

Everything was dark. I could hear muffled sounds, but I couldn't quite figure out what was happening or where I was. *"First; I wished to explore in a more open ended fashion and in greater depth"* [1] the place in which I was trapped. I started moving around trying to find a way out. Suddenly, I saw it: the small crack of *"light which excels in brightness a whole host of suns"* [2]. Driven to it, I pulled myself out of the darkness. The light was blinding but after a few seconds of adjustment I could see everything so clearly.

My family, friends, loved ones: everyone was there. They were all helping to carry a massive oak box in which I laid. Slowly they advanced through a garden whose beauty is incomparable. *"A square garden of eighty campi trevigiani; in the middle of which runs a little river, which makes the situation very delightful and beautiful."*[3]*"Blocks or screens of trees and the various plants act like different planes of a stage set: they convey the illusion of different landscapes, of depth, without offering, in passing, the substance."* [4] Behind them, *"The old and beautiful trees of the abandoned park are kept. A river of colossal white pebbles and blue-glass rocks flows into an existing pond. The ground around the trees has been scraped and turned into a field of ornamental shrubs and flowers including bulbs, perennials, and annuals. The trunks of certain trees are covered with flowering creepers (Hydrangea petiolaris and Clematis montana), blurring the distinction between the original trees and the new interventions. A black concrete bridge leaps over the seasonal waves of color and texture; pedestrians can look but do not have to trample the beauty below."* [5] *"everything was new and brilliant: a fanfare of colors. . . Color? It is blood circulating vigorously in the body. Color? It is the very sign of life. The flowers in the gardens and the fields have no patina; the sky is blue in fine weather. The dull accords of plowed earth, of standing rocks, of exposed geological strata, are the solid springboard of those bursts of life which are renewed each spring after the winter: colors!"* [6]. *"Life creates and destroys; it gives birth to the temples of India and also to the creeping tropical plants which loosen stone from stone in the work men have failed to guard."* [7] *"A ring of geometrical forms encloses this charming and picturesque scene"* [8].

*"These plants are really astounding," I said to myself, stepping back to appraise the entire collection."* [9] It seems like an endless garden but at the end of this garden is a wall with two small latches. It is in the biggest of these openings that my family put me. *"This tank stores nitrogen in liquid form at -196 degrees Fahrenheit and delivers it via a small rubber tube running through a manhole cover."* *"As it is released, the nitrogen heats up and becomes gas, providing pressure"* [10] to freeze. I felt a chill so refreshing it felt as if I were being thoroughly cleaned.

After being lightly shaken, the refreshing feeling vanished and all that was left was the pure sensation of being lighter than air. I was reduced to ashes in only a few minutes. Freed. Now I knew for sure that *"The soul is better off without the body, the body is just a nuisance: "It seems likely that we shall, only when we are dead, attain that which we desire and of which we claim to be lovers, namely wisdom, as our argument shows, not while we live.... While we live, we shall be closest to knowledge if we refrain as much as possible from association with the body and do not join with it more than we must, if we are not infected with its nature but purify ourselves from it until the god himself frees us."* [11].

Prayers were chanted and accompanied me in this cleansing journey but what I had felt was beyond any pleasure I had ever experienced. The power of it all blinded and deafened me. But I was slowly regaining my senses and could once again witness what I was becoming.

My ashes had come out the second opening: neatly laid in a flowerpot. The members of my family came, and each laid a single seed they had picked out in my remains. I was to become a Vanda Miss Joaquim orchid: a hybrid flower known for its vibrant colours, hardiness and resilience.

Then, it was time for the loved one's and friends to help me flourish. As tradition has it, each of them carried a hand full of rich soil that they added to the pot in order to cover me up. I could feel the pulse

of life driven from the seeds and sensed that I was about to grow once again. The ceremony had come to an end and as I started finding comfort in this reincarnation, my family and friends carried me back through the garden.

In other times and cultures, *"It was necessary to embalm and hide under flowers the remains of a dead society; chants and prayers were required. The altar is prepared and there are trophies on it. There are the green flames of a ceremony in memory of so many things that were. Purple curtains lighted by green flames, the evocation of ghosts, desubstantialization, dematerialization. Dream! Freud! Phantoms in limbo! Almost spiritism. Spiritualism, stories, evocation. Literature. There are no bones in it any longer, but disjointed things, unearthly, passing over into stupefying and promiscuous combinations. Sensitive souls, lacking in solidity, occupy themselves with these precious, crepuscular decorations. The sea withdraws; at the horizon the sun bleeds upon the exceedingly green water; there are ruins in the form of a cenotaph, the clouds are in tatters; fragments of columns lie on the ground; by association, cut up torsos of women and dark blood, birds, a horse of the decadent period of antiquity. Symbols, abbreviations, evocations. What liturgy is this? What refined, moving, spectral ceremony? What appeal to the past? Is it an entombment?"* [12]. An entombment that does not allow them to find comfort in uniting the dead with nature. This ceremony not only unites the dead but also the living. All the people gathered here are originally from different cultures, religions and countries brought together by this death ceremony. A purifying ritual free of excessive spiritualism: the Nuoyan.

[1] Wang\_Groat\_\_Architectural\_Research\_Methods [2]  
Harrison\_Wood\_Gaiger\_\_Art\_in\_Theory\_1648-1815 [3] Palladio\_TFBoA [4] Koolhaas\_SMLXL [5]  
Koolhaas\_SMLXL [6] Le\_Corbusier\_WTCWW [7] Le\_Corbusier\_WTCWW [8] Le\_Corbusier\_TCoT [9]  
Koolhaas\_SMLXL [10] Ascher\_\_The\_Works\_Anatomy\_of\_a\_City [11]  
Sedlacek\_\_Economics\_of\_Good\_and\_Evil [12] Le\_Corbusier\_WTCWW