# ARTURO

EDICIÓN FACSIMILAR

# EDICIÓN FACSIMILAR DE LA REVISTA *ARTURO*

ENSAYOS Y TRADUCCIONES

María Amalia García
Coordinación general

FUNDACIÓN ESPIGAS

TAREA
INSTITUTO DE INVESTIGACIONES
SOBRE EL PATRIMONIO CULTURAL

UNIVERSIDAD
NACIONAL DE
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**Coordinación general**
María Amalia García

**Ensayos**
María Amalia García
Raúl Naón

**Asesoramiento especializado**
Patricia M. Artundo

**Fotografía**
Oscar Balducci

**Diseño gráfico**
Estudio Marius Riveiro Villar

**Traducciones al inglés**
Introducciones y ensayos: Tamara Stuby
Traducción de textos teóricos - Revista *Arturo*: Jane Brodie
Traducción de poesías - Revista *Arturo*: Wendy Gosselin

**Corrección de textos**
Corrección en español y en inglés: Alicia Di Stasio y Mario Valledor

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FNA: Vassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, Joaquín Torres-García

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Accesibilidad, investigación, preservación y colaboración son los cuatro ejes que definen la misión de Espigas y también los pilares que fundan la realización del facsímil de la revista *Arturo*. Cada uno de esos aspectos justifica una edición impresa en un momento donde las prácticas de reproducción están monopolizadas por la tecnología digital.

En primer lugar, hacer un facsímil de *Arturo* permite dar acceso a algunos aspectos de la dimensión material de la revista que las reproducciones difundidas vía Internet no contemplan. El uso de distintos tipos de papel, los tamaños de las hojas y sus proporciones, las texturas y el desgaste de las tintas son aspectos difíciles de reconstruir para quien no haya tenido la posibilidad de acceder a una edición de 1944. Del mismo modo, las imágenes recortadas y pegadas sobre el papel apelan a la materialidad de esas reproducciones, que no solo dan cuenta de las tecnologías de impresión de una época, sino también de la centralidad de la dimensión objetual en una publicación que nos obliga a manipular las imágenes como si se tratase de "elementos reales en el espacio real". Así, lejos de ser una característica secundaria, la materialidad fue central para la realización de *Arturo*, tanto en 1944 como en la edición que ahora presentamos.

En segundo lugar, la accesibilidad se complementa con la importancia de la investigación. Este facsímil incluye un trabajo de María Amalia García que proporciona una mirada original sobre la revista a través de novedosas hipótesis. Lejos de agotar las posibilidades de lectura, su texto refiere y revisa una extensa lista de investigadores que han aportado nuevas perspectivas sobre *Arturo* a lo largo de los últimos años. Junto a su trabajo, Raúl Naón presenta un relato que sirve para pensar en simultáneo las lecturas historiográficas con las dinámicas del coleccionismo. A su vez, la decisión de incluir la primera traducción completa de la revista sin duda favorecerá una difusión de sus contenidos mucho más allá de los países de habla hispana y también posibilitará echar luz sobre redes de intercambio todavía no exploradas.

En tercer lugar, el facsímil también contribuye a la preservación, otro de los pilares sobre los que se funda Espigas. Cuando se trata de documentos con escasos ejemplares disponibles, el facsímil puede impedir que las ediciones originales se deterioren, al evitar su manipulación. En un contexto donde las curadurías requieren cada vez más documentos para ser exhibidos, por ejemplo, el facsímil puede remplazar las ediciones históricas, obviando los riesgos que implica cada muestra.

Finalmente, este facsímil se funda sobre un trabajo en conjunto que se inició en 2009 y que llegó a su fin gracias a la colaboración desinteresada de investigadores e instituciones. En este sentido, quiero agradecer especialmente la labor de la doctora María Amalia García y de Raúl Naón, por asumir la realización de esta obra. Este proyecto no habría sido posible sin su tenacidad y trabajo constantes. También deseo destacar la donación por parte del doctor Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro de la documentación referida a la edición facsimilar de 1994, que podrá ser consultada en la sede de Espigas.

Sin duda, este proyecto tampoco podría haber llegado a destino sin la colaboración del sector público y el privado. En este aspecto, fue central el apoyo del Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, a través de su régimen de mecenazgo, una estrategia central para el apoyo de la cultura. Por último, agradezco especialmente a las autoridades y a los equipos de la Fundación Espigas y del Centro de Estudios Espigas, perteneciente a Tarea - Instituto de Investigaciones sobre el Patrimonio Cultural de la Universidad Nacional de San Martín.

**Dr. Agustín R. Díez Fischer**
Director
Centro de Estudios Espigas
Tarea-IIPC / Universidad Nacional de San Martín

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Este facsímil es producto de un largo proceso. Comenzó en 2009, bajo el impulso inicial de María Amalia García y Raúl Naón, con el propósito de dar circulación ampliada a materiales inaccesibles, como es la revista *Arturo*. Fundación Espigas, bajo la dirección de Mauro Herlitzka, acogió con sumo entusiasmo la idea, y se inició el trabajo con el asesoramiento especializado de Patricia M. Artundo, como responsable de proyectos especiales de Fundación Espigas. Estamos sumamente agradecidos al equipo de Fundación Espigas por su apoyo, y fundamentalmente a Mauro Herlitzka, cuya acción fue clave para la autorización de los derechos de reproducción. También nuestro reconocimiento a Patricia M. Artundo, por su asesoramiento en los lineamientos generales del proyecto, y a Marina Baron Supervielle, por la coordinación ejecutiva.

Finalmente, la realización del facsímil llegó en un nuevo momento de la institución, constituida como Centro de Estudios Espigas - Fundación Espigas y dependiente del Instituto de Investigaciones sobre el Patrimonio Cultural (Tarea-IIPC) de la Universidad Nacional de San Martín. Estamos muy agradecidos a su director, Agustín Díez Fischer, por su compromiso y generosidad; también a Luisa Tomatti, por su ayuda para la consecución de las tareas. Asimismo, queremos expresar nuestra gratitud a las autoridades de Tarea-IIPC y de la Universidad, por darle continuidad al proyecto.

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Agradecemos a los artistas y poetas, y a sus familiares y derechohabientes, el permiso de reproducción para esta edición. También a Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, editor del primer facsímil de *Arturo*, por su estímulo durante todos estos años. Asimismo, queremos agradecer a colegas y amigos que nos acompañaron y apoyaron en este proceso: va nuestro reconocimiento especial para Gabriela y Hugo Francone, Gabriela Comte, Gênese Andrade, Valeria Balut y Silvia Dolinko.

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**M.A.G. - R.N.**

# LA REVISTA *ARTURO* Y LA POTENCIA MÚLTIPLE DE LA VANGUARDIA

María Amalia García

*Este gran torbellino de fuego originario*
*y fuentes vivas*
*Este cuerpo de viento en su horizonte puro*
*No cae de su cumbre al drama sin razón precisa.*
**Vicente Huidobro**, "Una mujer baila sus sueños", *Arturo*, 1944

La revista *Arturo* es una leyenda: un solo número lanzado en Buenos Aires en el verano de 1944 ha sido un eslabón clave en la transformación del arte argentino y sus proyecciones en el panorama latinoamericano. Su aparición única –esfuerzo de un grupo de jóvenes artistas y poetas–, la generativa inscripción de sus planteos, la inédita comunión de ideas y figuras y su materialidad artesanal reafirman este carácter mítico. La revista representa un momento embrionario y aglutinador de conceptos en ebullición cuya potencia disparó intervenciones múltiples.

Doscientos cincuenta fue –aparentemente– la cantidad de ejemplares de *Arturo*. Esta tirada reducida contribuyó sin duda a reforzar el mito, ya que su circulación es bastante restringida. Considerando el acotado número, son pocos los ejemplares existentes en la actualidad, los cuales están en manos de coleccionistas privados o en instituciones del exterior. Esta edición facsimilar se propone facilitar el acceso a la publicación considerando su dimensión material. Si bien existen otros facsímiles a los que me referiré en otro texto breve, éste busca ser una reproducción fidedigna de la revista respetando al máximo posible su aspecto original.

En los últimos años la revista ha sido abordada desde distintas perspectivas que posibilitaron la renovación de miradas sobre este objeto. Si las artes plásticas habían sido el foco de la crítica, más recientemente la poesía también ha recibido la atención merecida. La antesala del surgimiento de *Arturo*, así como los vínculos de los editores y los colaboradores en relación con las apuestas estético-políticas, también han sido objeto de estudio (véase bibliografía). A continuación, se propone dar cuenta de los móviles de la revista, sus apuestas y referentes, así como situar su importancia en el relato del arte moderno en relación con el panorama latinoamericano.

*Arturo. Revista de artes abstractas* instaló en el campo cultural porteño un proyecto de vanguardia cuyo recorte de ideas se elaboraba a partir de un espacio regional. Además de los textos de los miembros del grupo editor, Carmelo Arden Quin, Edgar Bayley, Gyula Kosice[1] y Rhod Rothfuss, incluyó colaboraciones de artistas y poetas de otras latitudes. Durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial, en el cruce de tensiones entre nacionalismos e internacionalismos, esta revista recortaba su área de representación dentro del mapa sudamericano. Así, los sentidos presentes en *Arturo* están en la confluencia de elecciones estéticas y contactos artístico-intelectuales: su propuesta reelaboró los debates artísticos internacionales de entreguerras a través de conexiones regionales latinoamericanas.[2]

La extranjería es una marca clave de la publicación: si bien los editores y los colaboradores más allegados residían en la órbita rioplatense y circulaban por los bares porteños, sus procedencias eran muy variadas. Kosice era húngaro, llegado a la Argentina a los 4 años; Rothfuss, de Montevideo; Arden Quin, nacido en la frontera entre el Uruguay y el Brasil; los hermanos Maldonado-Bayley eran los únicos porteños, mientras que Lidy Prati –en ese momento, de Maldonado– era chaqueña. (Aparentemente, fue Prati quien, con la ayuda de su familia, dedicada a la industria algodonera, financió parte de la publicación de la revista).[3] En 1944 estos artistas y poetas eran relativamente jóvenes: el mayor, Carmelo Arden Quin, tenía 31 años, y Kosice, el más joven, 20.

Además de sus noveles impulsores, la publicación reunió a "vanguardistas consagrados", que

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1 En la revista aparecen Ardén Quin y Kósice, con acento; no se ha utilizado esta grafía en el texto, dado que estos artistas no la continuaron empleando.

2 María Amalia García, *El arte abstracto. Intercambios culturales entre Argentina y Brasil*, Buenos Aires, Siglo XXI, 2011, p. 26.

3 Lidy Prati, en entrevista con Carla Bertone; "Muchachas de vanguardia", *ramona*, nº 62, Buenos Aires, julio de 2006, p. 67. Véase también María Amalia García, "Lidy Prati y su instancia diferencial en la unidad del arte concreto", en *Yente-Prati*, Buenos Aires, Malba - Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, 2009, pp. 87-99.

habían tenido un papel activo en la renovación estética desde las primeras décadas del siglo XX: Joaquín Torres-García, Vicente Huidobro, Murilo Mendes y Maria Helena Vieira da Silva. Estos colaboradores fueron clave en la lectura y reapropiación que la revista realizó de tres décadas de desarrollo vanguardista europeo, ya que operaron como traductores activos de dichos procesos. También se reproducían obras de Vassily Kandinsky y Piet Mondrian.

La cubierta roja realizada por Tomás Maldonado, marca distintiva de la publicación, se constituyó, a través de su profusa circulación posterior en libros, catálogos y exposiciones, en el ícono del desarrollo del arte abstracto argentino. Una lava incandescente que aúna las ideas surgidas en la revista. Los trazos lineales blancos quebrados y expresivos responden en parte a la impronta técnica del linograbado. Recorridos erráticos como ríos abrevando unos en otros funcionan a modo de metáfora de los nexos y tránsitos de la publicación.

*Arturo*, la revista por excelencia de la vanguardia abstracta argentina, no tiene manifiesto: sus editores no lograron conciliar un texto común, aunque los cuatro expresaron sus bases para la nueva estética. Las retiraciones de tapa y de contratapa pueden considerarse las intervenciones editoriales grupales; en estos espacios, la sintaxis de la revista da paso a la enunciación colectiva. En la retiración de tapa, figuran las entradas de diccionario para los términos "inventar" e "invención" (emulando el interés surrealista por los diccionarios). A pie de página, en color verde, se suma la máxima de la revista: "INVENCIÓN contra AUTOMATISMO". La confrontación de la cubierta "expresionista" de Maldonado con la declaración "INVENCIÓN contra AUTOMATISMO" devela el amplio horizonte del proyecto. En la retiración de contratapa se publican tres fragmentos que remiten (casi directamente) a los textos de Arden Quin, Bayley y Kosice. En la acción de dar vuelta la página, se activan las tensiones que se gestaban en la publicación. Entre el anverso y el reverso de una hoja se ponían en juego las elaboraciones y percepciones que un grupo de jóvenes presentaba, desde Buenos Aires y durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial, sobre el mundo contemporáneo.

La lectura de las tensiones entre tapa y retiración de tapa ha sido señalada en relación con la organicidad de los contenidos de *Arturo*; marcar ambigüedades y contradicciones en la revista representa un lugar común de la crítica sobre ésta.[4] En efecto, si se la analiza retrospectivamente, esta relación aparece como desajustada respecto del ideario posterior de la vanguardia invencionista: me refiero a los grupos Arte Madí, Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención y Perceptismo, volcados –en mayor o menor medida– a los procesos constructivos, los abordajes científico-matemáticos y la apuesta al futuro.

Este artículo busca hacer foco, precisamente, en aquellos aspectos en tensión, en las definiciones inciertas, ideas inaccesibles, aseveraciones paradójicas, dado que estos núcleos de sentido, estos intersticios, son reveladores de los significados que atravesaron la publicación. En esos lugares poco rotundos o, mejor dicho, en sus enunciaciones contundentes en oposición, es donde la revista expone su potencialidad; es a través de esas fallas que se escuchan los debates, que se corporizan esos espíritus diversos que habitan sus páginas. El texto indaga, por un lado, en las tensiones en las definiciones de la abstracción y el surrealismo, así como en las filiaciones de los colaboradores en relación con estas poéticas. Por otro lado, se analizan las lecturas que en torno de lo "primitivo" realizó la publicación. Entiendo que estos enfoques van a contracorriente de las lecturas más convencionales sobre la revista, así como de los grupos que la sucedieron. Si en otra oportunidad se ha estudiado de qué manera la *Arturo* reelaboró los debates artísticos internacionales de entreguerras a través de conexiones regionales latinoamericanas,[5] ahora la propuesta es revisar las lecturas desatendidas que revelan debates clave para la publicación.

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4 Entre las primeras referencias, véanse Wolf Roitman, "Ubicación definitiva de Vicente Huidobro", *Poesía Buenos Aires*, nº 7, otoño de 1952, p. 2; Jorge B. Rivera, *Madí y la vanguardia argentina*, Buenos Aires, Paidós, 1976, p. 21; Nelly Perazzo, *El Arte Concreto en la Argentina*, Buenos Aires, Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, 1983, p. 56.

5 María Amalia García, *El arte abstracto. Intercambios culturales entre Argentina y Brasil*, *op. cit.*

1. Carmelo Arden Quin, carta a Maria Helena Vieira da Silva y Arpad Szenes, Buenos Aires, 6 de noviembre de 1943. Centro de Documentação, Fundação Arpad Szenes - Vieira da Silva, Lisboa, Portugal.

Si en la revista son recurrentes las contraposiciones de sentido producto de variadas perspectivas, el nombre no fue la excepción. Arturo, o el Guardián de la Osa, es el nombre de una de las estrellas más brillantes de la constelación boreal de Brootes.[6] También se ha asociado la elección del nombre a un homenaje a Arthur Rimbaud.[7] Bajo esta estrella, *Arturo* parecía vislumbrar la pregnancia de su estela. La exaltación de lo humano es también fundante en su ideario, y puede verse representada en el título. Se sabe, por correspondencia previa a la aparición de la revista entre Arden Quin y Maria Helena Vieira da Silva (y su marido, Arpad Szenes), que el nombre se completaba con la sigla "X2", que, podemos pensar, reforzaba el carácter estelar y las intertextualidades con la ciencia ficción, y que, finalmente, desapareció.[8] En esa misma carta Arden Quin marcaba los lineamientos de la publicación y evidenciaba la pluralidad de posiciones que abarcaba:

> Yo saco aquí en Buenos Aires un periódico de vanguardia conjuntamente con Torres-García. El primer número saldrá a comienzos del año próximo. La orientación de Arturo X2 (éste es su nombre) será de absoluta prescindencia académica, romántica o expresionista, y acepta el surrealismo, el constructivismo de Torres-García y otras modernas escuelas de vanguardia. En una palabra, habrá un cierto eclecticismo; pero eso sí, únicamente dentro de las modernas y últimas corrientes artísticas.[9]

Considerando la carta de Arden Quin, resulta evidente que sus editores eran conscientes del "cierto eclecticismo" que manejaba la propuesta.

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6 Gyula Kosice, "A partir de la revista *Arturo*", *La Nación*, Buenos Aires, 1º de octubre de 1989, sección 4ª, p. 6. Es interesante señalar que cuando en el año 2010 Gyula Kosice autorizó a la Fundación Espigas a la realización de este facsímil solicitó la inclusión en el texto crítico del siguiente párrafo que se reproduce en su totalidad: "Al promediar el año 1943 tuve la necesidad de buscar en un diccionario de la Real Academia Española la palabra Arte. En la página enfrentada leo la palabra Arturo, que en griego significa Arktouros, arktos: osa y ouros: custodio, estrella de la constelación de Boyero, de primera magnitud. Es una de las veinte estrellas más brillantes del Universo. En el año 1944, cuando se trató de designar la revista *Arturo*, yo propuse dicho nombre, y fue aceptado." Véase carta de autorización de Gyula Kosice a la Fundación Espigas para la realización del facsímil de la revista *Arturo*, 21 de enero de 2010, Fundación Espigas. Véase además Gyula Kosice, e-mail a Mauro Herlitzka, 12 de julio de 2010, Fundación Espigas.

7 Shelley Goodman, *Carmelo Arden Quin... When Art Jumped Out of its Cage*, Dallas, Madí Museum, 2004, p. 86.

8 En alguna bibliografía aparece como K2; sin embargo, en las cartas de época ha figurado como X2. Véase Shelley Goodman, *Carmelo Arden Quin...*, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

9 Carmelo Arden Quin, carta a Maria Helena Vieira da Silva y Arpad Szenes, Buenos Aires, 6 de noviembre de 1943. Centro de Documentação, Fundação Arpad Szenes - Vieira da Silva, Lisboa. Agradezco a Sandra Santos, de dicha fundación, haberme facilitado esta documentación.

Sin embargo, la revista necesitaba distinguirse de otros idearios; siguiendo la carta citada, la publicación se entendía como absolutamente prescindente de filiaciones académicas, románticas o expresionistas. Su proyecto se basaba en aquello que sus editores denominaron "invencionismo". Éste se proponía como un nuevo modo conceptual de abordar el hecho estético que privilegiaba la autonomía y los valores inventivos en detrimento de las cualidades descriptivas. En este sentido, se destacaban las capacidades intelectivas en la invención artística. En contraposición, el automatismo representaba la antítesis de lo que, al parecer, definía la publicación: asociado técnica y estéticamente al surrealismo, proponía la libertad y el fluir del inconsciente como elementos y procedimientos creativos centrales.

Sin embargo, una lectura atenta tanto de los textos de los editores como del artículo publicado por Torres-García ("Respecto a una futura creación literaria") permite indicar que, en *Arturo*, el automatismo era considerado una importante estrategia, ya que posibilitaba la liberación de los procedimientos expresivos y la apertura a nuevas dimensiones; sin embargo, luego se imponía un segundo momento: la invención. En efecto, aun cuando se aceptaran muchos de los postulados del surrealismo, el punto de discordia entre ambas propuestas era cómo ejecutar el método. Si a través del automatismo se lograban producciones ajenas de censura y con absoluta indiferencia por el resultado, el invencionismo, en contraposición, planteaba una primacía del fin, es decir, el concepto de invención se proponía como superador del automatismo. La invención era precisa, científica, delimitada, y surgía a través de un proceso intelectual que reorganizaba ese proyecto creativo.[10] "Invención contra automatismo" involucraba, entonces, el reconocimiento superador de la técnica surrealista y la proposición de un nuevo estadio en la creación estética.[11] En suma, una tensión constante entre la creación inconsciente y la construcción racionalista fue el meollo de la teoría y práctica del invencionismo porteño.[12]

También se ha mencionado como antecedente inmediato del invencionismo el creacionismo de Vicente Huidobro, en tanto opera con el concepto de imagen autónoma y no referencial, una imagen que crea y no traduce. En efecto, Huidobro, el iniciador de las vanguardias latinoamericanas, fue el poeta guía de esta publicación: citado por Bayley y por Rothfuss en sendos textos publicados en la revista, fue reconocido como aquel que sentó las bases para la concepción de una nueva estética.[13] Alejandro Crispiani ha indicado que el concepto de invención también había sido utilizado desde los 30 por Torres-García, aunque no con las mismas connotaciones que adquiría en la revista porteña.[14] Torres-García fue un personaje faro para la publicación en la articulación entre inscripciones poéticas y contactos interpersonales; de hecho, como ha demostrado Cristina Rossi, la vinculación con Huidobro fue a través del maestro uruguayo.[15]

Constructivismo, creacionismo, surrealismo; he señalado algunos de los referentes más pregnantes en la revista. Es preciso considerar otro

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10 María Amalia García, *El arte abstracto. Intercambios culturales entre Argentina y Brasil*, *op. cit.*

11 Carmelo Arden Quin, s/t ["Son las condiciones materiales..."], *Arturo*, Buenos Aires, 1944, s/p.

12 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, "Buenos Aires: rompiendo el marco", en Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro (cur.), *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Austin, The Blanton Museum - University of Texas at Austin, 2007, p. 232.

13 Alejandro Crispiani ha señalado que hay un punto de disidencia central entre el creacionismo de Huidobro y el invencionismo, ya que, para el escritor chileno, la creación es esencialmente un acto individual, el poeta es el "pequeño dios" y su creación es siempre personal. Contrariamente, el invencionismo pretende llegar a la obra de arte colectiva, en la que las invenciones individuales se encadenarían unas con otras. Alejandro Crispiani, *Objetos para transformar el mundo. Trayectorias del arte concreto-invención. Argentina y Chile, 1940-1970*, Bernal, Universidad Nacional de Quilmes/Prometeo, 2011, p. 66. Véanse también Derek Harris, "Arturo and the Literary Avant-Garde", en *The Place of Arturo in the Argentinian Avant-Garde*, Aberdeen, University of Aberdeen, Centre for the Study of the Hispanic Avant-Garde, 1994, pp. 1-7; Ornela Barisone, *Experimentos poéticos opacos. Biopsias malditas: del invencionismo argentino a la poesía visual (1944-1969)*, Buenos Aires, Corregidor, 2017, pp. 120-122.

14 Alejandro Crispiani, *Objetos para transformar el mundo...*, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

15 Cristina Rossi, *La revista Arturo en su tiempo inaugural*, Buenos Aires, Fundación Espigas, 2018. http://revistasdeartelatinoamericano.org/items/show/57 (27.03.2018).

componente importante en *Arturo*: el primitivismo. En su texto, Arden Quin caracterizaba la invención como una fase superadora de las anteriores etapas creativas de la humanidad. La invención se correspondía con un estadio particular de la evolución humana concebida desde una perspectiva marxista, e implicaba la clausura del orden previo y un recomienzo absoluto.

> Nosotros estamos viviendo en economía como en arte, y demás ideologías, un período de tesis; período de recomienzo; período primitivo; pero bajo normas y estructuras científicas [...] Así la expresión, que en arte, ha sido el fundamento del primitivismo natural, vino a ser reemplazada por la INVENCIÓN en el primitivismo moderno, científico.[16]

Lo primitivo involucraba, entonces, una apuesta social de transformación, de retorno originario pero actualizado: Arden Quin justificaba esta vuelta a través de la proposición hegeliana de la marcha ascensional de la historia en espiral. Mientras lo primitivo –que se implicaba en la liberación y expresión de los instintos– se correspondía con el automatismo, este nuevo momento, el primitivismo científico, se manifestaba en la invención. Es interesante destacar que el primitivismo, además del automatismo, era un ingrediente clave en el surrealismo, que, como se ha señalado, fue una poética fundante en la recuperación que la revista realizó de tres décadas de genealogía vanguardista. La crítica generalizada a la racionalidad burguesa basada en lo "maravilloso", o sea, en lo irracional, lo fantástico y lo onírico, se une a la fascinación por lo primitivo. Esta línea fue principalmente sostenida por Georges Bataille a través de la revista *Documents*.[17]

Esta fluidez referencial entre surrealismo y abstracción, así como las alusiones a lo primitivo, fueron evitadas en los análisis sobre la revista; salvo excepciones,[18] fueron dejadas de lado por su opacidad respecto de las búsquedas posteriores de los artistas involucrados. Sin embargo, es preciso tener en cuenta que estos debates tenían un contexto importante en el panorama europeo –fundamentalmente en el ámbito parisino– y, por ende, encontraron un eco inmediato en nuestras orillas.

El panorama cultural porteño de los años 30 y 40 estuvo determinado por acontecimientos internacionales que marcaban el avance de los totalitarismos. La consolidación del régimen estalinista, la experiencia nazi-fascista, la Guerra Civil Española, el ascenso de Franco y la Segunda Guerra Mundial fueron los tópicos que atravesaron los discursos políticos y culturales generando nuevos compromisos. Exiliados de diversas latitudes intensificaron en nuestro medio estos debates. Ellos, numerosos intelectuales y artistas, se convirtieron en informantes clave para comprender lo ocurrido en el período de entreguerras europeo: como recuerda Tomás Maldonado, "de sus maltrechas valijas de cartón de hombres en fuga salían documentos que nos fascinaban y de los cuales podíamos obtener preciosas informaciones sobre los radicales cambios culturales sobrevenidos en Europa entre las dos guerras".[19] Para los editores de *Arturo* resultaba central recuperar este bagaje para poder ir más allá de esas búsquedas.

Precisamente por estos nexos, la idea de imagen pura y las propuestas de la abstracción no eran desconocidas en el ámbito porteño. En forma casi simultánea a la aparición de *Arturo*, en febrero de 1944 el periódico *Correo Literario*, publicado por exiliados españoles, homenajeaba a Piet Mondrian con motivo de su muerte.[20] Son numerosas las figuras que transitaron las búsquedas abstractas en la Argentina: Emilio Pettoruti, Juan Del Prete, Yente (Eugenia Crenovich), Lucio Fontana, entre otros. Su abordaje excede este texto; sin embargo,

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16 Carmelo Arden Quin, s/t ["Son las condiciones materiales..."], *op. cit*.

17 Rosalind Krauss, *La originalidad de la vanguardia y otros mitos modernos*, Madrid, Alianza, 1996, pp. 71-72; Martin Jay, *Ojos abatidos. La denigración de la visión en el pensamiento francés del siglo XX*, Madrid, Akal, 2007, p. 174.

18 Entre las excepciones, resalto el temprano trabajo de Graciela de Sola, *Proyecciones del surrealismo en la literatura argentina*, Buenos Aires, Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1967, p. 73.

19 Giacinto Di Pietrantonio, "Entrevista", en Tomás Maldonado, *Lo real y lo virtual*, Barcelona, Gedisa, 1994, p. 211.

20 Piet Mondrian, "El arte abstracto" y "Nuevas", *Correo Literario*, nº 7, Buenos Aires, 15 de febrero de 1944, pp. 5 y 1-2, respectivamente. Silvia Dolinko, "El rescate de una cultura 'universal'. Discursos programáticos y selecciones plásticas en *Correo Literario*", en

tener en cuenta estos antecedentes habilita a pensar por qué los editores de *Arturo* que reconocían otras paternidades regionales e internacionales negaban lo ocurrido en el ámbito local. Pettoruti era mencionado –peyorativamente– en el texto de Rhod Rothfuss; Del Prete y Fontana –referentes en línea con las elecciones de la revista– fueron omitidos por los editores de *Arturo*. Una posible explicación –además de la radicalidad que, aunque sin definirla con claridad, se buscaba sostener– es que la disputa por lo nuevo los obligaba a posicionarse, en el circuito vernáculo, como los únicos precursores y representantes de esta tendencia.

Retomando las tensiones entre abstracción y surrealismo, es clave situar el debate en el panorama francés de entreguerras, ya que en ese momento numerosos artistas pivotaban dentro de las diversas líneas de ambas poéticas.[21] A su vez, las dos propuestas auguraban horizontes de transformación que, en la coyuntura política de entreguerras, generaban fuertes compromisos. Arden Quin refería explícitamente a este proceso en su texto:

> Nadie se ha detenido, con pensamiento dialéctico materialista, en la Escuela de París, para ver que ella ha sido el resultado emocional e ideológico de una transformación total del mundo. Nadie pensó en subordinar el fenómeno del arte moderno, y sus abstracciones, al proceso de liquidación económica y social del orden capitalista, y a la creación de una nueva sociedad bajo formas socialistas de producción.[22]

Durante la década del 20, los principales activadores de las experiencias abstracto-constructivas, procedentes de distintas latitudes, confluyeron en París. Se encontraban allí Vassily Kandinsky, Theo van Doesburg, Piet Mondrian, Hans Arp, Sophie Taeuber-Arp, Georges Vantongerloo, Natalia Gontcharova, Mijaíl Larinov, Antoine Pevsner, entre otros. De las vinculaciones de Joaquín Torres-García –quien estaba en la capital francesa desde 1926– con Michel Seuphor, Piet Mondrian y Theo van Doesburg surgió la idea de formar un grupo de orientación antisurrealista conocido como Cercle et Carré, cuya línea de promoción se circunscribía a las propuestas no figurativas.[23] Si bien la idea era crear un frente unido contra el surrealismo y promover la comunicación entre artistas abstracto-geométricos, Cercle et Carré adoptó una actitud pluralista respecto de las interpretaciones de la abstracción (lo que llevó a Van Doesburg a separarse del grupo). En este sentido, también es preciso relativizar la oposición surrealista de Cercle et Carré si se considera a artistas como Hans Arp o como Joaquín Torres-García, quienes oscilaban entre ambas tendencias cruzando elementos de las dos tradiciones.[24]

Según ya se ha señalado, Torres-García fue una figura central para comprender la articulación de este derrotero entre inscripciones poéticas y contactos interpersonales, y permite entender por qué esta revista puede considerarse una propuesta de vanguardia regional.[25] Su actuación en Europa y posteriormente en Montevideo lo constituía en un referente para toda la órbita rioplatense. Además de publicar en *Arturo* tres colaboraciones –"Con respecto a una futura creación literaria", "Divertimento" y un dibujo de 1932–, se incluyó la participación de su hijo Augusto.

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Patricia M. Artundo (ed.), *Arte en revistas. Publicaciones culturales en la Argentina 1900-1950*, Rosario, Beatriz Viterbo, 2008, pp. 131-165.

21 Véanse David Batchelor, "'Esta libertad, este orden': el arte en Francia después de la Primera Guerra Mundial", y Paul Wood, "Realismo y realidades", en Briony Fer, David Batchelor, Paul Wood, *Realismo, racionalismo, surrealismo. El arte de entreguerras (1914-1945)*, Madrid, Akal, 1999, p. 81.

22 Carmelo Arden Quin, s/t ["Son las condiciones materiales..."], *op. cit.*

23 Gladis Fabre (cur.), *París 1930. Arte abstracto, arte concreto, Cercle et Carré*, Valencia, IVAM, 1990, pp. 31-34.

24 A este respecto, Juan Fló ha señalado que "en tanto que el antisurrealismo fue el estímulo inicial para la formación del grupo, y, en alguna medida, Torres lo compartía, ese alineamiento disimula la mayor proximidad que Torres tenía con la exaltación del inconsciente y el concepto supraestético del arte, propios del surrealismo, que con la tendencia técnico-maquinista o con el formalismo estético de la mayoría de los integrantes de Cercle et Carré". Para este autor, el antisurrealismo en Torres-García fue una opción coyuntural. Juan Fló, *Torres-García en (y desde) Montevideo*, Montevideo, Arca, 1991, p. 15.

25 María Amalia García, *El arte abstracto. Intercambios culturales entre Argentina y Brasil*, *op. cit.*

Montevideo se había convertido para esos tiempos en un centro de peregrinación artística: los artistas cruzaban a la otra margen del ancho río para seguir sus enseñanzas. En las agendas donde Torres-García anotaba a sus visitantes aparecen menciones a "Rothfuss y sus discípulos", como definía el maestro al grupo de integrantes de *Arturo*.[26] Asimismo, desde su retorno al Río de la Plata, Torres-García tuvo un lugar central en la escena porteña a través de sus columnas en el diario *La Nación* y en otras publicaciones en las que daba a conocer el derrotero del arte moderno y de sus principales protagonistas –Mondrian, Van Doesburg y Arp, entre otros–.[27]

Murilo Mendes y Maria Helena Vieira da Silva también fueron referentes de acción y relectura de estos procesos europeos desde la órbita latinoamericana para la relocalización de la vanguardia en el cruce regional. La poesía de Mendes, si bien es eminentemente vanguardista, dados la desaparición de la rima, el ritmo libre, el desconocimiento de las reglas de puntuación y el lenguaje coloquial, sí trabaja con alusiones a la realidad y, por ende, no se ajusta al ideal invencionista de la imagen pura.[28]

Bayley es, sin duda, el que expone de manera más ajustada el poema como un objeto que no refiere a elementos externos: trabaja con la creación de palabras –"callhermano" "Loturcamonudolantianamente"[29]–, con operaciones fonéticas –"Umumumumumumumumu/ mumumumumu ERTEMUR"[30]– y con el quiebre del sentido convencional de escritura-lectura. Sin embargo, como ha señalado Luciana Del Gizzo, entre las asociaciones puramente fonéticas o planificadas para romper el sentido afloran hilachas de coherencia, que marcan una toma de posición respecto de la Guerra Mundial, que, al momento de aparición de la revista, aún no había acabado:[31] "Telegramas cayendo yo me opongo al nazismo".[32] Por su parte, Ornela Barisone ha señalado que Bayley investigó en *Arturo* una poesía sintético-ideogramática, aunque la impronta discursiva surrealista no permitió consolidarla en ese momento: los poemas de Bayley dejan en claro la tensión con el surrealismo entre la aceptación y el rechazo.[33]

Arden Quin y Kosice, los futuros líderes del movimiento Madí, además de sus textos teóricos, también publicaron poesía, pero no obra plástica. Según ha afirmado Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, esto lleva a pensar que en 1944 primaban las reflexiones teórico-poéticas por sobre las propuestas plásticas; éste es otro elemento que permite entender que el episodio *Arturo* fue formativo e inicial en el desarrollo creativo de la mayoría de sus miembros.[34] Los poemas de ambos siguen la línea de Bayley en el juego lingüístico, aunque faltan el humor, la ironía, y el contrapunto con el lenguaje lógico;[35] el poema de Arden Quin "Pegaso come hierba en el caos" resulta cercano a un relato de invención onírica.

Volviendo a la conexión brasileña, Maria Helena Vieira da Silva llegó a Río de Janeiro junto con su marido, Arpad Szenes, desde Lisboa en junio de 1940.[36] El vínculo con el ambiente carioca se produjo, fundamentalmente, a través de Murilo

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26 Agradezco a Cecilia de Torres haberme facilitado informaciones extraídas de los diarios de Torres-García sobre las visitas de críticos y artistas argentinos a su taller en Montevideo.

27 Cristina Rossi, "Torres-García en el Buenos Aires de los primeros cuarenta. Acerca de la circulación de la obra torresgarciana antes de la aparición de la revista *Arturo*", en *XXV International Congress Latin American Studies Associaton (LASA)*, Las Vegas, Nevada, octubre de 2004.

28 Luciana Del Gizzo, *Volver a la vanguardia. El invencionismo y su deriva en el Movimiento Poesía Buenos Aires*, Buenos Aires, Ediciones en Danza, 2017, p. 93.

29 Edgar Bayley, "ESTRENO ESCURRE", *Arturo*, Buenos Aires, 1944, s/p.

30 Edgar Bayley, "SEGUNDO POEMA EN CION", *Arturo*, Buenos Aires, 1944, s/p.

31 Luciana Del Gizzo, *Volver a la vanguardia...*, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

32 Edgar Bayley, "ESTRENO ESCURRE", *op. cit.*

33 Ornela Barisone, *Experimentos poéticos opacos...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-122.

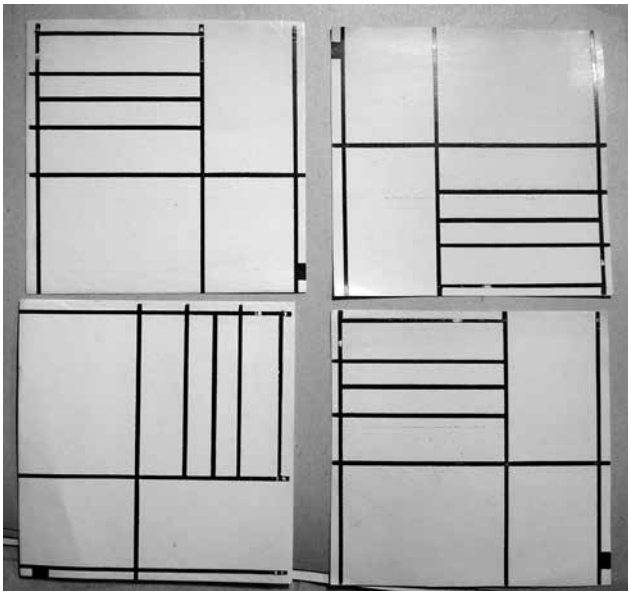
34 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, "Rhod Rothfuss, Untitled (Harlequin)", en Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro (cur.), *The Geometry of Hope...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-96.

35 Luciana Del Gizzo, *Volver a la vanguardia...*, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

36 María Amalia García, "La revista *Arturo* y la conexión carioca: en torno de la participación de Maria Helena Vieira da Silva y Murilo Mendes en la vanguardia invencionista porteña", *Pós. Revista do Programa de Pós-graduação em Artes da Escola de Belas Artes da*

2. Exposición de Maria Helena Vieira da Silva, Museu de Belas Artes, Río de Janeiro, 1942.

3. Imágenes de *Composition en blanc, noir et rouge* de Piet Mondrian que se incluyen en la revista *Arturo* (sin el pintado de la línea roja). Archivo Lidy Prati.



Mendes quien era un activador clave de la bohemia de la ciudad, integrada también por otros artistas exiliados. Este rol debió de haber resultado atractivo a los editores de *Arturo*, además de su particular poética en tensión entre el cristianismo y el surrealismo. El viaje realizado por Arden Quin y Edgar Bayley al Brasil en 1942 posibilitó estos intercambios. En julio de 1942, gracias a las gestiones de Mendes, Vieira da Silva hizo una exposición individual en el Museu Nacional de Belas Artes de Río de Janeiro. Es probable que esta exposición haya sido visitada por los viajeros argentinos, puesto que las obras reproducidas en *Arturo* fueron exhibidas en esa oportunidad. Vieira da Silva publicó en *Arturo* dos obras en *gouache* datadas en 1940, cuyos títulos no se consignan en la leyenda de la revista. Una de ellas es identificada actualmente como *Le métro*. La otra, que representa una ronda de mujeres, no tiene un nombre asignado, aunque sí se sabe que formó parte de la exposición en el Museu Nacional de Belas Artes, ya que aparece en las fotos que documentan ese evento.

A la par que las propuestas teóricas, el análisis de los planteos visuales también revela tensiones y complejidades: en la "revista de artes abstractas", muchas de las obras reproducidas, si bien incorporan lecciones vanguardistas, utilizan repertorios figurativos, como el caso de las de Viera da Silva. De los editores y colaboradores locales, solo hay reproducciones de la obra plástica de Maldonado, Lidy Prati y Rhod Rothfuss. Las viñetas de Prati adquieren claramente un posicionamiento no figurativo a través de la utilización de la línea, a veces más orgánica y, en otros momentos, más geometrizada. Libres de una organización ortogonal, estas imágenes se componen de pequeñas estructuras geométricas lineales interconectadas.

Respecto de la participación de Lidy Prati en *Arturo*, es interesante señalar que, de modo recurrente durante las últimas décadas de su vida, ella recordaba haber visto *Composition en blanc, noir et rouge* en la revista *Art News* y haber propuesto la reproducción de dicha obra de Piet Mondrian en *Arturo*. Asimismo, Prati ha señalado en varias oportunidades que, dados los costos de reproducción en color, ella había pintado la línea roja del margen inferior de la obra para cada uno de los ejemplares de la revista. Este recuerdo contribuyó a reforzar el carácter mítico de la publicación. Entre los documentos guardados por la artista en su archivo personal, están las imágenes sueltas en papel ilustración que fueron

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*Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais*, vol. 2, nº 4, Belo Horizonte, UFMG, noviembre de 2012, pp. 38-61, https://www.eba.ufmg.br/revistapos/index.php/pos/article/view/51/53 (21.12.2017).

pegadas en la revista; allí aparece *Composition en blanc, noir et rouge* sin pintar; la imagen es una grilla negra sobre blanco donde el rojo está ausente.[37]

Esta obra de Mondrian acompañaba el artículo de Rothfuss, "El marco: un problema de plástica actual" –publicado en las páginas finales de la revista–. Allí, Rothfuss reflexiona sobre el marco en cuanto elemento determinante en la tradición de las artes plásticas. Ésta es posiblemente la innovación más importante introducida por *Arturo*.
A pesar de que el grupo se disolvió rápidamente –dando lugar, entre 1945 y 1947, a las ya mencionadas agrupaciones Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención, Arte Madí y Perceptismo–, la propuesta plástica aquí surgida, el marco recortado, sería el núcleo constitutivo de la producción de muchos de estos artistas hasta los años 50. A través de esta indagación, el marco recortado –las estructuras irregulares que combinan formas geométricas– se convirtió en el soporte pictórico utilizado por dichos grupos. En los años siguientes, estas configuraciones de forma-color colgarían de las paredes de algunos innovadores espacios porteños.

En su planteo, Rothfuss también intentaba dar una visión comprensiva del arte en correlación con algunos hitos históricos. El inicio –mal fechado en el texto– era la Revolución Francesa y la consiguiente necesidad histórica de un naturalismo casi fotográfico. Un segundo momento, marcado consecutivamente por el posimpresionismo, el cubismo, el futurismo, el neoplasticismo y el constructivismo, estaba guiado por una búsqueda plástica cada vez más abstracta que expresaba "la realidad esencial". Sin embargo, para Rothfuss, aun en el seno de la creación plástica pura surgían nuevos problemas: "El cubismo y el no objetivismo, por sus composiciones basadas, ya en ritmos de líneas oblicuas, ya en figuras triangulares o poligonales, se crearon a sí mismos el problema de que un marco rectangular, cortaba el desarrollo plástico del tema".

Rothfuss señalaba la necesidad de romper la estructura del marco ortogonal; para él, la regularidad del soporte fragmentaba la forma, de modo que la obra, aunque abstracta, seguía el concepto de ventana de los cuadros naturalistas:

> Una pintura con un marco regular hace presentir una continuidad del tema, que solo desaparece, cuando el marco está rigurosamente estructurado de acuerdo a la composición de la pintura.
> Vale decir, cuando se hace jugar al borde de la tela, un papel activo en la creación plástica. Papel que debe tenerlo siempre. Una pintura debe ser algo que empiece y termine en ella misma. Sin solución de continuidad.[38]

El artículo estaba acompañado por tres obras: *Deux, etc.*, de Vassily Kandinsky, reproducida en la primera página y al final del texto en la segunda página; *Composition en blanc, noir et rouge*, de Piet Mondrian, y *Trabajo en estudio*, de Rothfuss, una pieza de marco recortado. Según ha señalado Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, la yuxtaposición estratégica del marco recortado y la obra de Mondrian crea una comparación implícita: Rothfuss, con su propuesta textual y visual, estaba planteando la superación de los proyectos del arte no figurativo europeo.[39] Acuerdo con Pérez-Barreiro en que Rothfuss proponía un debate con las vanguardias internacionales; esto nos permite dimensionar el alcance que se les estaba dando a los problemas tratados en la revista y a quiénes se elegía como interlocutores en los diálogos y disputas. Sin embargo, también es preciso tener en cuenta los procesos locales que estaban en juego.

La obra *Trabajo en estudio*, de Rothfuss, reproducida en *Arturo* y actualmente desaparecida, es un marco recortado claramente influenciado por

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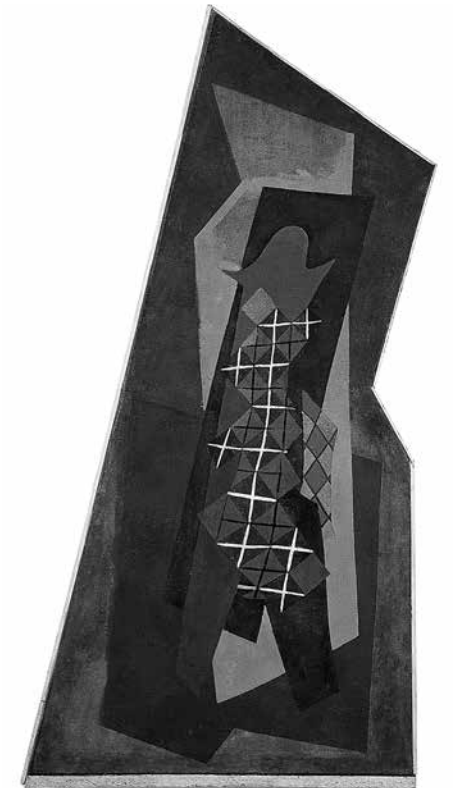
37 Es preciso un estudio material de la revista para dilucidar si efectivamente Prati pintó dicha línea o si la incorporación del rojo fue parte de un proceso posterior de impresión. Véanse intervención de Lidy Prati en la mesa redonda con Manuel Espinosa, Enio Iommi y Lidy Prati coordinada por Jorge López Anaya en ocasión de la exposición *Utopía de la forma*, Galería del Infinito, Buenos Aires, abril-mayo 2004; entrevista con la autora, 2005. Cfr. además Carla Bertone, "Muchachas de vanguardia", *op. cit.*, y María Amalia García, "Lidy Prati y su instancia diferencial en la unidad del arte concreto", *op. cit.*

38 Rhod Rothfuss, "El marco: un problema de plástica actual", *Arturo*, Buenos Aires, 1944, s/p.

39 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, "Buenos Aires: rompiendo el marco", en Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro (cur.), *The Geometry of Hope...*, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

4. Emilio Pettoruti, *Orgía II*, 1934, óleo sobre tela, 55 x 46 cm, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires. Donación María Luisa Bemberg. Derechos Reservados Fundación Pettoruti: www.pettoruti.com

5. Rhod Rothfuss, *Arlequín*, 1943, óleo sobre tela, 176 x 84 x 2,5 cm. Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros.



Pettoruti: una imagen cubista similar a aquellas que pintaba el artista platense. Vale mencionar que, en el texto citado, Rothfuss refiere a Pettoruti peyorativamente como el "cubista de otoño", y a su estrategia de composición en círculos, elipses y polígonos dentro del marco rectangular. Según ha analizado Patricia M. Artundo, éste fue un método bastante utilizado por el artista en obras como *Orgía II*, *Copa llena* y *Tres cigarrillos*.[40] Para el joven Rothfuss, la solución de componer dentro de estructuras no rectangulares y luego inscribirlas en el marco ortogonal no era la solución al problema.

Sin embargo, Rothfuss se encontraba más cerca de Pettoruti de lo que hubiera querido estar. Muy posiblemente Rothfuss haya visitado la muestra de Pettoruti en el Círculo de Bellas Artes de Montevideo en 1939, donde estuvieron expuestas las obras mencionadas. Si comparamos *Trabajo en estudio* y *Orgía II*, es evidente que Rothfuss quiso dar un paso más en esta búsqueda y obtener pinturas con su "propio marco"; como dijo en su texto, "una pintura que empiece y termine en ella misma".

Esta búsqueda llevaba varios meses: en diciembre de 1943 Rothfuss presentó una exhibición de pinturas en el Ateneo de Montevideo, un espacio clave de resistencia cultural en el contexto de los totalitarismos durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial.[41] Allí, mostró unos trabajos que se podrían denominar "marcos recortados figurativos".[42]

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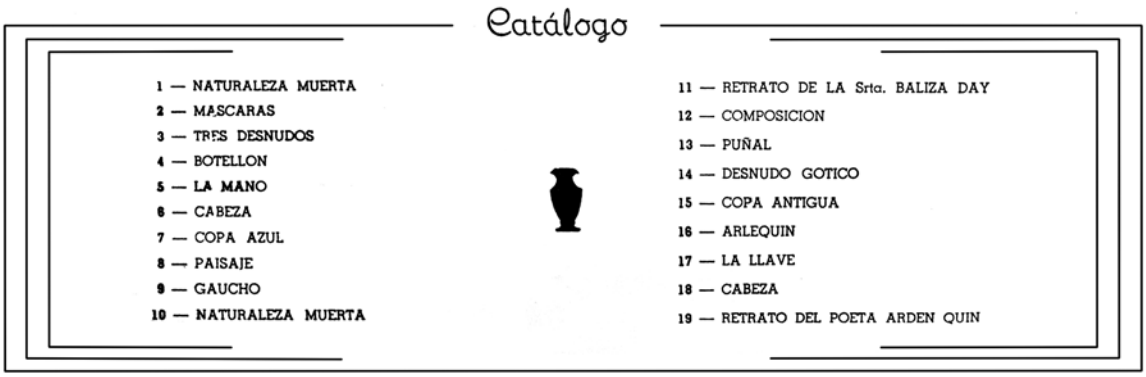
40 Patricia M. Artundo, "Otros papeles de trabajo: Pettoruti y el arte abstracto", en *Pettoruti y el arte abstracto 1914-1949*, Buenos Aires, Malba, 2011.

41 Rhod Rothfuss, *Exposición de pinturas*, Ateneo de Montevideo, diciembre de 1943. Archivo Ateneo de Montevideo.

42 Mario Sagradini, *Rhod Rothfuss (1920-1969). Vida y producción del artista uruguayo cofundador y teórico de Madí. Del marco estructurado al shaped canvas*, Universidad de Texas en Austin, 1999, mimeo.

6. Rhod Rothfuss, *Exposición de pinturas*, Ateneo de Montevideo, diciembre de 1943. Archivo Ateneo de Montevideo.

7. Exposición *Art Concret Invention chez Pichon-Rivière*, Buenos Aires, octubre de 1945. La obra *La llave* es la de la derecha sobre la pared.




*Trabajo en estudio* forma parte de ese núcleo de producciones, aunque no participó de la exposición, al menos con ese nombre. Analizando el listado del pequeño catálogo, podemos suponer que fueron exhibidas obras con marco recortado y cercanas al imaginario de Pettoruti a la luz de títulos como *Botellón*, *Copa azul*, *Copa antigua*. También por el listado del catálogo se sabe que *Arlequín* –hoy de la Colección Cisneros– participó de la exhibición. Otra pieza de las expuestas, titulada *La llave*, es posiblemente la que se presentó en la muestra privada realizada en la casa del psiquiatra Enrique Pichon-Rivière en 1945.[43] En el catálogo figuran otras obras, como *Gaucho* y *Retrato del poeta Arden Quin*, piezas desconocidas que despiertan nuestra curiosidad sobre el tipo de imagen y la técnica utilizada.

En la revista se publica otra obra que puede leerse como un marco recortado: *Invención Nº 2*, de Maldonado, reproducida en el anverso del índice; una pieza no figurativa y de clara inspiración automático-expresiva, en línea con la cubierta realizada por el mismo autor. A diferencia de *Trabajo en estudio*, de Rothfuss, es difícil entender esta obra como de estructura irregular, ya que aparenta ser una imagen concebida con formato rectangular y posteriormente cortada (la resolución del perímetro con curvas sucesivas sostiene la hipótesis del recorte posterior y de la imposibilidad de una construcción de marco recortado). Esta operación de adaptación podría haber sido efectuada tanto en la superficie pictórica como en la fotografía utilizada para la reproducción en la revista.[44] Esta pieza resulta interesante, ya que nos

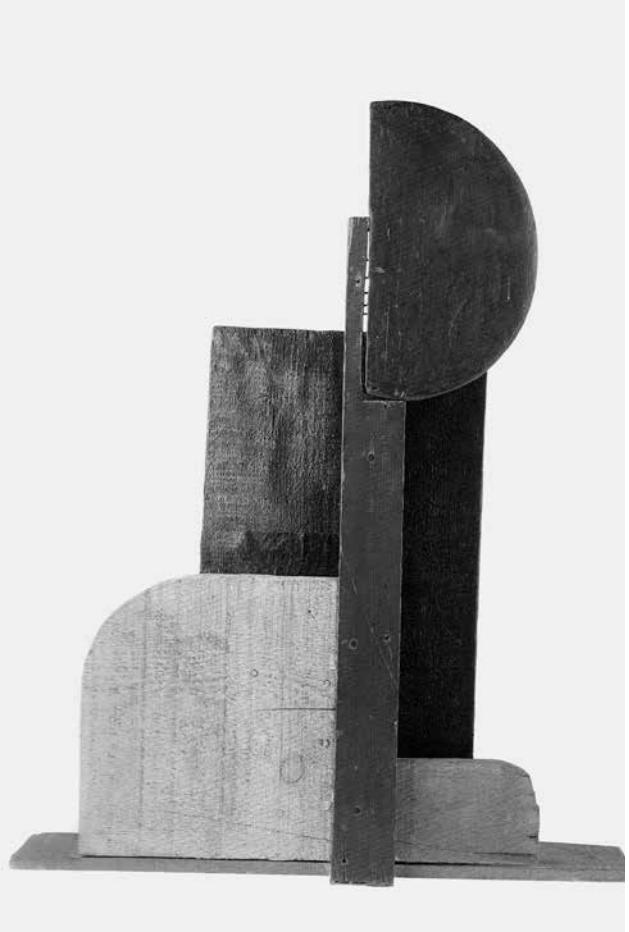
43 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, *The Argentine Avant-Garde 1944-1950*, Department of Art History and Theory, University of Essex, 1996, tesis doctoral, mimeo.

44 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, *The Argentine Avant-Garde 1944-1950*, *op. cit.*, cap. 2.

8. Fiesta de Carnaval, Círculo de Bellas Artes de Montevideo, febrero de 1940. Archivo Círculo de Bellas Artes de Montevideo.

9. Tablado de Carnaval, Montevideo, febrero de 1936. Centro de Fotografía de Montevideo.

10. Joaquín Torres-García, *Objet Plastique/Composition*, 1931-1934, óleo, tempera y clavos sobre madera, 52 x 42 x 9 cm, IVAM, Valencia.



permite pensar en la simultaneidad y coexistencia con las que se estaban produciendo estas reflexiones. En las mismas páginas en que Rothfuss publicaba "El marco: un problema de plástica actual" y su *Trabajo en estudio*, ejecutando los lineamientos básicos de esta teoría, *Invención N° 2*, de Maldonado, adoptaba de modo experimental y embrionario un formato irregular.

Volviendo a Rothfuss y su propuesta del marco recortado, es preciso considerar, más allá de la referencia a Pettoruti y la recepción cubofuturista en Buenos Aires, otras dos tradiciones pictóricas que devinieron clave en la constitución de este dispositivo: Guillermo Laborde y Joaquín Torres-García. En este sentido, entiendo que en la conceptualización del marco recortado se opera una síntesis de tradiciones de la pintura rioplatense.[45]

Laborde fue el profesor de Rothfuss en el Círculo de Bellas Artes de Montevideo; esta vinculación ha sido escasamente considerada para analizar su trayectoria y el surgimiento del marco recortado. Su pintura se enmarca en la Escuela Planista de Montevideo, línea cultivada desde los años 20 por numerosos artistas, como José Cúneo, Carmelo de Arzadun y Petrona Vieira, entre otros. Sin embargo, no solo se destacó en la pintura de caballete, sino

45 María Amalia García, "Rhod Rothfuss y el marco recortado. Síntesis de las tradiciones de la pintura rioplatense", presentación realizada en *Encounters, Utopias, and Experimentation from Pre-Columbian Tenochtitlán to Contemporary Buenos Aires*, Los Ángeles, Getty Center, noviembre de 2017, mimeo.

que además realizó pintura mural, decoraciones para fiestas, disfraces y carros alegóricos de carnaval y escenografías para teatro; además hizo diseño gráfico, tipografía, publicidades, entre otras actividades. También su labor docente es clave: fue reconocido y recordado como un profesor excelente que daba a sus alumnos las herramientas para desarrollar su propia personalidad. Según sabemos por el Libro de Registro de Estudiantes y Socios, Rothfuss fue estudiante del Círculo de Bellas Artes entre junio de 1938 y agosto de 1942 y tomó los cursos de Laborde hasta 1940, año de su imprevisto deceso.

Mario Sagradini señaló que Laborde incitaba a sus estudiantes a experimentar por fuera de la pintura de caballete y los estimulaba a desarrollar diferentes actividades, como decorados para fiestas, disfraces de carnaval, diseño de afiches, entre otras realizaciones visuales. Emulando a Laborde, Rothfuss hizo murales y decoraciones para fiestas para el Círculo de Bellas Artes, clubs y algunos sindicatos, y, aparentemente, ganó premios municipales por sus decoraciones de carnaval. Según Sagradini, Laborde les recomendaba a sus estudiantes el uso de esmaltes sintéticos y pinturas al duco –nombre comercial de la pintura nitrocelulósica– para dar más resistencia al cartón en las realizaciones al aire libre. Además de los esmaltes, para la confección de los tablados y los carruajes se utilizaba una gran variedad de materiales, como madera, chapa, alambre, cartón, yeso y papel maché.[46]

Esta diversidad de soluciones materiales y visuales, sin duda tuvo que haber permeado las obras de Rothfuss. En este sentido, acuerdo con Sagradini en que mucho de Guillermo Laborde y de las decoraciones del carnaval se coló en la producción invencionista. Me interesa pensar la génesis del marco recortado en ese ir y venir entre la pintura de caballete y los artefactos del carnaval, entre la genealogía del arte moderno y las celebraciones populares.

Torres-García es otra línea central en esta síntesis de tradiciones pictóricas rioplatenses. La resolución del dispositivo del marco recortado está cercana a los trabajos de Torres-García, si tenemos en cuenta la investigación que desde la década del 20 desarrolló con construcciones de madera. Las "maderas" son una extensa y original serie de construcciones de este material que el maestro uruguayo produjo desde los años 20 hasta el final de su carrera: precarios ensamblajes de materiales humildes –madera barata, clavos y pintura– condensan búsquedas clave de muchas poéticas de vanguardia.[47] Estas estructuras, aunque de marcada tridimensionalidad, enfatizan su planimetría emparentándose con la resolución del marco recortado.

Sin embargo, no solo el dispositivo del marco recortado puede vincularse a sus producciones, sino también otra pieza de Rothfuss publicada en *Arturo*: *Plástica en madera*. Tanto desde los materiales y procedimientos como desde el contenido semántico, esta pieza está muy cerca de producciones del maestro. El personaje de *Plástica en madera*, aparentemente realizado con elementos rectangulares de madera, plantea reminiscencias indígenas por el tocado y el bastón de mando y por la proximidad visual con las piezas de las antiguas culturas americanas. No solo la resolución material, sino también el universo no occidental, indígena, están cercanos al ideario de Torres-García.

Según se ha planteado, tanto como el surrealismo y la abstracción, la cuestión del primitivismo también era un tema clave en el contexto parisino de entreguerras. Entre 1928 y 1932 el arte antiguo de las Américas fue eminentemente visible en París: entre otras intervenciones como la ya mencionada revista *Documents*, son resaltables *Les Arts anciens de l'Amérique* en el Musée des Arts Décoratifs en 1928 –que fue la mayor exhibición dedicada a las culturas originarias de América– y la reorganización del Musée du Trocadéro entre 1929 y 1932 por Paul Rivet, su nuevo director. Las manifestaciones de las culturas antiguas fueron un núcleo central en los

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46 Mario Sagradini, *Rhod Rothfuss (1920-1969)…, op. cit.* Respecto de la investigación realizada en Montevideo, quiero agradecer especialmente a Gabriel Peluffo, Mario Sagradini, Gerardo Ruiz y Martín Vecino por la atenta colaboración con mis tareas.

47 Mari Carmen Ramírez, "A Constructed Precariousness. Abstraction against the Grain", en *Joaquín Torres-García. Constructing Abstraction with Wood*, Houston, The Menil Collection, 2010, pp. 32-34.

intereses de Torres-García tanto durante su estadía en Barcelona y en Nueva York como en París, a través de su amistad con Rivet.[48]

El arte moderno busca sus orígenes en un salto al pasado anterior a la constitución de lo artístico como producción autónoma; el quiebre con la historia encuentra en la fantasía de lo primitivo su piedra de toque. Desde finales del siglo XIX, el interés por el arte de las culturas antiguas ofrecía un camino no solo para superar las viejas convenciones académicas del arte, sino también para imponerse sobre los estilos de las vanguardias recientes.[49] Éste parece ser el contexto que Rothfuss utilizó para plantear el tema del marco recortado, citando precisamente a Paul Gauguin, considerado el padre del primitivismo moderno en su búsqueda de una nueva visión basada en las culturas tribales. "El arte primitivo procede del espíritu y amplía la naturaleza"; así el arte primitivo permitía librarse del "abominable error del naturalismo que comenzó con los griegos de Pericles", habilitando a la pintura a regresar a sus orígenes. Rothfuss retomaba estas palabras para sustentar su quiebre con la tradición, que, como se ha señalado, no solo era con la renacentista, sino también con las soluciones modernas que no resolvían el "problema de la creación plástica pura".[50] Así, el marco recortado podía leerse en línea con el primitivismo moderno que proponía Arden Quin: un dispositivo que cortaba la tradición del objeto pictórico y que, a su vez, prevalecería más que la revista, aunando a sus miembros más allá de sus disputas.

*Arturo* comenzó a desmembrarse casi al mismo tiempo de su aparición. Los diversos intereses, expectativas y creencias de sus participantes formaban una masa incandescente que no pudo mantenerse unida por mucho tiempo sin explotar. El fraccionamiento del grupo devino en diferencias teórico-estéticas y en disputas personales entre sus integrantes, quienes no lograron consensuar la aparición de un segundo número. La revista había unido aquello que parecía irreconciliable; reconectaba pasado y futuro, inconsciente y razón, invención y automatismo.

La búsqueda de nuevas soluciones fue su horizonte en ese mundo en crisis. Tradiciones vanguardistas y contactos culturales dan las claves de lectura para esta publicación: no resultan comprensibles las elecciones estéticas sin abordar las conexiones interpersonales; a su vez, estas relaciones también carecen de móvil si no se las comprende en un marco de intereses y búsquedas artísticas. Sus apuestas artísticas son como objetos devorados por el mar y devueltos por la marea: reconocibles, pero totalmente transformados. Efectivamente, fueron tanto las traducciones operadas por los otros sobre los desarrollos modernos como las lecturas y experiencias del propio recorrido las que regularon la producción de estos jóvenes artistas y poetas. *Arturo*, como un "gran torbellino de fuego originario", llevó a su núcleo la destrucción bélica europea y arrojó en las orillas rioplatenses la potencia múltiple de la vanguardia.

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48 Margit Rowell, "Torres-García and 'Primitivism' in Paris", en *Joaquín Torres-García. Constructing Abstraction with Wood*, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-126.

49 Gill Perry, "El primitivismo y 'lo moderno'", en Charles Harrison, Francis Frascina y Gill Perry, *Primitivismo, cubismo y abstracción. Los primeros años del siglo XX*, Madrid, Akal, 1998, pp. 8-9.

50 Rhod Rothfuss, "El marco: un problema de plástica actual", *op. cit.*

# DOCUMENTAR LA VANGUARDIA

Raúl Naón

La revista *Arturo* fue la publicación fundacional de las vanguardias de los años 40, pieza clave para comprender la cosmovisión y las propuestas de los movimientos de arte concreto, Arte Madí y Perceptismo en la Argentina. Producto de la interrelación de artistas y poetas, reunió a jóvenes promesas y a consagrados artistas internacionales.

La documentación nos acerca y revela datos que permiten una comprensión integral de estos movimientos. Con ese objetivo, hace más de quince años, emprendí la tarea de conformar un archivo documental alrededor de ellos. Me gustaría compartir, a propósito de esta publicación, la metodología de trabajo y algunas hipótesis que surgieron en estos años de pesquisas.

La meticulosa realización de *Arturo* fue parte de una acción deliberada e integral: revistas, panfletos, catálogos, volantes eran vehículos de difusión de sus ideas. En este sentido, *Arturo* no puede ser separada de la obra plástica de los artistas que participaron, ya que formaba parte del ideario de promoción de las vanguardias. La tarea de reconstruir la historia a través de documentación y registros requirió, como primera medida, la vinculación directa con los protagonistas. Tomás Maldonado, Raúl Lozza, Enio Iommi, Juan Melé y Lidy Prati, entre otros. Me intereso, además, en documentar el pasado, registrar su presente a través de una serie de entrevistas. Durante todo este tiempo los visité asiduamente, y de ello resultaron, en algunos casos, relaciones de complicidad y amistad. Recuerdo las reuniones con Lidy en el café Tolón, en la esquina de Santa Fe y Coronel Díaz; las visitas a Raúl Lozza en su casa del barrio de La Paternal; las innumerables conversaciones con Enio Iommi en su taller de San Telmo; el taller de Juan Melé. Los encuentros Buenos Aires-Milán con Tomás Maldonado, sus anécdotas y sus apreciaciones siempre renovadas sobre el pasado y el presente.

Todos estos intercambios sobre sus experiencias y recuerdos fueron revelando mitos y visiones que me llevaron a entender de una manera más integral sus historias, la historia de estos movimientos. El trabajo de detective devino en el de especialista, al conocer el invencionismo desde una dimensión subjetiva, a través de mis vínculos con los artistas, y objetiva, a través de los documentos y la construcción del archivo. Estas dos dimensiones de acercamiento se entrecruzan permanentemente, permitiendo nuevos interrogantes y algunas respuestas.

*Arturo* fue una revista lujosa para ser la primera publicación de un grupo de jóvenes proletarios. De allí el interrogante: ¿quién o quiénes la financiaron? Una posibilidad es que la familia de Lidy Prati, que se encontraba en una cómoda situación económica, fuera una de las aportantes. Otra hipótesis surge en relación con la figura de Gerardo Sorensen, vinculado al mundo de las finanzas. El hallazgo de una reveladora dedicatoria en un ejemplar de la revista me llevó a rastrear (a través de su hija) que Sorensen, amigo de los hermanos Maldonado-Bayley, habría sido otro de los importantes soportes económicos.

En lo que respecta a la tirada, podemos estimar que hubo 250 ejemplares. Una filtración de agua en un depósito habría sido la causante de la pérdida de gran parte de la edición, de ahí su rareza. Tengo ubicados alrededor de quince ejemplares: cinco están en bibliotecas y colecciones en Estados Unidos, tres en Europa, dos en Chile, uno en Uruguay y cuatro en la Argentina. Cinco tienen dedicatoria de época.

*Arturo* tiene algunas otras características interesantes de mencionar. Hojas de papel de seda proveniente del negocio de marroquinería de la familia de Gyula Kosice, estaban intercaladas a lo largo de la revista. Sospecho que solo los primeros ejemplares contaron con estas cuatro hojas, pues tuve en mis manos otros dos que carecían de estos folios. También quiero mencionar que Lidy Prati, única mujer del grupo, sostuvo hasta su muerte que la línea roja del Mondrian que ilustra la publicación fue pintada a mano por ella, convirtiéndolo en todo un gesto de artesanía y dedicación en la confección de la revista.

Libreros, anticuarios, ferias y remates fueron fuentes fundamentales para la obtención de material. Así fui desarrollando un modo propio de investigación. Fui generando una red de fieles proveedores, a quienes rindo homenaje por haber comprendido la importancia de mi tarea. Con el descubrimiento de estos materiales, se iba configurando un enorme rompecabezas de relaciones informales más o menos ocultas entre los

protagonistas de estos años 40. Lo paradójico de este *puzzle* es que no tiene forma definida ni cantidad de piezas determinada, sino que se va conformando a medida que la investigación avanza. En este sentido, es de vital importancia la íntima vinculación que tiene este tipo de coleccionismo con los investigadores y académicos, con quienes hemos compartido, además de pasión por estos temas, hipótesis, datos y curiosidades. En este sentido, mi profundo agradecimiento a Marita García y Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, amistad surgida de este maravilloso viaje a través de los documentos.

Para concluir, me gustaría mencionar que la motivación de estas palabras se origina en las ganas de homenajear el sistema colaborativo que permitió hacer este facsímil, un trabajo de diálogo y aprendizaje entre investigadores, libreros, galeristas, instituciones, coleccionistas, detectives, *amateurs*, artistas, curadores, entre otros/as. Espero que compartir parte de este recorrido contribuya a visibilizar las redes, a sistematizarlas y, sobre todo, a expandirlas.

# EL FACSÍMIL DE LA REVISTA *ARTURO*, UNA BREVE HISTORIA

María Amalia García

Este facsímil de la revista *Arturo* se propone facilitar el acceso a la publicación considerando su dimensión material. Su tirada original fue de 250 ejemplares, y los existentes actualmente se encuentran en su totalidad en manos de coleccionistas privados o en instituciones en el exterior. No hay bibliotecas públicas en la Argentina que cuenten con un original de *Arturo*. Recientemente, archivos en formato PDF de la revista han sido incorporados a los portales web de Espigas (TareaIIPC, UNSAM / Fundación) y del Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Cultura de Izquierdas (CeDInCI, UNSAM), facilitando su consulta.[1] Sin embargo, la dimensión material de la publicación, así como la experiencia de lectura y la sintaxis de sus páginas, resultan inaccesibles a través de la versión digital. En este sentido, este facsímil se propone reponer la revista en su aspecto físico y garantizar la consulta en reservorios públicos nacionales e internacionales. Asimismo, el facsímil busca promover el conocimiento de revistas culturales y ampliar y complejizar el horizonte de indagación en torno a la abstracción argentina y latinoamericana.

Este facsímil se presenta como una fidedigna reproducción de la revista, tal cual ha sido publicada originalmente, aunque conforme a las normas y tecnologías actuales. Esto es: respetando al máximo posible la materialidad original, considerando el tipo de papel, los separadores de papel transparente, los tonos de las tintas de impresión, el tamaño, así como el sistema de pegado de las imágenes. Las fotografías de las páginas fueron tomadas de un ejemplar original de *Arturo* –propiedad de Raúl Naón– en perfecto estado, y se contrastaron con otros ejemplares. Entendemos que la reconstrucción objetiva de la revista en términos materiales es central para su apreciación y estudio.

Con anterioridad a la presente, se han realizado dos ediciones facsimilares de *Arturo*. La primera fue publicada en 1994 por el Centre for the Study of the Hispanic Avant-Garde de la University of Aberdeen (Escocia), con motivo de los 50 años de aparición de la revista, bajo la coordinación general de Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro. La edición estaba acompañada por un cuadernillo con textos de Pérez-Barreiro y Derek Harris sobre la vanguardia artístico-literaria en la Argentina. Unos meses después de su aparición, el facsímil editado por el Centre for the Study of the Hispanic Avant-Garde fue objeto de una demanda por un conflicto legal de derechos de autor (*copyright*) que obligó a retirar los ejemplares de circulación.[2] Esta acción, acontecida a mediados de los años 90, hacía eco de los debates y conflictos que habían seguido a la aparición de *Arturo*. La disputa por la oficialidad de la memoria ha sido una marca del invencionismo porteño; una necesidad de fijar las narraciones en torno de los sucesos y grupos fue una constante entre los protagonistas y también entre muchos de sus seguidores. La impugnación de este facsímil socavó aún más el acceso a la publicación, aunque fue posible consultarlo en algunas bibliotecas en Buenos Aires. Si bien dicho facsímil mantiene algunas distancias con la revista original, fue, sin duda, un material clave para quienes nos iniciamos en el estudio de estos grupos a finales del siglo XX.

La otra edición facsimilar ha sido publicada por la Biblioteca Nacional (Argentina) en 2014 para conmemorar los 70 años de la revista. Fue parte de una importante colección de facsímiles lanzada por esta institución, que permitió un acceso ampliado a materiales inaccesibles o de circulación acotada. Esta nueva publicación de *Arturo* no fue hecha a partir de un ejemplar original, sino del facsímil realizado por el Centre for the Study of the Hispanic Avant-Garde. Esta decisión editorial de la Biblioteca Nacional es por demás elocuente respecto de la falta de acceso a la revista original. Su publicación se propuso como una edición económica y de gran circulación, impresa en blanco y negro y en papel obra; por ende, la emblemática cubierta roja no fue reproducida fielmente. Los ejemplares están actualmente casi agotados,

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1 Tanto revistasdeartelatinoamericano.org, gestionada por Espigas, como americalee.cedinci.org, administrada por CeDinCi, incluyen digitalizaciones de revistas de arte y estudios críticos.

2 Derek Harris, "La edición de *Arturo*", *La Maga*, Buenos Aires, 11 de octubre de 1995, p. 41. Véase también Archivo Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, Centro Espigas - Fundación Espigas.

lo que revela el interés de la población argentina e internacional por la revista *Arturo*.

En suma, esperamos que esta cuidada edición suscite el interés por la dimensión material y conceptual de *Arturo* en diversos sectores de la población afines a cuestiones culturales y que contribuya a una difusión profunda del arte argentino y latinoamericano, promoviendo nuevas investigaciones académicas y artísticas.

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# ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

Accessibility, investigation, preservation and collaboration are the four core aims that define Espigas' mission, and these pillars also provide the underpinning for this facsimile reproduction of *Arturo* magazine. Every one of these objectives justifies the production of a print edition at a moment when reproduction practices are monopolized by digital technology.

In the first place, making a facsimile of *Arturo* allows access to some aspects of the magazine's physical dimension that remain intangible in reproductions that circulate via Internet. Aspects such as different types of paper, the size and proportion of its pages, or the texture of inks and their process of wear are difficult to reconstruct for those who have never had the opportunity to access an example of the 1944 edition. Similarly, the images cut and pasted into its pages appeal to the material nature of the reproductions, which testify not only to the era's printing technologies, but also to the central importance of their dimension as objects in a publication that obligates us to manipulate its pages as if they were "real elements in real space". In this sense, *Arturo*'s material aspect was far from being a secondary characteristic, and the edition that we present here handles it with the same central significance that it had when it was first produced in 1944.

Secondly, the relevance of research complements the increase in accessibility. This facsimile includes work by María Amalia García that contributes an original approach to the magazine by way of novel hypotheses. As opposed to confining possible readings, her text refers to and revises an extensive list of investigators who have provided new perspectives on *Arturo* in recent years. In addition to her work, Raúl Naón presents an account that serves in order to think simultaneously about historiographic readings and the dynamics of collecting. Likewise, the decision to include the first complete translation of the magazine will undoubtedly favor wider distribution of its content, to reach beyond the boundaries of Spanish-speaking countries and shed light on previously unexplored networks of exchange.

Thirdly, the facsimile also contributes to the task of conservation, another of the fundamental pillars at Espigas. In the case of documents where available copies are scarce, a facsimile can prevent the deterioration of existing examples from the original edition by avoiding their manipulation. For example, in a context where curatorial practice increasingly demands that documents be exhibited, facsimiles can replace historical editions and so eliminate the risks involved in every exhibition.

Finally, this facsimile is based on a joint effort that began in 2009 and has come to fruition thanks to the generous collaboration of different investigators and institutions. I would especially like to thank Dr. María Amalia García and Raúl Naón for their work in undertaking the production of this publication. This project would not have been possible without their tenacity and untiring labor. I would also like to underscore the importance of Dr. Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro's donation of the documentation related to the 1994 facsimile edition, which will be available for consultation at Espigas headquarters.

This project would surely never have become a reality without collaboration between public and private sectors. Support from the City of Buenos Aires government has been essential in this regard, through its system of patronage (Mecenazgo), a strategic mechanism for cultural funding. Finally, my special thanks to the authorities and teams working at Fundación Espigas and the Centro de Estudios Espigas, part of Tarea - Instituto de Investigaciones sobre el Patrimonio Cultural, at the Universidad Nacional de San Martín.

**Dr. Agustín R. Díez Fischer**
Director
Centro de Estudios Espigas
Tarea-IIPC / Universidad Nacional de San Martín

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This facsimile is the final result of a long process. It began in 2009 with impetus by María Amalia García and Raúl Naón, whose intention was to put inaccessible material, as is *Arturo* magazine, into wider circulation. Fundación Espigas, under Director Mauro Herlitzka, welcomed the idea with great enthusiasm, and work began with specialist consultant Patricia M. Artundo, in charge of the Foundation's special projects. We are deeply grateful to the team at Fundación Espigas for their support and especially to Mauro Herlitzka, whose actions were crucial in achieving the authorization of reproduction rights. Our sincere appreciation also goes to Patricia Artundo for her guidance on the project's overall parameters, and to Marina Baron Supervielle, for its executive coordination.

The facsimile finally materialized at the moment when the institution was entering a new phase, constituted as Centro de Estudios Espigas – Fundación Espigas, as part of the Instituto para la Investigación del Patrimonio Cultural (Tarea-IIPC) at the Universidad Nacional de San Martín. We give special thanks to its Director, Agustín Díez Fischer, for his commitment and generosity; and also to Luisa Tomatti for her help in accomplishing the task. We would similarly like to express our thanks to the authorities at Tarea-IIPC and the University for giving the project continuity.

During this entire process, there have been people who were essential to bringing the facsimile to fruition: first of all we would like to thank Marius Riveiro Villar and Carlos Caturini from Mariusestudio, who embraced the project from the very start with creativity and professionalism; equally to Carlos Gaudin and Hernán Salas from Talleres Trama, for his commitment in tackling the challenges of the task. Oscar Balducci handled the photographic production and he is present in our fondest memories. Our appreciation also goes to Jane Brodie, Wendy Gosselin and Tamara Stuby for translating and to Alicia Di Stasio and Mario Valledor for correcting the texts.

We thank the artists and poets, their relatives and rights holders for their permission to reproduce images for this edition. We also thank Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, editor of the first facsimile of *Arturo*, for his encouragement during all these years. Similarly, we would like to thank the many friends and colleagues who have accompanied us throughout this process: our sincere appreciation to Gabriela and Hugo Francone, Gabriela Comte, Gênese Andrade, Valeria Balut and Silvia Dolinko.

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**M.A.G. - R.N.**

# *ARTURO* MAGAZINE AND THE MANIFOLD POWER OF THE AVANT-GARDE

María Amalia García

*This grand maelstrom of ancient fire and living springs*
*This body of wind on its purest horizon*
*Does not fall from its peak into drama without a precise reason.*

**Vicente Huidobro**, "Una mujer baila sus sueños" (A Woman Dances Her Dreams), *Arturo*, 1944

*Arturo* magazine is a legend: a single issue, launched in Buenos Aires in the summer of 1944 has proven to have been a monumental step in Argentinean art's process of transformation and its projection in the Latin American panorama overall. Its unique appearance—the result of a group of young artists and poets' efforts—and the generative nature of its proposals constituted an unprecedented communion of ideas and figures which, along with the hand-crafted nature of its material form all reaffirm its mythical character. The magazine represents an embryonic moment; it agglutinated concepts that were churning in the air, whose potency, in turn, triggered multiple interventions.

Two hundred and fifty was—apparently—the number of copies of *Arturo* produced. This limited print run undoubtedly contributed to reinforce the myth, given that its circulation was quite restricted. In light of this small number, there are very few copies still in existence today, and they are in the hands of private collectors or institutions abroad. This facsimile edition proposes to facilitate access to the publication, giving due consideration to its physical dimension. While other facsimiles do exist, to which I will refer briefly in a separate text, this one aspires to be a faithful reproduction of the magazine, carried out with the greatest respect possible for its original appearance.

In recent years, the magazine has been approached from different perspectives, enabling renewed points of view concerning the object. While the plastic arts had usually been the focal point of critiques, more recently its poetry has also received the attention it deserves. The prelude to *Arturo*'s appearance and the ties its editors and collaborators maintained with different aesthetic-political lines have also been the subject of study (see bibliography). The text that follows proposes to explore the motives behind the magazine, its points of reference and the stakes it wagered, in addition to situating its importance for narratives of modern art with respect to the Latin American panorama.

*Arturo. Revista de artes abstractas* (Arturo. Magazine of the Abstract Arts) established an avant-garde project in the midst of Buenos Aires' cultural field, where the selection of ideas was elaborated on the basis of a regional scope. In addition to the members of the editorial group—Carmelo Arden Quin, Edgar Bayley, Gyula Kosice[1] and Rhod Rothfuss—it also included collaborations from artists and poets from other latitudes. During the Second World War, amidst intersecting tensions between nationalisms and internationalisms, the magazine delineated its area of representation within the map of South America. As a result, the logic present in *Arturo* was the result of convergence between aesthetic choices and artistic-intellectual contacts: by way of Latin America's regional connections, the magazine's proposal re-elaborated international art debates from the period between the Wars.[2]

Foreignness was one of the earmarks of the magazine: although its editors and closest collaborators were residing in the Buenos Aires area and frequented its bars, they came from very different backgrounds. Kosice was Hungarian, having arrived in Argentina when he was 4 years old; Rothfuss was from Montevideo; Arden Quin was born on the border between Uruguay and Brazil; the Maldonado-Bayley brothers were the only natives to Buenos Aires, and Lidy Prati—married at the time to Maldonado—was from the province of Chaco. (It appears to have been Prati who, with help from her family, dedicated to the cotton industry, financed part of the magazine.)[3] In 1944 these artists and poets were relatively young: the

1 In the magazine, Ardén Quin and Kósice appear with accents; given that these artists desisted the use of an accent, it has not been used in the graphic presentation of this text.
2 María Amalia García, *El arte abstracto. Intercambios culturales entre Argentina y Brasil*, Buenos Aires, Siglo XXI, 2011, p. 26.
3 Lidy Prati, in an interview with Carla Bertone; "Muchachas de vanguardia", ramona, nº 62, Buenos Aires, July 2006, p. 67. See also María Amalia García, "Lidy Prati y su instancia diferencial en la unidad del arte concreto", in Yente-Prati, Buenos Aires, Malba - Museo

oldest was Carmelo Arden Quin, at 31, and the youngest, at 20, was Kosice.

Aside from joining its new proponents together, the publication also united "recognized members of the avant-garde" who had played an active role in aesthetic renovations during the early decades of the 20th century: Joaquín Torres-García, Vicente Huidobro, Murilo Mendes and Maria Helena Vieira da Silva. These collaborators were of vital importance to the reading and re-appropriation of three decades of European avant-garde developments carried out in the magazine, since they operated as active translators of said processes. They also reproduced texts by Vassily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian.

The red cover design by Tomás Maldonado was the publication's distinctive hallmark, and it came to constitute the icon of abstract Argentinean art's development due to its prolific subsequent circulation in books, catalogs and exhibitions. It was incandescent lava, uniting the ideas that emerged in the magazine. Its white linear strokes, expressive and interrupted, respond in part to the technical characteristics of a linoleum cut. Erratic paths, like rivers feeding into one another, serve as a metaphor for the publication's routes and connections.

*Arturo*, the magazine par excellence of Argentina' abstract avant-garde, has no manifesto: its editors didn't manage to come to agreement on a common text, although the four did express their basis for the new aesthetic. The inside of the front and back covers can be considered group interventions by the editors; in these spaces the magazine's syntax gives way to a collective enunciation. The dictionary entries for the terms "inventar" (invent) and "invención" (invention) figure on the inside of the front cover, emulating the Surrealists' interest in dictionaries. At the foot of the page, printed in green, is the magazine's motto: "INVENCIÓN contra AUTOMATISMO" (INVENTION over AUTOMATISM). The confrontation between the "expressionist" cover by Maldonado and the declaration "INVENTION over AUTOMATISM" reveals the project's broad horizons. On the inside of the back cover, three excerpts that remit (almost directly) to texts by Arden Quin, Bayley and Kosice appear. The very action of turning the page activates the tensions gestated during its publication. Between the front and back of a single page, the different perceptions and elaborations in regard to the contemporary world being presented by a group of young people from Buenos Aires during the Second World War were put in play.

Readings of the tension between the cover and its reverse have been pointed to in relation to the organization of *Arturo*'s contents; signaling ambiguities and contradictions in the magazine represent a cliché in critical comments on it.[4] Analyzed in retrospect, this relationship effectively seems somewhat maladjusted as compared to the conceptual tenets maintained later by the inventionist avant-garde: here I am referring to the Madí, Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención and Perceptismo groups, devoted to a greater or lesser extent to constructive processes, mathematical and scientific approaches and a commitment to the future.

The aim of this article is to focus precisely on these aspects in tension—the uncertain definitions, inaccessible ideas and paradoxical assertions—given that these interstices and cores of significance can reveal the meanings that traversed the publication as a whole. It is in these areas that are less complete or, to put it in a better way, where important statements are in opposition to one another, that the magazine exposes its potential; these faults are the cracks through which its debates can be overheard, embodying the diverse spirits that inhabit its pages. On the one hand, the text investigates the tensions that are present in definitions of Abstraction and Surrealism, as well as the collaborators' affiliations in relation to these poetics. On the other hand, the publications' readings of the "primitive" are examined. I understand that these focal points go against the grain of the most conventional interpretations of both the magazine and the

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de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, 2009.

4 Among the earliest references, see Wolf Roitman, "Ubicación definitiva de Vicente Huidobro", Poesía Buenos Aires, nº 7, Autumn 1952, p. 2; Jorge B. Rivera, Madí y la vanguardia argentina, Buenos Aires, Paidós, 1976, p. 21 and Nelly Perazzo, El Arte Concreto en la Argentina, Buenos Aires, Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, 1983, p. 56.

groups that followed after it. While on other occasions the manner in which *Arturo* re-elaborated international art debates from the period between the Wars by way of regional connections in Latin America was studied,[5] the proposal now is to revise neglected readings in order to reveal key debates that were relevant to its publication.

Juxtapositions of meaning recur throughout the magazine as a result of its variety of perspectives, and its name is by no means an exception. Arcturus (Arturo in Spanish), or the guardian of the bear (from the ancient Greek), is the name of one of the brightest stars in the northern hemisphere's Boötes constellation.[6] The choice of name has also been associated with paying homage to Arthur Rimbaud.[7] Beneath this star, *Arturo* would seem to have glimpsed the allure of its own wake. An exaltation of the human is also a fundamental aspect of its conceptual platform, and this can be seen represented in the magazine's title. From correspondence prior to the publication's appearance between Arden Quin and Maria Helena Vieira da Silva (and her husband, Arpad Szenes), we know that the name was completed then with the initials "X2", which can be thought of as having reinforced the stellar nature of the name and its inter-textual aspect with science fiction, but in the end, the suffix disappeared.[8] In that same letter, Arden Quin outlined the publication, evidencing the plurality of positions covered

> Here in Buenos Aires, I am putting out an avant-garde magazine with Torres-García. The first issue will come out early next year. The orientation of Arturo X2 (that is its name) will be of complete academic, romantic and expressionistic abstention and it accepts Surrealism, Torres-García's Constructivism and that of other modern avant-garde schools. In a word, there will be certain eclecticism; but only the trends that fall within the modern and the latest in art.[9] [see ill. 1]

In light of Arden Quin's letter, it is clear that the editors were aware that the proposal involved "certain eclecticism". Nevertheless, the magazine needed to distinguish itself from other conceptual stances; in keeping with the letter quoted above, the publication understood itself to be absolutely determined to do without academic, romantic or expressionistic affiliations. The project was based on what its editors denominated "Inventionism". This was proposed as a new mode of conceptual approach to aesthetic practice that prioritized autonomy and inventive values in detriment of descriptive qualities. In this sense, intellective capacities were emphasized for artistic invention. In counterpoint, automatism represented the antithesis of what seems to have defined the publication: it was technically and aesthetically associated with Surrealism and proposed freedom and letting the unconscious flow unhindered as essential creative elements and procedures.

Nevertheless, an attentive reading of the editors' texts and of the article Torres-García published ("Respecto a una futura creación literaria", On a Future Literary Creation) would indicate that automatism was considered to be an important strategy in *Arturo*, given that it enabled the

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5 María Amalia García, *El arte abstracto. Intercambios culturales entre Argentina y Brasil*, *op. cit*.

6 Gyula Kosice, "A partir de la revista Arturo", *La Nación*, Buenos Aires, October 1, 1989, section 4, p. 6. It is interesting to point out that when Gyula Kosice authorized Fundación Espigas to produce the facsimile in 2010, he requested that the following paragraph be included in the critical text, reproduced in its entirety: "Mid-way through the year 1943, I had the need to search for the word Art in a Real Academia Española (Royal Spanish Academy) dictionary. On the opposite page, I read the word Arturo, which in Greek means Arktouros, arktos: a bear and a guard: custodian, star of the first magnitude in the Boötes constellation. It is one of the twenty brightest stars in the universe. In the year 1944, when it came to giving a name to Arturo magazine, I proposed said name and it was accepted." See Gyula Kosice's letter giving Fundación Espigas authorization to produce the facsimile of *Arturo* magazine, January 21, 2010, Fundación Espigas. See also Gyula Kosice, e-mail to Mauro Herlitzka, July 12, 2010, Fundación Espigas.

7 Shelley Goodman, *Carmelo Arden Quin… When Art Jumped Out of its Cage*, Dallas, Madí Museum, 2004, p. 86.

8 In some bibliographies it appears as K2; however, in letters from that period it figured as X2. See Shelley Goodman, *Carmelo Arden Quin…*, *op. cit*., p. 90.

9 Carmelo Arden Quin, letter to Maria Helena Vieira da Silva and Arpad Szenes, Buenos Aires, November 6, 1943. Centro de Documentação, Fundação Arpad Szenes - Vieira da Silva, Lisbon. I thank Sandra Santos, from said Foundation, for facilitating access to this documentation.

liberation of expressive procedures and an aperture toward new dimensions; however, a second moment then took prevalence: invention. Even while many of the precepts of Surrealism were accepted, the point where disagreement arose between these two proposals was in how the method was to be executed. If, by way of automatism production could be achieved removed from censorship and with complete indifference with regard to the result, invention, on the other hand, suggested the primacy of the end, that is to say, the concept of invention purported to surpass automatism. Invention was precise, scientific and delimited, and it emerged through an intellectual process that reorganized that other creative process.[10] "Invention over Automatism" then, involved recognition of its superiority over surrealist technique and the proposition of a new state of aesthetic creation.[11] In short, an ongoing tug-of-war between unconscious creation and rationalist construction made up the very core of Buenos Aires' inventionist theory and practice.[12]

Vicente Huidobro's Creationism has also been mentioned as an immediate predecessor to Inventionism, given that it operates with the concept of the autonomous, non-referential image, an image that creates rather than translating. In fact, Huidobro, the initiator of the Latin American avant-garde, was the publication's poet guide: quoted by Bayley and Rothfuss in both texts published in the magazine, he was recognized as the one who established the basis for the conception of a new aesthetic.[13] Alejandro Crispiani has indicated that the concept of invention had also been used since the '30s by Torres-García, although without the same connotations that it would acquire in the Buenos Aires magazine.[14] Torres-García's figure was a beacon for the publication in terms of articulating poetic inscriptions and interpersonal contacts; as Cristina Rossi has demonstrated, the connection with Huidobro was made by way of the Uruguayan master.[15]

Constructivism, Creationism and Surrealism: I have touched on some of the magazine's most important points of reference. Another important component of *Arturo* that must be mentioned is Primitivism. In his text, Arden Quin characterized invention as a phase that surpasses humanity's previous stages of creativity. Invention corresponded to a particular state of human evolution conceived of from a Marxist perspective, and it implied bringing the previous order to a close and an absolutely new beginning.

> In both economics and art—and in other ideologies as well—we are experiencing a period of thesis, a primitive period, a re-beginning, but under scientific norms and structures [...] Thus, expression, which in art has been the foundation of natural Primitivism, has been replaced by INVENTION in modern, scientific Primitivism.[16]

Involved in Primitivism, then, was a social commitment to transformation, a return to primary origins, but in an updated sense: Arden Quin justified this return with the Hegelian proposition of

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10 María Amalia García, *El arte abstracto. Intercambios culturales entre Argentina y Brasil*, *op. cit.*

11 Carmelo Arden Quin, s/t ["Son las condiciones materiales..."], *Arturo*, Buenos Aires, 1944, s/p.

12 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, "Buenos Aires: rompiendo el marco", in Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro (cur.), *The Geometry of Hope. Latin American Abstract Art from the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection*, Austin, The Blanton Museum - University of Texas at Austin, 2007, p. 232.

13 Alejandro Crispiani has pointed out a fundamental dissidence between Huidobro's Creationism and Inventionism, given that for the Chilean writer, creation is essentially an act of the individual, a poet is a "small God" and his or her creation is always personal. On the contrary, Inventionism purports to produce collective artworks, where each individual invention is linked to those by others. Alejandro Crispiani, *Objetos para transformar el mundo. Trayectorias del arte concreto-invención. Argentina y Chile, 1940-1970*, Bernal, Universidad Nacional de Quilmes/Prometeo, 2011, p. 66. See also Derek Harris, "Arturo and the Literary Avant-Garde", in *The Place of Arturo in the Argentinian Avant-Garde*, Aberdeen, University of Aberdeen, Centre for the Study of the Hispanic Avant-Garde, 1994, pp. 1-7; Ornela Barisone, *Experimentos poéticos opacos. Biopsias malditas: del invencionismo argentino a la poesía visual (1944-1969)*, Buenos Aires, Corregidor, 2017, pp. 120-122.

14 Alejandro Crispiani, *Objetos para transformar el mundo...*, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

15 Cristina Rossi, *La revista Arturo en su tiempo inaugural*, Buenos Aires, Fundación Espigas, 2018. http://revistasdeartelatinoamericano.org/items/show/57 (27.03.2018).

16 Carmelo Arden Quin, s/t ["Son las condiciones materiales..."], *op. cit.*

history advancing in an ascending spiral. While primitivism—which implied liberation and expression of instincts—corresponded to automatism, this new moment of scientific primitivism manifested itself in invention. It is interesting to highlight the fact that in addition to automatism, primitivism was also a key ingredient of Surrealism, which, as mentioned previously, was one of the founding poetics in the magazine's recovery of three decades of avant-garde genealogy. The overall critique of middle-class rationale on the basis of the "marvelous", in other words, the irrational, fantastic and dream-like, is combined with a fascination for the primitive. This line of thought was sustained primarily by Georges Bataille in *Documents* magazine.[17]

The fluidity between Surrealism and Abstraction references as well as allusions to the primitive were eluded in analyses of the magazine; aside from a few exceptions,[18] they were left to one side on account of their opacity compared to later explorations undertaken by the artists involved. Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that there was an important context for these debates on the European scene—fundamentally in the Parisian milieu—and as a result, they met with an immediate echo on our shores.

Buenos Aires' cultural panorama during the '30s and '40s was determined by international events marking the advance of totalitarian regimes. The consolidation of Stalin's regime, the Nazi-fascist experience, the Spanish Civil War, the rise of Franco and the Second World War were topics that permeated political and cultural discourse, generating new commitments. The presence of exiles from different latitudes intensified these debates on the local scene. This healthy number of artists and intellectuals became key informants in order to comprehend what took place during the interwar period in Europe: as Tomás Maldonado recalls: "out of the tattered cardboard suitcases of these men in flight emerged documents that fascinated us, and from them we could obtain precious information about radical cultural changes that had unexpectedly come about in Europe between the two wars".[19] For the editors of *Arturo*, it was essential to recover this baggage, in order to advance further in their quests.

It is precisely due to these ties that the idea of pure image and different abstract proposals did not result unfamiliar to the Buenos Aires scene. Almost simultaneously with the presentation of *Arturo*, in February of 1944 *Correo Literario* magazine, published by Spanish exiles, rendered homage to Piet Mondrian on the occasion of his death.[20] There were numerous figures who pursued the path of abstraction in Argentina: Emilio Pettoruti, Juan Del Prete, Yente (Eugenia Crenovich) and Lucio Fontana, among others. Discussion of their approaches exceeds the scope of this text, but keeping these precedents in mind better enables consideration of the reasons why the editors of *Arturo*—who recognized different regional and international paternities—would negate what happened on a local scale. Pettoruti was mentioned in a pejorative manner in the text by Rhod Rothfuss while Del Prete and Fontana were omitted by *Arturo*'s editors, in spite of being figures of reference in line with the magazine's choices. One possible explanation—in addition to the radical spirit that they sought to maintain, albeit without any clear definition—is that the dispute over the new obliged them to take a stance, at least in vernacular circuits, as the tendency's only precursors and representatives.

Returning to the tension between Abstraction and Surrealism, it is imperative that the debate be situated in the French context between the wars, given that many artists were pivoting between different strains of each of these poetic lines at that

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17 Rosalind Krauss, *La originalidad de la vanguardia y otros mitos modernos*, Madrid, Alianza, 1996, pp. 71-72; Martin Jay, *Ojos abatidos. La denigración de la visión en el pensamiento francés del siglo XX*, Madrid, Akal, 2007, p. 174.

18 Among the exceptions, I particularly highlight the early work by Graciela de Sola, *Proyecciones del surrealismo en la literatura argentina*, Buenos Aires, Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1967, p. 73.

19 Giacinto Di Pietrantonio, "Entrevista", in Tomás Maldonado, *Lo real y lo virtual*, Barcelona, Gedisa, 1994, p. 211.

20 Piet Mondrian, "El arte abstracto" and "Nuevas", Correo Literario, nº 7, Buenos Aires, February 15, 1944, pp. 5 and 1-2, respectively. Silvia Dolinko, "El rescate de una cultura 'universal'. Discursos programáticos y selecciones plásticas en Correo Literario", in Patricia M. Artundo (ed.), Arte en revistas. Publicaciones culturales en la Argentina 1900-1950, Rosario, Beatriz Viterbo, 2008, pp. 131-165.

time.[21] In turn, both of these proposals were auguring future transformations that generated strong levels of commitment in the midst of the interwar political situation. Arden Quin makes an explicit reference to this process in his text:

> Nobody has employed dialectical materialism to understand that the Paris School was an emotional and ideological response to a total transformation of the world. Nobody has seen that the phenomenon of modern art and its abstractions is part of the economic and social liquidation of the capitalist order and the creation of a new society governed by socialist forms of production.[22]

The primary movers of abstract-constructivist experiences came from different latitudes to converge in Paris during the '20s. The people who met there included Vassily Kandinsky, Theo van Doesburg, Piet Mondrian, Hans Arp, Sophie Taeuber-Arp, Georges Vantongerloo, Natalia Goncharova, Mikhail Larionov and Antoine Pevsner, among others. The idea of forming a group with an anti-Surrealism orientation emerged among those with ties to Joaquín Torres-García—who had been in the French capital since 1926—along with Michel Seuphor, Piet Mondrian and Theo van Doesburg; the group was known as Cercle et Carré, and it promoted non-figurative proposals.[23] Although the idea had been to create a united front against Surrealism and to foment communication between abstract-geometric artists, Cercle et Carré adopted a pluralistic attitude with respect to different interpretations of abstraction (which led Van Doesburg to leave the group). In this sense, it is also important to look at Cercle et Carré's opposition to Surrealism in relative terms, considering that artists like Hans Arp or Joaquín Torres-García oscillated between both tendencies, working with a cross between elements from both traditions.[24]

As mentioned previously, Torres-García is a key figure in order to comprehend how the course of these poetic inscriptions and interpersonal contacts was articulated, and so understand why the magazine can be considered to be a regional avant-garde proposal.[25] The role he played in Europe and then in Montevideo established him as a figure of reference for the broader Río de la Plata area. In addition to collaborating with *Arturo* with three pieces published—"Con respecto a una futura creación literaria" (On a Future Literary Creation), "Divertimento" (Amusement) and a drawing from 1932—a contribution from his son, Augusto, was also included.

At that point Montevideo had become a center of artistic pilgrimage: artists crossed over to the opposite shore of the wide Río de la Plata to follow his teachings. In the agendas where Torres-García made note of his visitors, a mention appears of "Rothfuss and his disciples", which was how the master defined the group of *Arturo*'s members.[26] Torres-García had a similarly important place on the Buenos Aires scene following his return from Europe by way of his newspaper columns in *La Nación* and other publications that informed on the progress of modern art and its main figures, Mondrian, Van Doesburg and Arp, among others.[27]

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21 See David Batchelor, "'Esta libertad, este orden': el arte en Francia después de la Primera Guerra Mundial", and Paul Wood, "Realismo y realidades", in Briony Fer, David Batchelor, Paul Wood, *Realismo, racionalismo, surrealismo. El arte de entreguerras (1914-1945)*, Madrid, Akal, 1999, p. 81.

22 Carmelo Arden Quin, s/t ["Son las condiciones materiales..."], *op. cit.*

23 Gladis Fabre (cur.), *París 1930. Arte abstracto, arte concreto, Cercle et Carré*, Valencia, IVAM, 1990, pp. 31-34.

24 Regarding this, Juan Fló has pointed out that "in so far as anti-Surrealism, which Torres shared to a certain extent, was what had initially instigated the group's formation, this association dissimulates that Torres had greater proximity to the exaltation of the unconscious and the supra-aesthetic concept of art that pertained to Surrealism than he did to the technical-machinist tendency or the aesthetic formalism of the majority of Cercle et Carré's members". For this author, Torres-García's anti-Surrealism was a circumstantial option. Juan Fló, Torres-García en (y desde) Montevideo, Montevideo, Arca, 1991, p. 15.

25 María Amalia García, *El arte abstracto. Intercambios culturales entre Argentina y Brasil*, *op. cit.*

26 I thank Cecilia de Torres for having facilitated access to information extracted from Torres-García's diaries regarding visits by Argentinean critics and artists received at his studio in Montevideo.

27 Cristina Rossi, "Torres-García en el Buenos Aires de los primeros cuarenta. Acerca de la circulación de la obra torresgarciana antes de la aparición de la revista *Arturo*", in *XXV International Congress Latin American Studies Associaton (LASA)*, Las Vegas-Nevada, October 2004.

Murilo Mendes and Maria Helena Vieira da Silva were also figures of reference through actions and a rereading of European processes from the perspective of the Latin American sphere, which dealt with relocating the avant-garde to a regional junction. While eminently avant-garde in terms of the disappearance of rhyme, free rhythm, ignoring punctuation rules and colloquial language, Mendes' poetry works with allusions to reality and therefore does not coincide with the inventionist ideal of pure image.[28]

Bayley is undoubtedly the person who most precisely executes the idea of a poem as an object that does not refer to external elements: he works to create words—"callhermano" (llamarbrother) or "Loturcamonudolantianamente" (Loturcamonudolantianally)[29]—with phoenetic operations—"Umumumumumumumumu/ mumumumumu ERTEMUR" [30]—and breaks away from the conventional sense of writing-reading. As Luciana Del Gizzo has pointed out, however, from among the associations that are purely phonetic or planned to interrupt meaning, strings of coherence sprout forth that mark a position in reference to the World War, which had not yet come to an end when the magazine was produced:[31] "Telegrams falling I'm opposed to Nazism".[32] On the other hand, Ornela Barisone has indicated that Bayley investigated synthetic-ideogrammatic poetry in *Arturo*, although the Surrealist discursive tendency did not allow for its consolidation at that moment: Bayley's poems make the tension between acceptance and rejection of Surrealism clear.[33]

Kosice and Arden Quin, the future leaders of the Madí Movement, published poetry in addition to their theoretical texts, but not visual works. Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro has affirmed that this leads one to think that in 1944, theoretical-poetic reflections took precedence over plastic proposals; this is one more element that supports understanding the *Arturo* episode as an initial formative instance in the creative development for the majority of its members.[34] The poems by both artists follow along the lines of Bayley in terms of linguistic play, though they lack his humor, irony and positioning in counterpoint to logical language;[35] the poem "Pegaso come hierba en el caos" (Pegasus Eats Grass in Chaos) comes close to a tale of dream-like invention.

Returning to the connection with Brazil, Maria Helena Vieira da Silva arrived in Rio de Janeiro with her husband, Arpad Szenes, from Lisbon in June of 1940.[36] Their ties with the local scene were fundamentally by way of Murilo Mendes. Mendes was a key proponent of bohemian circles in that city, which also included other exiled artists. This role must have been a point of attraction for the editors of *Arturo*, in addition to his particular poetic sense tensed between Christianity and Surrealism.
The trip that Arden Quin and Edgar Bayley made to Brazil in 1942 made this exchange possible. In July of 1942, thanks to efforts made by Mendes, Vieira da Silva had a solo show at the Museu Nacional de Belas Artes in Rio de Janeiro. It is likely that the Argentinean visitors would have seen the show, considering that the works reproduced in *Arturo* were exhibited on that occasion. [see ill. 2] Vieira da Silva published two gouache works dated 1940

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28 Luciana Del Gizzo, *Volver a la vanguardia. El invencionismo y su deriva en el Movimiento Poesía Buenos Aires*, Buenos Aires, Ediciones en Danza, 2017, p. 93.
29 Edgar Bayley, "ESTRENO ESCURRE", *Arturo*, Buenos Aires, 1944, s/p.
30 Edgar Bayley, "SEGUNDO POEMA EN CION", *Arturo*, Buenos Aires, 1944, s/p.
31 Luciana Del Gizzo, *Volver a la vanguardia...*, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
32 Edgar Bayley, "ESTRENO ESCURRE", *op. cit.*
33 Ornela Barisone, Experimentos poéticos opacos..., op. cit., pp. 120-122.
34 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, "Rhod Rothfuss, Untitled (Harlequin)", in Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro (cur.), *The Geometry of Hope...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-96.
35 Luciana Del Gizzo, *Volver a la vanguardia...*, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
36 María Amalia García, "La revista *Arturo* y la conexión carioca: en torno de la participación de Maria Helena Vieira da Silva y Murilo Mendes en la vanguardia invencionista porteña", *Pós. Revista do Programa de Pós-graduação em Artes da Escola de Belas Artes da Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais*, vol. 2, nº 4, Belo Horizonte, UFMG, November 2012, pp. 38-61, https://www.eba.ufmg.br/revistapos/index.php/pos/article/view/51/53 (21.12.2017).

in *Arturo*, the titles of which were not specified in the magazine's index. One of these is currently identified as *Le métro* (The Metro). The other, representing a circle of women, does not have a designated title, though it is known that it was included in the Museu Nacional de Belas Artes exhibition because it appears in documentary photographs of the event.

On a par with the strain present in their theoretical proposals, an analysis of the visual tenets set forth uncovers similar tensions and complexities: many of the works reproduced in the "abstract arts magazine" utilized figurative repertoires, albeit incorporating lessons from the avant-garde, for example in the case of Vieira da Silva's works. From the editors and local collaborators, there are only reproductions of visual works by Maldonado, Lidy Prati and Rhod Rothfuss. The vignettes by Prati clearly take a non-figurative stance due to the use of line, ranging from more geometric to more organic. Freed from an orthogonal organization, these images are composed of small, interconnected, linear geometric structures. Regarding Lidy Prati's participation in *Arturo*, it is interesting to point out that during the final decades of her life she reiterated the memory of having seen *Composition en blanc, noir et rouge* in *Art News* magazine, and having proposed that a reproduction of said work by Piet Mondrian appear in *Arturo*. Similarly, Prati has explained on various opportunities that, due to the cost of color reproduction, she had painted the red line on the lower edge of the work in every copy of the magazine. This recollection contributed to reinforcing the publication's mythical character. [see ill. 3]
The loose images on print quality paper that were glued into the magazine figure among the documents the artist has stored in her personal archive. Unpainted copies of *Composition en blanc, noir et rouge* appear there; the image is a black grid on white where the red is missing.[37]

This work by Mondrian accompanied an article by Rothfuss, "El marco: un problema de plástica actual" (The frame: A Problem in Art Today), published on the final pages of the magazine. In it, Rothfuss reflects on the frame as a decisive element in the visual arts tradition. This may well be the most important innovation that *Arturo* introduced. In spite of the fact that the group dissolved rapidly—paving the way between 1945 and 1947 for the groups previously mentioned, Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención, Arte Madí and Perceptismo—the plastic proposal that emerged at that moment, the shaped frame, would constitute the core basis for many of these artists' productions until the '50s. By way of this investigation, the shaped frame—irregular structures made of combined geometric shapes—became the pictorial support utilized by these groups. In the years that followed, these configurations of form and color would hang from the walls of several innovative spaces in Buenos Aires.

In his proposition, Rothfuss also attempted to provide a comprehensive vision of art and its correlation to certain historical mileposts. The starting point—misdated in the text—was the French Revolution and the consequent historical need for an almost photographic naturalism. A second milepost, consecutively marked by post-Impressionism, Cubism, Futurism, neo-Plasticism and Constructivism, was guided by an increasingly abstract plastic search for something that would express "essential reality". Nevertheless, for Rothfuss new problems were emerging even at the heart of pure visual creation: "Because based as compositions either on the rhythms of slanted lines or on triangular or polygonal shapes, Cubism and non-objectivism formulated a new problem: the rectangular frame as impediment to the visual development of the theme".

Rothfuss pointed out the need to break away from the orthogonally structured frame; in his view,

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37 A physical study of the magazine is needed in order to elucidate whether Prati effectively painted said line, or that the red was incorporated during a later stage of the printing process. (See Lidy Prati's intervention during the round table discussion held between Manuel Espinosa, Enio Iommi and Lidy Prati and coordinated by Jorge López Anaya, on the occasion of the Utopía de la forma exhibition at Galería del Infinito, Buenos Aires, April-May 2004; interview with the author, 2005. Cfr. also Carla Bertone, "Muchachas de vanguardia", op. cit., and María Amalia García, "Lidy Prati y su instancia diferencial en la unidad del arte concreto", *op. cit.*

the regularity of the support fragmented form in such a way as to make even an abstract work follow along with naturalist paintings' window concept:

> A painting with a regular frame produces a sense of continuity that only vanishes when the frame is rigorously structured according to the painting's composition, that is, when the edge of the canvas plays an active role in creation—as it always should. A painting should be something that begins and ends in itself. Without continuity.[38]

The article was accompanied by three works: *Deux, etc.* (The Two, etc.) by Vassily Kandinsky, reproduced on the first page and at the end of the text on the second page; *Composition en blanc, noir et rouge* (Composition in White, Black and Red), by Piet Mondrian, and *Trabajo en estudio* (Work in Study), by Rothfuss, a piece with a shaped frame. As Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro has pointed out, the strategic juxtaposition of the shaped frame and the work by Mondrian create an implicit composition: with his textual and visual proposition, Rothfuss was suggesting that European non-figurative art projects had been surpassed.[39] I concur with Pérez-Barreiro in so far that Rothfuss was indeed proposing a debate with international avant-garde projects; this allows us to gauge the scope that was being designated to the issues being handled in the magazine, and which people were being chosen as interlocutors in these dialogs and disputes. At any rate, it is also important to keep in mind the local processes that were being set into motion.

Rothfuss' piece *Trabajo en estudio*—reproduced in *Arturo* but whose current whereabouts are unknown—is a shaped frame work clearly influenced by Pettoruti: it is a cubist image similar to ones the artist from La Plata was painting at that time. It is worth mentioning that Rothfuss refers to Pettoruti pejoratively as the "Autumn Cubist" in the text cited above, and likewise to his compositional strategy of circles, ellipses and polygons inside a rectangular frame. In Patricia M. Artundo's analysis, the artist utilized this method quite often, in works such as *Orgía II* (Orgy II), *Copa llena* (Full Wineglass) and *Tres cigarrillos* (Three Cigarettes).[40] [see ill. 4] For the young Rothfuss, the procedure of composing within non-rectangular structures only to then inscribe them inside an orthogonal frame was not a solution to the problem.

Nevertheless, Rothfuss found himself closer to Pettoruti than he would like to have imagined. It is likely that Rothfuss had visited Pettoruti's show at the Círculo de Bellas Artes in Montevideo in 1939, where the abovementioned works were exhibited. If we compare *Trabajo en estudio* and *Orgía II*, it is clear that Rothfuss wanted to go one step further in this exploration and obtain paintings in their "own frame"; as he said in his text, "A painting [...] that begins and ends in itself".

This search went on for several months; in December of 1943, Rothfuss presented an exhibition of paintings at the Ateneo in Montevideo, a key venue for cultural resistance in the context of the totalitarian regimes during the Second World War.[41] There, he showed several works that could be denominated "figurative shaped frames".[42] Although it did not participate in the exhibition (at least not with that title), *Trabajo en estudio* forms part of this nucleus of production. On the basis of the list of works in the small catalog, we can assume that shaped frame works were shown with imagery close to that of Pettoruti, in light of titles such as *Botellón* (Flagon), *Copa azul* (Blue Wineglass), and *Copa antigua* (Old Wineglass). From the catalog list we also know that *Arlequín* (Harlequin)—today part of the Cisneros collection—participated in the exhibition. [see ill. 5 and 6] Another piece in the show, titled *La llave* (The Key), may well be the one he presented in the private

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38 Rhod Rothfuss, "El marco: un problema de plástica actual", *Arturo*, Buenos Aires, 1944, s/p.

39 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, "Buenos Aires: rompiendo el marco", in Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro (cur.), *The Geometry of Hope...*, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

40 Patricia M. Artundo, "Otros papeles de trabajo: Pettoruti y el arte abstracto", in *Pettoruti y el arte abstracto 1914-1949*, Buenos Aires, Malba, 2011.

41 Rhod Rothfuss, *Exposición de pinturas*, Ateneo de Montevideo, December 1943. Ateneo de Montevideo archive.

42 Mario Sagradini, *Rhod Rothfuss (1920-1969). Vida y producción del artista uruguayo cofundador y teórico de Madí. Del marco estructurado al shaped canvas*, Universidad de Texas en Austin, 1999, mimeo.

show held at the home of psychiatrist Enrique Pichon-Rivière in 1945.[43] [see ill. 7] Other works, such as *Gaucho* and *Retrato del poeta Arden Quin* (Portrait of Poet Arden Quin) also figure in the catalog, but are pieces unknown to us and therefore arouse curiosity regarding the type of image and the technique utilized.

Another work which can be read as a shaped frame piece was published in the magazine: Maldonado's *Invención N° 2* (Invention No. 2), which was reproduced on the front side of the index page. It is a non-figurative piece, clearly inspired in automatic-expressive procedure, along the same lines as the cover, done by the same artist. As opposed to *Trabajo en estudio*, by Rothfuss, it is difficult to understand this work as having an irregular structure because it appears to be an image conceived of in a rectangular format and cut later (the perimeter resolved by way of successive curves sustains the hypothesis of posterior cutting and the impossibility of it being a shaped frame construction). The operation of adaptation could have equally been carried out either on the surface of the piece itself or on the photograph used in its reproduction in the magazine.[44] This piece is quite interesting in that it allows us to consider the simultaneity and coexistence of these reflections at the moment they were taking place. On the same pages where Rothfuss published "El marco: un problema de plástica actual" and his *Trabajo en estudio*, in which he executed this theory's basic tenets, Maldonado's *Invención N° 2* adopted an irregular format in an experimental, embryonic mode.

Returning to Rothfuss and his shaped frame proposal, and moving past the reference to Pettoruti and how Cubo-Futurism was received in Buenos Aires, we must also consider two other pictorial traditions that turned out to be key elements in constituting this device: Guillermo Laborde and Joaquín Torres-García. In this sense, I understand that in the conceptualization of the shaped frame there was a synthesis of existing painting traditions in the larger Rio de la Plata area.[45]

Laborde was Rothfuss' professor at the Círculo de Bellas Artes in Montevideo; this connection has been given scant consideration in an analysis of his career and the appearance of the shaped frame. His painting is inscribed in Montevideo's Planismo (Flat Plane) school, a movement cultivated by many artists such as José Cúneo, Carmelo de Arzadun and Petrona Viera, among others, from the '20s onward. Nevertheless, he was outstanding not only for his easel painting, but also painted murals, party decorations, allegorical Carnival costumes and floats and stage sets for theater; he also worked in graphic design, typography and advertising, among other things. His teaching activity was crucial: he was recognized and remembered as an excellent professor, who provided his students with the tools to develop their own personalities. According to what we know from the Libro de Registro de Estudiantes y Socios (Students and Members Records Book), Rothfuss was a student at the Círculo de Bellas Artes from June 1938 to August 1942, and took Laborde's classes until 1940, the year he passed away unexpectedly.

Mario Sagradini pointed out that Laborde incited his students to experiment beyond the confines of easel painting, encouraging them to develop diverse activities, such as party decorations, Carnival costumes and poster design, among other visual productions. [see ill. 8] Emulating Laborde, Rothfuss carried out murals and party decorations at the Círculo de Bellas Artes, clubs and several union halls, and apparently won prizes on a municipal level for his Carnival decorations. According to Sagradini, Laborde recommended the use of enamel paint and Duco car paint—a brand name of nitrocellulose lacquer—to his students in order to

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43 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, *The Argentine Avant-Garde 1944-1950*, Department of Art History and Theory, University of Essex, 1996, doctoral thesis, mimeo.

44 Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, *The Argentine Avant-Garde 1944-1950*, *op. cit.*, chap. 2.

45 María Amalia García, "Rhod Rothfuss y el marco recortado. Síntesis de las tradiciones de la pintura rioplatense", presentation at Encounters, Utopias, and Experimentation from Pre-Columbian Tenochtitlán to Contemporary Buenos Aires, Los Angeles, Getty Center, November 2017, mimeo.

make the cardboard used in outdoor painting more resistant. In addition to enamel paint, a wide variety of materials were used for making floats and stage sets, such as wood, sheet metal, wire, cardboard, plaster and papier mâché.[46] [see ill. 9]

This diversity in material and visual resolutions undoubtedly permeated Rothfuss' work. In this sense, I agree with Sagradini's point that much of Guillermo Laborde's approach and Carnival decoration-making infiltrated inventionist production. It interests me to think about the genesis of the shaped frame in the midst of these comings and goings between easel painting and Carnival artifacts, between the genealogy of modern art and popular celebrations.

Torres-García is another significant thread in this synthesis of Rio de la Plata area pictorial traditions. Resolution of the shaped frame device is closely related to Torres-García's work, if we consider the investigation he developed with wood constructions beginning in the '20s. The "wood assemblages" constitute an extensive and original series of constructions made out of said material produced by the Uruguayan master from the '20s until the end of his career: they are precarious assemblages of humble materials—cheap wood, nails and paint—that condense different lines of investigation that were key to large part of the avant-garde's poetics.[47] Although markedly three-dimensional, these structures emphasize their planar mechanics, linking them to the resolution of the shaped frame. [see ill. 10]

His production, however, has ties not only to the shaped frame device, but also to another piece that Rothfuss published in *Arturo*, titled *Plástica en madera* (Plastic [Art] in Wood). The materials, the procedure and the piece's semantic content are all closely related to the master's work. The character in *Plástica en madera*, apparently made using rectangular pieces of wood, is reminiscent of an indigenous figure on account of the headdress and baton, in addition to its visual proximity to ancient American cultures. It is not only the material resolution but also the reference to the non-Western indigenous universe that are so near to Torres-García's thinking.

As has been proposed, Primitivism, in addition to Surrealism and Abstraction, was a key theme in the Parisian context in the interwar period. Between 1928 and 1932, America's ancient art was eminently visible in Paris: among other interventions like *Documents* magazine, referred to earlier, two additional events that deserve mention are *Les Arts anciens de l'Amérique* (The Ancient Arts of America) at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in 1928—the largest exhibition dedicated to America's indigenous cultures—and the reorganization of the Musée du Trocadéro between 1929 and 1932, carried out by its new Director, Paul Rivet. Ancient cultures' manifestations were at the central core of Torres-García's interests, during his stay in Barcelona and also during the time he spent in New York and Paris, by way of his friendship with Rivet.[48]

Modern art looks for its origins in a leap into the past, prior to the constitution of art as autonomous production; this break away from history finds its touchstone in fantasies of the primitive. Since the late 19th century, interest in the art of ancient cultures has offered a route by which to overcome old academic art conventions, and also to prevail over recent avant-garde styles.[49] This would seem to be the context that Rothfuss brought to bear in order to propose the shaped frame issue, quoting no less that Paul Gaugin, considered to be the father of modern Primitivism, in his search for a new vision based on tribal cultures. "Primitive art comes from the spirit and expands nature"; in this way, primitive art allowed freeing one's self from the "abominable error of naturalism, which began with the Greece of Pericles", enabling painting to return to its origins. Rothfuss took up these words

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46 Mario Sagradini, *Rhod Rothfuss (1920-1969)...*, *op. cit.*

47 Mari Carmen Ramírez, "A Constructed Precariousness. Abstraction against the Grain", in *Joaquín Torres-García. Constructing Abstraction with Wood*, Houston, The Menil Collection, 2010, pp. 32-34.

48 Margit Rowell, "Torres-García and 'Primitivism' in Paris", in *Joaquín Torres-García. Constructing Abstraction with Wood*, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-126.

49 Gill Perry, "El primitivismo y 'lo moderno'", in Charles Harrison, Francis Frascina and Gill Perry, *Primitivismo, cubismo y abstracción. Los primeros años del siglo XX*, Madrid, Akal, 1998, pp. 8-9.

again to support his break with tradition, which, as has been pointed out, was not only with Renaissance tradition but also with modern solutions that did not resolve the "problem of pure visual creation".[50] Accordingly, the shaped frame could be read as being in line with the modern Primitivism that Arden Quin was proposing: a device that severed the tradition of the pictorial object which would, in turn, outlast the magazine itself, joining its members together regardless of their internal disputes.

*Arturo* began to split up almost as soon as it appeared. Its members' diverse interests, expectations and beliefs made up an incandescent mass that could not remain united for very long without exploding. The group splintered along the lines of theoretical-aesthetic differences and personal disputes between its members, who did not manage to reach a consensus on the appearance of a second issue. The magazine had brought together apparently irreconcilable elements; it connected past and future, the unconscious and reason, invention and automatism.

Their search for new solutions was their bright spot on the horizon in a world in crisis. Avant-garde traditions and cultural contacts provide the keys for reading this publication: the aesthetic choices are not comprehensible without considering the interpersonal ties involved; at the same time, these very relationships also lack a motive unless they are understood within the framework of artistic interests and investigation. Their artistic ventures are like objects swallowed up by the sea and handed back by the tide on the shore: still recognizable, but completely transformed. The production of these young artists and poets was effectively regulated as much by translations of modern developments conduced by others as it was by readings and interpretations of their own paths of experience. Like a "grand maelstrom of ancient fire", *Arturo* brought the destruction of the war in Europe into its very core, and what washed up on the shores of the Rio de la Plata was the manifold power of the avant-garde.

50 Rhod Rothfuss, "El marco: un problema de plástica actual", *op. cit.*

# DOCUMENTING THE AVANT-GARDE

Raúl Naón

*Arturo* magazine was a foundational publication for avant-garde groups during the '40s and it is a key element to any thorough understanding of the proposals and cosmovision of concrete art, Madí and Perceptism in Argentina. It is the result of relationships between artists and poets, where young, promising figures and well-established international artists came together.

Documentation reveals facts and brings us closer to these movements, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of them. It was with this aim in mind that over fifteen years ago I undertook the task of putting together a documentary archive. On the occasion of this publication, I would like to share the methodology behind the work involved and some of the hypotheses that emerged during these years of research.

The meticulous production of *Arturo* formed part of one deliberate, integral action: magazines, pamphlets, catalogs and flyers were vehicles for disseminating ideas. In this sense, *Arturo* cannot be separated from the visual works by its participating artists, given that it was part of these avant-garde movements' promotional ideology. The task of reconstructing history through documentation and records required direct links with the main protagonists as a first step: Tomás Maldonado, Raúl Lozza, Enio Iommi, Juan Melé and Lidy Prati, among others. In addition to documenting the past, I was interested in registering the present in a series of interviews. During this entire time I have visited them assiduously, which in some cases led to developing relationships of complicity and friendship. I remember meeting with Lidy in the Tolón café on the corner of Santa Fe Avenue and Coronel Díaz; visits to see Raúl Lozza at his house in the La Paternal neighborhood; innumerable conversations with Enio Iommi at his studio in San Telmo; and Juan Melé's studio. I recall the Buenos Aires-Milan encounters with Tomás Maldonado, his anecdotes and his continually renewed assessments of both past and present.

This fluent exchange of experiences and memories progressively uncovered myths and visions, leading me to comprehend their stories and the history of these movements in a more complete way. The detective work derived into that of a specialist, becoming more familiar with a subjective dimension of Inventionism by way of my ties with the artists, as well as an objective dimension through documents and the process of constructing the archive. These two dimensions and forms of approach intertwine continually, allowing for new questions and some answers.

As the first publication produced by a group of young proletarians, *Arturo* magazine was a luxury. This raises the question: who or whom financed it? One possibility is that Lidy Prati's family, in a comfortable economic situation, may have been one of the contributors. Another hypothesis emerges in connection with Gerardo Sorensen, a person with ties to financial circles. The discovery of a revealing dedication in one example of the magazine led me to track down and verify (by way of his daughter) that Sorensen, a friend of the Maldonado-Bayley brothers, had been another important source of economic support.

Regarding the size of the print run, we can estimate that there were 250 copies made. Water that leaked into a warehouse would have been the cause for a large portion of the edition having been destroyed, and consequently, for its rarity. I have located some fifteen copies: five are in libraries and collections in the United States; three are in Europe, two in Chile, one in Uruguay and four in Argentina. Five have dedications that date from that era.

There are other interesting characteristics of *Arturo* worth mentioning. It had interleaved sheets of tissue paper placed throughout the magazine, which came from Gyula Kosice's family's leather goods business. I suspect that only the first copies contained these four sheets, because I have had two other copies in my hands that lacked these pages. I would also like to mention that Lidy Prati, the only woman in the group, sustained until her final days that she had hand-painted the red line in the piece by Mondrian illustrated in the publication, constituting a gesture of craft and dedication to the magazine's production.

Book dealers, antiques dealers, fairs and auctions were essential sources for obtaining material. Accordingly, I went about developing my own method of investigation. I gradually generated a network of faithful providers, to whom I render homage for having comprehended the importance of my task. Having discovered this material, an

enormous puzzle of more or less hidden, informal relationships between the key figures of the '40s was progressively configured. The most paradoxical aspect of this puzzle is that it has no defined shape and no set number of pieces; instead these take shape as the investigation advances. It is for this reason that the intimate link that exists between this type of collecting and academics and researchers is of such vital importance, and we have shared not only facts, curiosities and hypotheses, but also our passion for the themes studied. In this sense, my profound gratitude goes to Marita García and to Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, for the friendship that has grown out of this marvelous voyage through documents.

In conclusion, I would like to mention that these words originate and are motivated by the desire to render homage to the collaborative system that has allowed this facsimile to come to fruition, the result of dialogue and a learning process between researchers, book dealers, gallery directors, institutions, collectors, detectives, amateurs, artists and curators, among others. I hope that sharing part of the route traveled contributes toward making these networks more visible, more systematic and above all, to expanding them yet further.

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FACSIMILE OF *ARTURO* MAGAZINE

María Amalia García

This facsimile version of *Arturo* magazine proposes to facilitate access to the publication with due consideration given to its physical dimension. Two hundred and fifty copies were produced in its original print run, and the examples currently in existence can be found in their entirety in the hands of private collectors or foreign institutions. Not a single public library in Argentina has an original copy of *Arturo*. Recently, two websites, that of Espigas (Tarea-IIPC, UNSAM / Fundación) and that of the Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Cultura de Izquierdas (CeDInCI (Culture of the Left Research and Documentation Center), USAM) have incorporated .pdf format file reproductions, available for consultation.[1] However, the physical dimension of the publication and the experience of a reading that includes the syntax of its pages cannot be accessed by way of the digital version. This facsimile therefore proposes to recover the magazine in its material aspect and to guarantee its accessibility for consultation in public, national and international institutions. The facsimile similarly looks to promote widespread familiarity with cultural magazines and to expand and foment greater complexity in the range of exploration into abstraction in Argentina and Latin America.

This facsimile is presented as a faithful reproduction of the magazine, exactly as it was originally published, but in conformity with current norms and technology. In other words: the original material has been handled with the greatest respect possible, taking the type of paper, transparent paper separators, tone of printing inks, size and system of gluing images into consideration. Photographs were taken of an original copy of *Arturo* in perfect condition—the property of Raúl Naón—and it was compared with other examples. It is our understanding that an objective reconstruction of the magazine in physical terms is essential to its appreciation and study.

Two facsimile editions of *Arturo* have been made prior to this one. The first was published by the Centre for the Study of the Hispanic Avant-Garde at the University of Aberdeen (Scotland) in 1994, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the magazine's first appearance in an initiative coordinated by Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro. The edition was accompanied by a notebook with texts by Pérez-Barreiro and Derek Harris on Argentina's artistic-literary avant-garde. Some months following its presentation, the facsimile edited by the Centre for the Study of the Hispanic Avant-Garde was the object of a legal suit in a conflict over copyrights, which required removing the copies from circulation.[2] These events, which took place during the mid-90s, echoed the same debates and conflicts that ensued when *Arturo* first appeared. Disputes over the degree to which memory is of an official nature have been a hallmark of Inventionism in and around Buenos Aires; the need to establish a set narrative referring to the events and groups involved was a constant among its leading figures and also for many of their followers. The legal challenge to the facsimile undermined access to the publication even further, although it was possible to consult a copy in some libraries in Buenos Aires. Although the facsimile did maintain some distance from the original magazine, it undoubtedly constituted key reference material for those of us just starting our studies of these groups during the late 20th century.

The other facsimile edition had been published by Argentina's Biblioteca Nacional (National Library) in 2014 to commemorate the magazine's 70th anniversary. It was part of an important collection of facsimiles launched by the institution to make material that had been previously inaccessible or of limited circulation more readily available. This new publication of *Arturo* was produced on the basis of the Centre for the Study of the Hispanic Avant-Garde facsimile, rather than an original copy. This editorial decision on the part of the Biblioteca Nacional is more than eloquent with respect to the difficulty of access to the original magazine. This institution's publication was proposed as an economic edition for broad circulation, printed in

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1 Both revistasdeartelatinoamericano.org, run by Espigas, and americalee.cedinci.org, administered by CeDinCi, include digitalized versions of art magazines and critical studies.

2 Derek Harris, "La edición de Arturo", La Maga, Buenos Aires, October 11, 1995, p. 41. See also Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro Archive, Centro Espigas - Fundación Espigas.

black and white on regular stock paper; as a result, the emblematic red cover was not faithfully reproduced. Currently, copies of it are practically out of stock, which reveals the level of interest in *Arturo* magazine that exists both on the part of Argentina's population and abroad.

In short, we hope that the careful attention to detail in this edition awakens an attraction to the physical and conceptual dimensions of *Arturo* on the part of diverse sectors of the population with ties to cultural matters, and that it contributes to thorough dissemination of Argentinean and Latin American art, encouraging new endeavors in academic and artistic investigation.

TO INVENT:[1] To find or to discover by means of ingenuity or meditation, or by the workings of chance, a new or unknown thing. / The poet or the artist finds, imagines, creates his work /

INVENTION: Act or effect of inventing. / Thing invented. / FINDING /

INVENTION
over
AUTOMATISM

ARTURO
No. 1 SUMMER 1944

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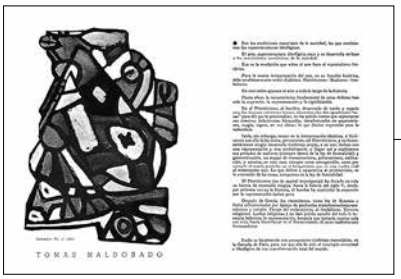
ARTURO. Revista de Artes Abstractas. To be published four times a year, at the end of each season. Editorial board: Ardén Quin, Rhod Rothfuss, Gyula Kósice, Edgar Bayley. The cover of this issue is a print made using an original plate by Tomás Maldonado. Vignettes by Lidy Maldonado. All texts original. Printed at Talleres Gráficos Experimentales Domingo F. Rocco, Directorio 429.
BUENOS AIRES

[1] T.N.: These are translations of the dictionary definitions of the Spanish words “inventar” (to invent) and “invención” (invention) cited by *Arturo*'s editors; they are not taken from the definition of those words in English.



• The material conditions of society are what condition ideological superstructures.

Art, an ideological superstructure, is born and takes shape on the basis of a society's economy, of changes in it.

That is historical materialism's revelation on art.

The dialectical order required for an exact interpretation of art, of its historical function, is: Primitivism-Realism-Symbolism.

That is the order in which art has appeared throughout history.

Thus far, expression, representation, or meaning has been the primary characteristic of each of these respective orders.

In Primitivism, man had no reason or place to hide from external forces (beings and elements—both of which were, for him, "things"). Those forces pressured him, and all he could do was *represent his fears*, uncertainties, pursuits, which—in his work—he rendered superstitions, magic, and signs, that is, expression *for nature*.

We would fall into idealistic interpretation, however, if we were to use that as the sole, permanent law of Primitivism, if we failed to give Primitivism its own dialectical development, or even just a representation or symbolization, with which to explain its periods of realism (always within the law of frontality) and geometrization, its phases of monochromes, polychromes, stylization, and return—always as a retrogression—in, for instance, the fourth period, in the San people, a complete return to red monochrome. What defines and characterizes Primitivism is the expression of things, composed in the law of frontality.

Primitivism, which is of major importance, lasted in all its might of magic expression into fifth-century Greece, where, for the first time in history, man replaced expression with pure optic representation.

After Greece, attempts at new beginnings—in Byzantium and Italy during periods of deep economic and social transformations: the passage from slavery to feudalism, religious uncertainty and religious wars—were not capable of shaking off the Hellenic heritage of representation, a heritage that would gain strength and culminate in the Renaissance, a period of pure, almost photomechanical, realism.

Nobody has employed dialectical materialism to understand that the Paris School was an emotional and ideological response to a total transformation of the world.

Nobody has seen that the phenomenon of modern art and its abstractions is part of the economic and social liquidation of the capitalist order and the creation of a new society governed by socialist forms of production

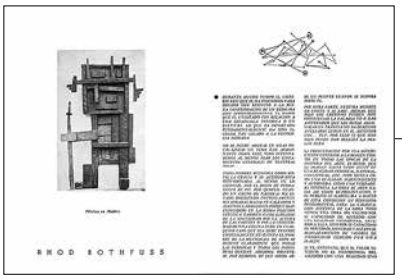
In both economics and art—and in other ideologies as well—we are experiencing a period of thesis, a primitive period, a re-beginning, but under scientific norms and structures as opposed to the material, instinctive Primitivism that made history.

With startling historical precision, art, in dialectical fashion, began a period of total rebirth, a re-beginning, and its creators, from the start and with great intuition, have seen in the art of native peoples their purest parallel.

Human society, after primitive communism, went through three economic orders (slavery, feudalism, and the bourgeoisie) to then resume its forgotten historical course. But that return is a parallel: the upward march of history itself (Lenin underscored Engels's notion of the "upward spiral") means that that return is not an exact copy, which would be a regression. History repeats itself, scientifically structured in its new conditions. The phases that once again arise in history's ceaseless evolution are separated by ascending spaces. History does not really repeat itself; it ensues in parallels.

Thus, expression, which in art has been the foundation of natural Primitivism, has been replaced by INVENTION in modern, scientific Primitivism. *Inventors*, its artists are not guided by pure intuition. They have a sense *creation* not of imagination (Apollinaire was not particularly imaginative). On that basis, they have been able to construct with full awareness the solid edifice of contemporary art (the recent art movements bear this out).

Beyond the expression of *nature* (*representation* of man himself), man engraved (copying his footprints in the sand) and painted on trees and on the walls of his caves (before the word, before thought, when he worked only with his limbs and by instinct), his hands bloody or moist with sap; after the period of the hunt, while gathering roots and fruit, first by chance, at random, and then by




imitation, and then by using inventiveness, as is still the case among certain primitive peoples—the Eskimos, for example, with their ivory carvings, which bear no sign of magic expression.

And thus, delving into deeper historical sources, we can find even purer parallels for contemporary art—and that thanks to determinism rather than justification, which history ignores.

It is clear, then, that *expression* is not capable of governing the spirit of artistic **composition** today—all the less so representation, magic, or sign. That is now the task of INVENTION, of pure creation.

Expressionism, dreamlike automatism, etc., only heed reactions and backward movements; they should be banished, abolished.

Automatism has never produced a living creature. It has produced aborted fetuses. At best, automatism stirs the imagination. But imagination must immediately be put in check by keen artistic awareness and even cold calculations, patiently devised and applied. That will automatically lead to it into creation.

*Invention*, then, becomes rigorous not by aesthetic means but to aesthetic ends. That implies, naturally, that imagination, in all its contradictions, will surface; consciousness will then organize it and clear away all representative, naturalist images (even dreams) and all symbols (even the unconscious).

Neither expression (Primitivism) nor representation (Realism) nor Symbolism (decadence), but INVENTION. Of any thing, any action, form, myth, for the fun of it, for the simple feeling of creation: eternity. FUNCTION.

ARDÉN QUIN

• For a long time the criterion used to determine the worthy structure of a finger has been more or less the same as the one used for a totemic figure or a scalpel. What has mattered, above all, is color, which is so enmeshed in human psychology.

A few lines do not suffice to examine in depth a topic as riveting as this one. But we will attempt to provide at least a general overview of our ideas.

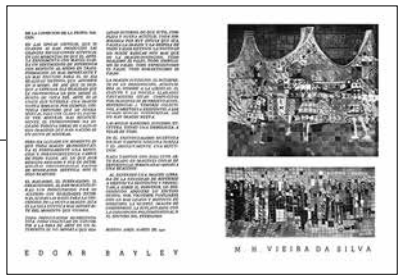
Any man recognizes grace as motivation and his attitude is determined, in essence at least, by the desire to remain standing. For instance, when a group of persons is staring at a shoehorn and some bricks, it is because they have come to the same aesthetic stance. Honesty can also be judged by virtue of the height of walls or the convexity of a hill, but—be that as it may—the name of the girl must be taken into careful consideration. It can, on those grounds, be concluded that all persons, that all individuals, are abolished. Observe, for instance, how a bridge seethes when it is sighed on.

At the same time, our death does not exist. It is also clear that, today, only morons can say the word "I" or insinuate that something aches. Taking a streetcar does not mean you have a right to then pick a fight in the elevator with... Tuf; that's why the only thing that gives a sense of beauty today is pure image.

There has been, throughout art history, concern with meaning outside the image. That is, the image was conceived as sign of a personal, natural, or conceptual reality, but never as an independent or autonomous reality, as a true experience. The work of art, then, was conceived as re-presentation, and for viewers that came to be a basic requirement for the work's aesthetic quality. *But the value of a work of art has never resided in its relationship to another reality, a reality outside of it; its value resides, rather, in its novelty*, and novelty means the displacement of sensibility enacted by an image.

*Aesthetic value does not, then, rest on some sort of reality but on the image itself.*

It is in critical times that major aesthetic revolutions have occurred. At those moments, the artist experiences most poignantly difference from an environment in a process of transformation.
The most important and fruitful thing for him at those junctures is that distinct reality that he




detects in himself; he then focuses on expressing that reality, which is what—from the perspective of art—provides him with the only thing that matters: a new image. Rimbaud, for instance, still believes that what is essential to seeing clearly is to make seen, to show. More recently, expressionism has yielded quality works with images born of a desire to show.

But the time has come when any re-presentative image is inevitably repetition and, as a result, of no value whatsoever. Hence, what was fruitful and, in certain circumstances, source of aesthetic renewal yesterday is today just reaction.

By yielding pure images not bound to external realities, dada, surrealism, creationism lay the basis for the conception of the new image. That is the most important aesthetic idea of these times.

Any re-presentative concern, any impulse to turn the work of art into an interpreter of any inner reality, no matter how subtle or complex, any new attitude, any symbology, no matter how vague, falsifies the image and bares it of any aesthetic value. Novelty today resides solely in image-invention. Any realism is false, any symbolism is false, any expressionism is false. Any romanticism is false.

Image-invention is interpreter of the unknown, it trains man in freedom. So-called fantastic stories and novels are composed of images of re-presentation, references to collective fears, to already existing objects that they try to interpret. There is nothing new there.

The fashions of Kafka, Joyce, and so forth have symbology despite everything.

There is no purity in deadening existentialism either; it is sheer repetition.

Nor is there any in Dalí, whose art based on image-copies of now-depleted experiences imports a reaction.

By defending an image unfettered by the need to make reference to existing objects and to project that image into the future, the unknown takes on a new meaning; we become familiar with the most distant and distinct regions of ourselves. We replace death, image of commitment, with multidimensional conception or sense of eternalism.

Buenos Aires, March 1944.
EDGAR BAYLEY

UNA MUJER
BAILA SUS SUEÑOS

VICENTE HUIDOBRO

**A WOMAN**
**DANCES HER DREAMS**

Land of aerial rhythm
Blood race tiered upward
Geological depth emerging to surface in harmony
Cells of ancient flesh in new phase
Land land for her sky and past her sky
Towards the black revolving nothingness and the madness of the universe

Recover the firmament
Recover the land
Wrap the world in experiential rhythms
Imprison the ether that escapes
Imprison the air
With this hasty flesh
In waves folding over the reverie
And the flight of the stars in the moment
when they were about to tell their story

This grand maelstrom of ancient fire and living springs
This body of wind on its purest horizon
Does not fall from its peak into drama without a precise reason

It means the light gravely wounded
The sleepwalking dove
The tree that dreams it's drowning
The stone that rolls and changes planets
It means the awakening of the ages

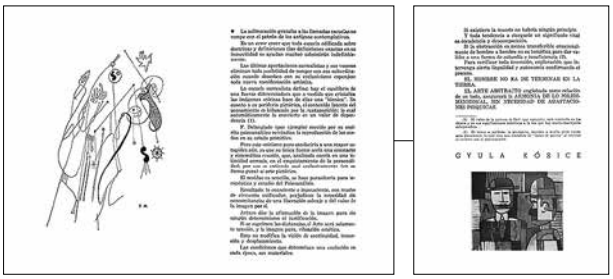
The path inward with its armies of ants
That begin singing to rise from the ranks

With her blood that is lost to view
Before night falls
With her guts in the way down deep
In what precedes any thought and whiteness itself
It means hypnotizing the centuries the mountains and the seas
Arriving in a summer delirium from pole to pole
With elated eyes
Lifting the chasms in her arms
And dying of sunlight on the grass

In a whirlwind of clouds and regions the flow says
I am here for the triumph of old solitudes
From the remote tombs that learn to fly
I am here among the peoples breathing
On hot quicksand
I am here with the fascination of the spheres
In substance of desires lost in the night
I am here to bind the day to my hips
And make the stone age into the golden age
Frightening away the tears that could be burned
Tossing the pain to its solitary eclipses

I am here like a pearl wandering in space
For your infinite gales
And your crater open to its first breath

Santiago de Chile
VICENTE HUIDOBRO






• Pointless acclimation to so-called schools does not break the pattern of the ancient contemplatives.

It is wrong to believe that any school built on doctrines and definitions will endure endlessly (exact definitions are, because stagnant, of little help).

The most recent contributions of surrealism and its spokespeople do away with any chance of disrupting that subordination since they absorb with spongy exclusivity any new artistic expression.

The surrealist school defines; there is the balance of a differentiating force that turns dreamlike images into “technique” as it crystallizes them. Regarding its pictorial periphery, the latent content of thought is split by juxtaposition which automatically turns it into a dependent value. (1)

Moved by psychoanalytic spirit, F. Delanglade (for example) upholds the reproduction of dreams in their primitive state.

But that pure onirism would lead to even greater stupidity, since its sole source would be constant and systematic evasion that, upon analysis, would fall into closed intimacy, into the deadlock of personality; that is why, in pure form, it encompasses solely the art of painting.

The residue is simple: it is a parasite of therapy and the study of Psychoanalysis.

Result: the conscious and the unconscious, joined together to a large degree, hold back the necessary unbridled liberation and the value of the image **as such**.

Arturo utters the affirmation of the pure image with no outside determinism or justification.

Overcoming distances, Art is solely tension, and pure image, aesthetic vibration.

That does not alter the vision of continuity, immersion, or displacement.

The conditions that determine the evolution of each age are material.

If death existed, there would be no beginning.

And any inclination to give it a vital meaning is decadence and decay.

If abstraction is harder to convey emotionally from man to man, that does not validate a form of cowardice or a shortcoming. (2)

A degree of illegality and autonomy must be at play to verify any invention or exploration: it confirms the process.

MAN NEED NOT END ON EARTH.

ABSTRACT ART, grasped as relation to a whole, will assure the HARMONY OF THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL, WITH NO NEED FOR PSYCHIC ADJUSTMENT.

(1) The value of Dalí’s paintings (for example) lies in objects and in their symbolic meanings; their descriptions are often stumbling blocks...

(2) Fear of not being able to follow and ignorance keep many people from fully expressing themselves, which sends a shiver down the spine when trying to get in touch with the unconscious.

GYULA KÓSICE

## THREE POEMS

### Debut Wrings

The citadel attends perforating punches.
Shavings confirmed at my theater. On your laps.
I come back.[2]

I understand this
It's not necessary
It's fine
I see it
So have at it steel llamarbrother[3] conceptualizing
The list is complete and boat shadow
The cavalier soldier with the camera hasn't been seen
Mars hasn't been seen this morning
The ruckus has yet to feel the northern heartaches
Opponent rests
The woman ran into the wing
Ran into unctuous softness and cried
Ran into flower god lantern
The lantern went out
It's not precise
Today
Today it's necessary to take this boggy birch[4]
Baroque
Today discourse today poet today a jump
Today I understand it digging deep
I dig up this day with its night even until later
I dig up this myristicaceous mechanism
Thanks a lot looks very good dodecahedron
If you're going to push it, it would be
An aspirin or freedom
Free conferva you're going bad
Summer solstice fled on this bread
And inside many channels crept
How good good good good
There was stuff of conversation inside the bladder
But the bread crumbled and squeak
Today debut today edgar
Loturcamonudolantianally[5]
Bastion seized by my troops I salute
Freedom sending the loaves forward
Telegrams falling I'm opposed to Nazism
Guitar in robe robs my milk bottles
I celebrate the decision not to use a parachute
A hysterical sap subverts the lottery
Eternity has bowed towards the revolver's profile.

But
If you are a thumb digging down
the infinite big guy who stumbles
or the simple arid plateau winch
yearning for sleep
if you're a slow complicated eye
on the frog's one-way trip
or shorthand
or interoceanic gorge
or dedicated to mortifying water
if you're an age and a been
with demonstrations was and gone
meetings a hand wrings this side
and well that's the way it must be
if you're debut to the stars
and you repent the fast steerable vitriol
you leave the earth to its own fish.

### First Poem in Tion

From the canvas rested the shovel
And that's why
Nothing had been decided
The girl who brought the image detached
straightened the ashtray that stood in as planet
That was all
Though it is also possible
that the girl could have thrown the shovel
and the flower
Nonetheless
the Phoenician version
could
be true

---

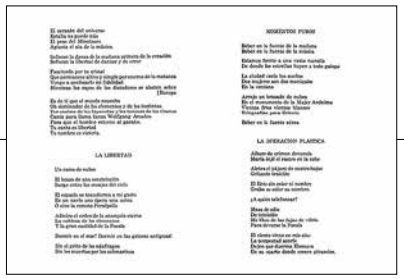
2 E.N.: Written vertically on the left margin.
3 T.N.: The original invents a word half in Spanish and half in English, *callhermano*.
4 T.N.: Literally: "muddy cane."
5 T.N.: The original says *Loturcamonudolantianamente*, an invented adverb, which was the reason here the ending of the word has been changed to "-ly."

She says the week must have dumped
some rule in the wardrobe
and that's how
the outburst ceased
Or the small finger flew
to Argentina
and the result was
IMAGINATION

**Second Poem in Tion**

It's OK we can be sad
Umumumumumumumumumu
mumumumumu ERTEMUR
Behind the curtain has stopped
the remnant
The fish sets in the evening as
if it were a postcard
And me being in the week
I feel
for that reason
very sad and I write:
luxury of the hump in the dead woman
Behind come wagons
Now it is known
that the wines entangle the yokes
that the grass grows best
in the sky
and that a beautiful painting
is an
EJACULATION
But fundamentally
I am persuaded
by the colors and the years
and the very cemeteries persuade me
The persuasion is barely necessary
The voice and the firing picket line
It's come to that
And the groups of young men and women
who shoot the landscape amidst dreams
It's the blue swimmer in the war
Doubled over the sea beneath tenderness
They return and establish over time
Now the battle definitively won
Challenge
Question: is it necessary to be persuaded of this
event?
Stones for the inventors
They alone pierce the future
This machine reconstructs the moon

Buenos Aires, March 1944.
EDGAR BAYLEY



## POEMS

### Newest Orpheus

I go wherever poetry leads me

Love is my biography
Stroke of fire

Contemporary birds
Take flight from my shoulders
Taking messages to the men

The allegorical world dissipates
This substance of struggle remains
From there you can make out eternity

The familiar blue star
Turns its back and left
Poetry blows where it wants.

### Homage to Mozart

Sitting in the shadow of your aerial monument
I come to talk with you oh Wolfgang Amadeus!

Night surrounds the Salzburg mountains
The swords of the dictators collude in the darkness.
Gather the flutes the cymbals the violins
And muddy the horizon with the tanks the cannons
the parachutes

They crush the music box
That nourished our childhood
They tear down the puppet theaters
And raise lead giants.
Oh Wolfgang Amadeus they conspire against the
rhythm!
They build apocryphal fatherlands and mutilate
unity

The heart of the universe
Explodes can bear no more
The weight of the Minotaur
Crushes the wing of music.
They smother the dance of creation's first morning
They smother the freedom to dance and to wander

Enthralled by your crystal
Which remains haughty and simple above the
slaughter
I come to confess my loyalty to you
As the rays of dictators demolish Europe

It's from you the world needs
Oh master of the elements and the instincts.
Above the bayonets and the tanks of the tyrants
Sing pure call dance Wolfgang Amadeus
So man can return to paradise.
Your song is freedom
Your name is victory.

### Freedom

A bouquet of clouds

The arm of a constellation
Arises amidst the sky's lace

Space is transformed as I like
It's a vessel an opera a powerhouse
Or else the remote Persepolis

I admire the order of eternal anarchy
The nobility of the elements
And the great chastity of Poetry

Sleep in the sea! Sleep in the old galleys!

Without the cry of the castaways
Without those killed by the submarines

### Pure Moments

Drinking from morning's fountain
Drinking from music's fountain

Before us a towering wall
From here stars flee at breakneck speed

The city empties dreams
Two women are two mannequins
In the window

I toss an armful of clouds
At the monument to an Anonymous Woman
Cold winds white winds
Telegraph for Orient

Drinking from the sky fountain

**The Plastic Operative**

Crime album reports
Maria left a trace on the cloud

The four-paged bird flaps
Screeching betrayal

The Being without color without name
Engraves its color its name

Who to telephone?

Mass of hatred
Of intuition
I shake off the glass corsets
To devour Poetry

Wind comes in my wings
The storm smiles
Let Eleonora sleep
In her room where sunflowers grow.

**Daily life**

Closed mirror
Mannequin of birds
Short life
Interrupts your dreams

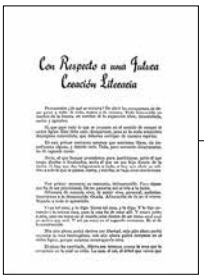
The city falls
From the sky's shelves

Man-drawer
Stored memories
Stored oranges and semen
Of other boy-drawers

Three mermaids threaten the sea

Cordelia on the balcony
Swallows clouds
Spits out jasmines

Rio de Janeiro
MURILO MENDES



## ON A FUTURE LITERARY CREATION

What was it about before? About opening the floodgates, about letting everything in. Everything, that is, except the sensible. Anything welcome in the name of madness, in the name of free, unbridled, bold, and aggressive expression.

Yes, let in everything that tends to break the logical order of things. That must fall, disappear; it is the bad habit of naturalist description that we must stamp out of our spirit.

At this first instance, we must feel free, with no impediment of any sort, and say everything. Everything, but from direct, not secondhand, experience.

Leave behind the one who looks to precedent as justification, the one with grandparents and great grandparents, the one who is not direct offspring of the earth. If everything must be faced in warlike stance, if everything thought, felt, and written must be heeded, it is under these conditions.

This first instance is necessary, indispensable. But bear in mind that it must be provisional. If not, it will all fall apart.

Influx of live matter, of live, personal, authentic feeling. Venture into the unknown. Daring. Affirmation of trust in one's self. Repudiation of everything learned.

I saw something, and I say it. I feel something, and I say it. And I say that thing by putting it there—it must be there. And it will be with another thing, but not as they are together in the world, rather as part of a rhythm in which I want them to be. And so I am now in the second instance. In the instance of construction.

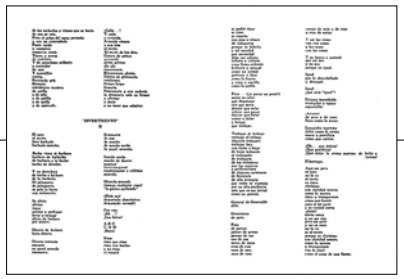
Especially now that it can be said with freedom, especially now that such a breadth can be brought together, especially now that the logical order can be broken—that because we are constructing something else.

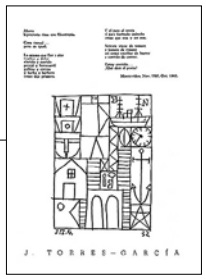
The plane has changed. We are now less interested in the thing than in the structure in which it is placed. The house, sun, tree that we see now settle differently: they are like stones in a wall. We are more interested in the wall we have made, the construction, than in the things or events we used to pursue. And so we see that what's our own, that originality, is on the side of that construction. It is no longer the things, but the rhythm in which they are placed—that is the essence of poetic creation.

That is the plane of Art. And poetry, which must always be just one manifestation of it, as art is just one manifestation of the universal order, must be in that plane. That is why poet and writer must be harmonist builders. That, after all, is what art is: building within harmonic law.

And I say that only he who has found a new rhythm, a personal rhythm unique to his self, will be able to put forth what he feels and sees in an also unique fashion. And by a rhythm unique to the self I do not mean the one that follows the universal laws of constructivism, but rather its modality, that is, invention, which is creation, according to those laws that must belong to us all. That is why one hurdle that must fall and be avoided is influence, working under influence, whether of another poet or school—even if called modern. Proceed in an honorable and pure fashion: what one feels or sees directly is immediately rendered on the abstract plane of one's constructive invention.

Proceeding thusly means having made a clean break with descriptive naturalism (antithesis of art and commonplace of the one who has not yet understood) to enter the aesthetic plane, which is the plane of art, and hence of true creation.






**"Divertimento"**[6]

Cat is the rat of rattiness
resounding ringing of merriment
and it's war
and it's peace.
Quantity
sanctity
chastity
in every cue.
Tremendous thunder
agitates gigantic
taut and brutal.
And the measure collapses.
Bottle ballista of barrooms
baseness turns triumphant
the seed is blood
the air is crystal
and the wine
and the tine
and the graphologism
and the imp
and the fish
grow reversed.
The astral stiches
and the ostriches
are same things.
Same things terrify me.
Ten teeth
ten fingers
same things blighting.
The rough plaster
And the thick lacquer
the tar
the wax
and packs of scorpions
are.
Are of aural.
And spider hairy
rounded wary
and the swimmer
and the shimmer
of glimmer
are not.
Are not
and are of aural auricles
and tears
and fears
that are and are not
Are...
arias.
Wane refrain — shine of ring
ding — dong — the bell
tick — tock — the clock
Tam tam.
I'm shining in firmament
so content
so jovial
so animal
and so slow
that I blow
and I want
and I want to see
and flee
and say
to naysay.

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6 T.N.: It is widely agreed that poetry is the most challenging genre a translator will encounter. *Divertimento I* and *Divertimento II*, the poems by Joaquín Torres-García included in *Revista Arturo*, were particularly arduous, as they open "the floodgates"—as the author himself puts it in the text that precedes them—"letting everything in... except the sensible." While at times the poet uses a single word to embark on a cacophonous journey that is more about sound than meaning, at others, like the stanza that begins with the militants crossing the Seine, he is grounded in something like a scene. In any case, he never strays from the "personal rhythm" he has found for himself.
How to translate these sound-soaked lines? After some back and forth with the editor, we reached the decision to include two versions of the poem, one sonic, and the other literal. In the sonic version, for example, the rhyming "vino/tino" becomes "wine/tine" though *tino*—as the literal version indicates—actually means tact. In another instance, a childish riff on the Spanish verb *subo* that ends, unexpectedly, with the word for rice ("Subo saba sibi sini/ sini tini del arroz") becomes a similar game of switched vowels on the basis of the English equivalent, "go up" ("Go up ga ap gi ip gi in/ gi in ti in of rice"); for lack of a more literal option, these lines are the same in both versions. In a handful of cases, the rhymes miraculously worked out perfectly in both languages (*suprema/crema* and supreme/cream). Most, though, required a flurry of back-and-forthing between thesaurus and rhyming dictionary in search of the closest word that would fit the rhyming scheme. So, for example, when the poet rhymes *carlinga* (cockpit) with *catinga* (stench), the sonic version uses armpit, which, I thought, suggests at least the possibility of stench. The sonic version is thus a humble attempt to enter the aesthetic plane, just as Torres-García proposed, while the literal version (which is included in a note at the end of each poem) offers a faithful rendition of the poet's words in English.

And fleeing
and shrieking
and perhaps jumping from bliss and shame
I see a hope
I see a snail
and I turn out the light
and there's no more sun.
Eternal play
and roll away
and tell and say
and never sway.
Enormous shapes
squalid bugs
strange beings
immense plains.
I am barely alone.
I go up...
The noise will cease.
I go up...
I don't drink the wine.
I go up...
And I go up
and I come
and I run
and there I go!
Wind of window
I go up...
Pleasant perfumes
I go up
I go up abruptly
and I go up
going up.
What is go up?
Go up ga ap gi ip gi in
gi in ti in of rice
we are two
we are three
welcome the pygmy.
For three days I've been in Alcoy
For three nights I've studied violin
and being in Alcoy
and scratching guts
I'm left at begin.
Blessed violin.

Grime.
grime brime
the eternal chime.

The flocks come
the flocks go
flocks of tomahawks.
Blocks.
By the block
blockading
men are blockish.
They are fish
they are cherry
in the putty.
White putty
putty blue
star and sun at once.
Candle
handle
on the crown
of the cow nailed down.
And the milky udder
of the mother cow.
Ten in the house out front
and another three
in the putty.
Commutable suitable
commensurable
multicolor.
From the crystal shop.
Crystal
pistol
inguinal crinkly
of psychiatry.
And by day
and aural hour
unexpected blasts
in the Basque casts
acquire capacity of audacity.
The blue hate
of the bisexual
the same.
Because fish is not fish
or varnish
or thicket
or cricket
but shine of wellwish.
The ledges of the things
and the gangs
the ledges of the fangs
and the things
fang thing fancying and shoestring

and ambrosia of tune in the balloon
cause har-de-har.
And at the peak of the mystique
and in the kiss of the cuisse
and in the singer's tale
is hidden a nightingale.
The whale was wailing
and no one cared.
Bisque comes from Vizcaya
and ferrum from the farrier
spark comes from the heat
and horror from terror.
Hummingbird, from antenna
from a ship on shore
and wind comes from water
and ice from Ecuador.
Bisque can't see straight.
Basque bisque from Vizcaya
red is your color
and the color of shame
and the color of squalor.
Bimbo bambo of cotton
the black man climbs on top
and pisses.
Divine freedom
of creation
I thank you
for your elation.
Bambo bembo the cockpit
I'm in love with the armpit.
Armpit
golden rhombus
in sky of solace.
And the aloes
deft and adventurous
rise up generous
in fields treacherous.
And the Rhin dreams.
Dreams in the dina dora
of the dreamy aurora
in meadows of flora.
Square squall of squall thundering
rumbling
at the pole's core.
And so passed the parade of the thirty-three civil
guards,
of the Apocalypse
apocalyptic.
Apocalyptic civil guards
elliptic.
Dipterous and antithesis
electrolysis.
Thirsty vinegar
and fried banana split
for Margaret.
The ancestors sound
crowned and downed
bearded missus
and light unsound
dreamed...
And left ringing and crying.
The pygmy pelican
looks of through me.
Don't look backwards see
pelican feathery
that ices the ices
and to the iceblink of ice
of blink and chink.
Don't look at me anymore.
Creaking cackle of chummy laughter
the cotton mix of blue polyp
the sharp eyesore
and the blasphemer
play the tambour.
Tambour
frenzy.
Golden the den
the squared squadron
insanity of saned
with sanity is saned.
Militants
throats slit
crossed the Seine.
They were all adrift
quite a scene.
It was an uncertain journey
beneath the Southern Cross.
Insanity with sanity is saned.
Orbicularis jutting from maxilla
epicene and ambiguous shake hands
shake the bosom
shake the fate
along the path.
Of wine from cruet
the mindset of the pet
and the rabid rage of the anisette

on the road
of time and of trample
trapper.
Timely trapper
of tremendous trampoline.
Parallelepiped
and little hole in the earth
oh so teeny tiny.
A roly-poly fell
oh so teeny tiny.
A bird eyed
and smiled.
Anecdote hugger-muggering
you go staggering
and the grocer brow-square
frying plan held in air
make a lovely pair.
Conjunct
conjunctivitis
of otitis.
Umbrella of umbra
of rain and spiders
of cane and clank
in the sandbank.
White sandbank
sandbank gray
gray and silver
walkway.
Farm of farmness and farmer
poet charmer
gargle of gargoyle
gongorism and cubism
encephalism
ism.
The astral lights
and the ostriches
are same things.
Same things terrify me.
The poet smiles
with compassion
when he hears the idiocy
of my melody.
Poor poet...!
Poet ringo
poet tango
ringo rango.
Renew of reneging and of rangifer
regenerate.
Regenerating the poetry
the poet.
Poet anemic
passéist
figurist.
Poet moonlight
egg white
corny cornet.
And the clarinet
of vignette
erroneous.
Erroneous and fruitless
poet furious.
Poet bilingual
stratosphere
panther...
And lilies gilded for the poet.
Brown of brownery
downer
brown
grounds iron
iron brown
spark of red brown of fire
of the shoer of the shoe stud
chivalry of the cavalry
of the chivalrous soldiers
of the headquarters quartered by the quartering of
the soldiers
a salary of solder
soldered
hard
of through
of the thru-beams
of the years of through
of the pew askew
digging.
And coming and going and coming
and rhythm and seam
of cost and spatial context
of space
and pace of thundercloud
of cloud
of black and white
and of drop
and tock tock
and striped thousands
striped sky
striper

and lightning
riding angles
roar
roar and rumble of deep grumble
and deep round and profound
peak
peakiest
laugh laughter laughter of lilac lilies
freshly
simple recalcitrance of masticating
of mandible masticating on taste
crack bone
hinge of mastication mandibular metabolic
by the metabolism of the merits of the evangelical
me-ritation
of the three-dimensional membrane cusp...
And the other responded:
Drama is dramatic
because of the dramatization of the opaque
qualities of opacity
because of the metaphysical elaboration of the
physical physics
of physicism
of erratic benoplastia
of hedonism
of alternating currents...
Agreed:
More considering
the tuning fork of the eurythmy eurythmic
micabillistic and pernicious
existence is peace
existence is sane
and seven
and seven teen
Constant and blunt
strikes
and if multiplied by three
and by eight...
And so...?
His numerical irritability astonishes me
but
constant and operant
it must be secant and blunt
by eurythmic opposition of accident.
And so
the verse
where is it?
where is the veridian verse?
that chaste veridian of sunken expression
sundry
estenoplastic visuality
ethereal
frigid sanity?
It's all right, but against that I oppose this other:
Closed block
on time lock
motley macula
blue devil
song auricula
they're songs of grays and fish
in snow so fecula.
Unquestionable enigma
stone surface
blessed can:
let's have the concept
the chest
the thunder
of the formidable plan.
Divine melody
Blue azure and wind of velvety.
Open space
fearsome and deformed lizard
the call of the place
are nothing in medieval terrain
From the ship that came
from the air that went
from the wave
from the fish
from the studs and wind that enchants
they laughed twisted.
But the beating of water persisted
and it was contradictory.
Green grass
and preserves
green preserves.
Land and land-ho
of embryo.
And of burning cataclysm
and canicular
of can.
And cantilevers
tiny vein.
Gray uproar.
Russet
colorless din
of chip

and of grip
and of courtship
and of hip
and of trinket.
Repeat...!
And street
and avenue.
Avenue venture
and three are found
the other way around.
Round the ten.
Got of goth
gothicizing
glottis glottic
glub glub
rhinoceros.
Gluttonous rhinoceros.
Gluttonous gluttony
quintain.
Tain sign
I'd sign
signifying and with boldness
the shame is in signing
and assigning
and saying
and not having to admire.[7]

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[7] "DIVERTIMENTO"
The cat is the bout of pickpocketing / resounding ringing of merriment / and it's war / and it's peace. / Little jokes / little drops / little pots / in every cue. / Tremendous thunder / shakes gigantic / taut and brutal. / And the measure collapses. / Bottle crossbow of barrooms / baseness turns triumphant / the seed is blood / the air is crystal / and the wine / and the tact / and the graphologism / and the imp / and the fish / grow backwards. / The astral lights / and the ostriches / are same things. / Same things terrify me. / Ten teeth / ten fingers / same things fatal. / The rough plaster / And the thick lacquer / the tar / the wax / and scourge of scorpions / are. / Are of sounds. / And spider hairy / round legged / and the cricket / and the shimmer / of polish / are not. / Are not / and are of audible sounds / and laments / and parrots / that are and are not. / Are... / singsong / Soft refrain — shine of ring / ding — dong — the bell / tick — tock — the clock. / Tam tam. / I'm shining in firmament / so content / so jovial / so animal / and so slow / that I feel / and I want / and I want to see / and flee / and say / to naysay. / And fleeing / and shrieking / and perhaps jumping from bliss and shame / I see a hope / I see a snail / and I turn out the light / and there's no more sun. / Eternal play / and roll / and tell and say / and never be. / Enormous shapes / squalid bugs / strange beings / immense plains. / I am barely alone. / I go up... / The noise will cease. / I go up... / I don't drink the wine. / I go up... / And I go up / and I come / and I have / and there I go! / Sale of window / I go up... / Pleasant perfumes / I go up... / I go up abruptly / and I go up / going up. / What is go up? / Go up ga ap gi ip gi in / gi in ti in of rice / we are two / we are three / welcome the Portuguese. / For three days I've been in Alcoy / for three nights I've studied violin / and being in Alcoy / and scratching guts / I'm left without an end. / Blessed violin. // Grime. / grime brime / the eternal song. / The flocks come / the flocks go / flocks of skins. / Barrels. / By the barrels / running over / men are brutish. / They are fish / they are cherry / in the mortar. / White mortar / mortar blue / star and sun at once. / Candle / ball / on the nape / of the cow spread eagle. / And the milky udder / of the mother cow. / Three in the house out front / and another ten / in the mortar. / Suitable peritoneum / peristaltic / multicolor. / From the crystal shop. / Crystal / branch / inguinal fold / of psychiatry. / And by day / and audible hour / unexpected gusts / in the Basque twists / acquire reputation of audacity. / The blue hate / of the bisexual / the same. / Because fish is not fish / or varnish / or thyme / or cricket / but shine of mullioned window. / The ledges of the things / and the cases / the ledges of the cheese / and the things / cheese thing thingamajig and butterfly / and ambrosia of tune in the branches / cause laughter. / And the peak of the birth / and in the kiss of the cherry / and in the singer's verse / a nightingale is hidden. / The whale was full / and no one cared. / Cross-eyed comes from Vizcaya / and iron from farrier / horror comes from fear / and spark from heat. / Hummingbird, from antenna / of the fisherman's boat / and wind comes from water / and ice from Ecuador. // The cross-eyed man can't see straight. / Basque cross-eyed man from Vizcaya / red is your color / and the color of shame / and the color of tremble. / Bimbo bambo of cotton / the black man climbs on top / and pisses. / Divine freedom / of creation / I thank you / for your rebellion. / Bambo bembo the cockpit / I'm in love with the stench. / Stench / golden rhombus / in starry sky. / And the aloes / deft and adventurous / rise up proud / in the sincere fields. / And the Rhin dreams. / Dreams in the dina dora / of the dreamy aurora / when the meadow colors. / Erase squall of pink squall / thundering / at the pole's core. / And so passed the parade of the thirty-three civil guards, / of the Apocalypse / apocalyptic. / Apocalyptic civil guards / elliptic. / Dipterous and antithesis / electrolysis. / Thirsty vinegar / and fried orange / for Margaret. / The audible lineage / cuckold and goring / bearded lady / and light out / dreamed... / And left ringing and crying. / The Portuguese pelican / looks of through me. / Don't look backwards like that / pelican of through / that freezes the ice / and the thread of ice / of ice and of linden. / Don't look at me anymore. / Squeaks the laughter of stocky laughter / the cotton mix of blue polyp / the sharp eyesore / and the blasphemer / play the tambour. / Tambour / frenzy. / Golden the doorway / the squared square / insanity of cure / with cure is cured. // Militants / throats slit / crossed the Seine. / They were all adrift / arousing pity. / It was an uncertain journey / beneath the Southern Cross. / Insanity with cure is cured. / Orbicularis jutting from maxilla / epicene and ambiguous shake hands / shake the bosom / shake the fate / along the path. / Of wine from cruet / the kennel of the dogs / and the rabid rage of the asparagus / on the road / of time and of deceit / trapper. / Early trapper / of tremendous trampoline. / Parallelepiped / and little hole in the earth / oh so teeny tiny. / A roly-poly fell / oh so teeny tiny. / A bird looked / and smiled. / Anecdote limpibambo / that you go staggering / and the uni-brow grocer / with the frying pan by its stub / make a lovely ensemble. / Ensemble / conjunctivitis / of otitis. / Umbrella of water / of rain and spiders / of cane and plantation / in the

**“Divertimento” II**

Judge
reversed budge.
Bearded judge
bearded beardless.

Beard comes from barber
barber from barberry
from barbarian and in fact
fact de facto.

And in facticity
of beard and simplicity
of the barbershop.
The hairdresser
of the hairdresser’s
shaves his beard
with measure.

He shaves
shave
shorn
oil and perfume
wash and groom
barber’s pursuit
for loot.

Barber’s money
good money.

Money current
sonorant
in paper bills
resonant.

Resonant
of sonance
of sound
of soundless sound
of paper bills.

Soundless sound
sound of money

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sandbank. / White sandbank / sandbank gray / gray and silver / stilts. / Farm of farmness and farmer / foreign poet / gargle of gargoyle / gongorism and cubism / encephalism / ism. / The astral lights / and the ostriches / are same things. / Same things terrify me. / The poet smiles / with compassion / when he hears the idiocy / of my song. / Poor poet...! / Poet ringo / poet tango / ringo rango. / Lame from limping and from rangifer / regenerate. / Regenerating the poetry / and the poet. / Poet anemic / passéist / figurist. / Poet moonlight / egg white / clearing of bugle. / And the clarinet / of machete / erroneous. / Erroneous and barren / poet furious. / Poet bilingual / stratosphere / panther... / And lilies primped for the poet. / Brown of brownery / downer / brown / err iron / iron brown / spark of red brown of fire / of the ironsmith of the horseshoe stud / cavalry of horses / of the cavalry soldiers / of the headquarters quartered by the quartering of the soldiers / paid of solder / soldered / hard / of through / of the crossbeams / of the years of through / of the b-s you fit / digging. / And coming and going and coming / and rhythm and seam / of cost and spatial context / of space / and sluggishness of thundercloud / of cloud / of black and of white / and of drop / and tock tock / and thousand stripes / striped sky / striper / and the lightning / riding angles / noise / noise and rumble of deep rumbling / and deep profound and tall / peak / peakiest / laugh laughter laughter of pink roses / freshly / simple recalcitrance of masticating / of mandible masticating on taste / crack bone / hinge of mastication mandibular metabolic / by the metabolism of the merits of the evangelical me-ritation / of the three-dimensional membrane cusp... / And the other responded: / Drama is dramatic / because of the dramatization of the opaque qualities of opacity / because of the metaphysical elaboration of the physical physics / of physicism / of erratic benoplastia / of hedonism / of alternating currents... / Agreed: / More considering / the tuning fork of the eurythmy eurythmic / micabillistic and pernicious / existence is peace / existence is sane / and seven / and seven teen / Constant and blunt / strikes / and if multiplied by three / and by eight... / And so...? / His numerical irritability astonishes me / but / constant and operant / it must be blotter and blunt / by eurythmic opposition of accident. / And so / the verse / where is it? / where is the veridian verse? / that chaste veridian of sunken expression / bursting / estenoplastic visuality / ethereal / frigid sanity? / It’s all right, but against that I oppose this other: / Closed block / on time pursed / motley macula / blue devil / sugary song / they’re songs of grays and fish / in well-tempered snow. / Unquestionable enigma / stone surface / blessed canine: / let’s have the concept / the chest / the thunder / of the formidable plan. / Divine melody / Blue azure and wind of ambrosia / Open space / fearsome and deformed lizard / the call of the desert / are nothing in medieval terrain / From the ship that came / from the air that went / from the wave / from the fish / from the studs and wind that enchants / that made them laugh. / But the beating of water persisted / and it was contradictory. / Green grass / and preserves / green preserves. / Earth and clod / of embryo. / And of burning cataclysm / and canicular / of canine. / And cantilevers / tiny vein. / Gray uproar. / Russet / Colorless din / of chip / and of chair / and of moth / and of keel / and of trinket. // Silence...! / And street / and avenue / Avenue come / and they’re three / backwards. / Backwards from the ten. / Drop of goth / dripping / glottis glottic / glub glub / rhinoceros. / Gluttonous rhinoceros. / Gluttonous gluttony / quintain. / Ferm firm / I’d sign / firmly and with boldness / the shame is in signing / and affirming / and saying / and not having to admire.

nominal
fantasmagonal
rectangular and spherical
coin.

Coin coyness
(work in progress)
“the morning dress”.

(It’s ill
too descriptive
too typical.)

I see that.
Ah…!
The letters!

A B C
C H D
Enough!

Rhyme
rhyme that rhymes
rhymes with chimes
and doesn’t rhyme
and won’t rhyme
and can’t rhyme
and didn’t rhyme
nor will ever rhyme
with pipe or tobacco
of tobacconist
because it’s ridiculous
and such a need
necessarily
must be nefarious
nefarious and blistering
like a flame burning
brilliant and sensual
like an animal
persistent and asperous
like madness
and simple and decrepit
like the arachnid.

But… (can you calm down?)
better to stay quiet
than cause a riot
better laugh than die
sleep than bury
charge than pay
dance than cry
eat and drink
and laze
than work.

Work of work
work to work
(make it work)
work irk
with clerk and irk
of irk worship
the worker
of workerness
of the workeroles
down the holes
and perforations
of a few orations
of hardware shop
of highest lot
still applicable
because they’re amicable
but it’s as ephemeral
as a general.

General of Generalife
alife.

Generalship
of whip.

Whip
of whisper
whisper of whippet
whippet of pet
pet of pat
pit of pot
cat of cot
cat of tac
tac of bat
rabbit of bit and rabid
and rabid of rage.

And so the whatnots
go with the untaughts
and the untaughts
with the whatnots.

And it's logical and tame
that it's that way
and not that way
because it's the same.

Just the same
it's insane
and not the same.

Same
what would be "same"?

Unfathomable enigma
triangular and opaque
stigma.

Arcane!
of ark and cane
plain like the main.

Languor supreme
sweet like cream
soft and pontifical
like a fondle.

Oh... how magnifical!
How pontifical!
How sweet the cream supreme of milk and
oatmeal!

Philanthropist.

I stop here
it's weird
but not
the other way around
it's clear
so clear
clear on the ear
like the aurora
clear and transparent
like a torrent
well if I stop
and a truth to assert
alert!
I am alert
and I won't divert
but I stop here
and it's not weird
it's not
not even the other way around
because it's so clear
clear on the ear
like the aurora
and transparent
(I already said it)
like water from a torrent.

Now
hypocrisy rhymes with philanthropy.

A coincidence...
with incidence.

The same as flower and hour
power and sour
lighthouse and spouse
vein and train
hen and kitchen
and beard and barber
as I said first.

And the judge reversed budge
the bearded judge beardless
things that are and are not.

Staccato comes from tomato
and tomato from animato
like sweep from weep
and runoff from run.

I've run out...
What will the poet say?[8]

Montevideo, Nov. 1937, Oct. 1943.
J. TORRES-GARCÍA

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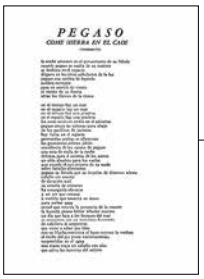
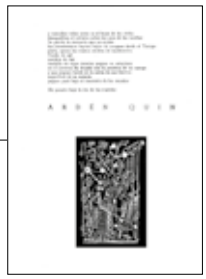
[8] "DIVERTIMENTO" II
The judge / reversed. / Bearded judge / bearded beardless. // Beard comes from barber / barber from fallow / from barbarous and in fact / fact de facto. // And straight / of beard and making / of the barbershop. / The hairdresser / of the hairdresser's / shaves his beard / with melancholy. // He shaves / shave / shorn / oil and perfume / wash and rinse / barber's trade / for money. // Barber's money /





**PEGASUS EATS GRASS IN CHAOS (EXCERPT)**

night breaks in the thought of his fable
when pegasus breaks loose from his instinct
runs amok in space
shoots in the sites yearning for light
pegasus that legendary shadow
terrestrial shadow
goes in the wind's direction
the wind of his shape
attracts the earth's wings

in time there is a sea
in space there is a sea
in time there is a meadow
in space there is a meadow
beings are in order in the universe
pegasus crosses the heads hung
of the hyacinth pacifists
there is fury in space
hidden geometries are elated
the geometries recover joy
din of pegasus's hooves
the night's coat of mail
defense for the star system
an absolute ear for the gaps
even exceeds the movement of his flight
over abstract battles
pegasus is driven by his impulse of aerial dynamos
horse without death
of blue length
his universe's stay
has managed to rise
and a being that postpones
as his desire requires
to drink water
steed that postpones death's presence
the legend perseus walser woodsman sailor
one day that he descends on the sea forests
he meets a horrendous monster
with a mane of snakes
who is coming to rob his islands
with his mechanical Axe the diver slits the medusa
the fish's rust has reminiscences,
suspended in the water
a hand traces a winged horse
that saves the ocean's gates

when the Horse is born
and its body meets the waters
it can already see the sentiment of its shape
in the curves of its mane
what space is boundary
with steel wings
what time is boundary

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good money. // Hard money / sonorous / in paper bills / resonant. // Resonant / of sonance / of sound / of deaf sound / of paper bills. // Deaf sound / sound of money / nominal / fantasmagonal / rectangular and spherical / coin. // Coin charm / (put anything) / "the broken leg". // (It's amiss / too descriptive / too normal). // I see that. / Ah...! / The letters! // A B C / C H D / Enough! // Rhyme / rhyme that rhymes / rhymes with flour / and doesn't rhyme / and won't rhyme / and can't rhyme / and didn't rhyme / nor will ever rhyme / with pipe or tobacco / of tobacconist / because it's ridiculous / and such a need / necessarily / must be nefarious / nefarious and hot / like a burning flame / brilliant and sensual / like an animal / persistent and hard / like madness / and simple and decrepit / like the moth. // But... (can you calm down?) / better to stay quiet / than to talk absurdities / better laugh than die / sleep than bury / charge than pay / dance than cry / eat and drink / and laze / than work. // Work of work / work to work / (make it work) / work low / with lock and lower / of lower locking / the worker / of workerness / of the workeroles / down the holes / and perforations / of a few questions / of hardware shop / most high ranking / still applicable / because of their extreme precaution / but it's as trivial / as a general. // General of Generalife / alife. // Generalship / of duck. // Duck / of kicking / kicking of clumsy / clumsy of bear / bear of dare / waiter of waitress / whatnot of thing / house of remove / remove of cow / rabbit of bit and of limp / and limp of rage. // And so the things / go with houses / and the houses / with the things. // And it's logical and natural / that it's that way / and not that way / because it's the same // Just the same / because it's insane / and not the same. // Same... / what would be "same"? // Unfathomable enigma / triangular and opaque / jumpy. // Arcane! / of arch and of gray / flat like the hand. // Languor supreme / sweet like cream / soft and pontifical / like a fondle. // Oh... how delicious! / How pontifical! / How sweet the cream supreme of milk and oatmeal! // Philanthropist. // I stop here / it's weird / but not / the other way around / it's clear / so clear / with audible clarity / like the aurora / clear and transparent / like a fountain / well if I stop / and it's certainly true / alert! / I am alert / and I won't go / but I stop / and it's not weird / it's not / not even the other way around / because it's so clear / with audible clarity / like the aurora / and transparent / (I already said it) / like water from a fountain. // Now / hypocrisy rhymes with philanthropy. // A coincidence... / but it's the same. // The same as flower and smell / tambour and pain / cry and husband / parsley and train / hen and kitchen / and beard and barber / as I said first. // And the judge reversed / the bearded judge beardless / things that are and are not. // Impetus comes from tomato / and tomato from auction / like sweep from brush / and stampede from run. // I've veered... / What will the poet say?

pegasus admires all that he senses emerge in the light
it gets steeper outside of the seaweed
from antiquity he gathers his mane
he plants them extends the height of the aegean
tramples universe of clocks
on days of rain
tramples magnets on the fire
on solstice nights
pierces a sword with aerial blade
against the unicorn that smiles at him reaching the prairie
dismantles the figure of something
the unicorn crushes the wildflower
something no other beast does

the unicorn is lying discerned amidst rain grasses
grasses that flow the countries to
sun out
on the mansards
on the exterior of the day of the trees
that populate the meadows of the atlas
next to the sun
the larch bites the trees of time
bearing alarched fruits
the faucet that the dust lifts
or separates the fire
falls into an ocean of mercury
I swim in the air of the nights
does his movement close
climbing steps
of another
order
of universes
which is what pegasus goes through
galaxies in flock of novas
worlds open when his fresh frontal hunger
shows the resolution of his mouth
the animal's lunch
what's about to happen is green
during a stroll through the clouds
the flash of pegasus's maneuver
defeats the stars
moves from mediterranean to atlantic
another seashore
the atlantic moons
that watch him
he sinks
before the seasons can be seen logs
of propeller
plantations of forests lit in the north
in less than time is submerged
creates sometimes ha
the corriente del golfo
emerges radiant after the sleep towards the last existing tree

it occurs to him to water amidst the constellations
machine his engines at the start of the heavens
yet again pegasus
without meddling with eternity
knows the golden numbers
once again an old man leads him to other side of something
others when he enters into a street
and the water that dreams
the jar overflows
an ether wind passes

horse of the ethers
your silence is no small matter. Nor is
the horse girl of Pegasus's eyes
nothing is so happy in the universe to measure height!
pegasus you sleep
the horizon is born
and pegasus, gallops in depths
withdrawn vertigos
with an eye that watches from the universe's sole instance

so pegasus
swimming in the perfume of the worlds
in his geometry of the beginning
in brief moment is lost to sight
in the sky he is a magellanic and his dawns
and now that pegasus is established he orders
what is missing
devours his grass grazes
a deep dose of nothingness
back in the field there is a water for the animals
next to the spring is a mute
the mirror attracts his balance
after his dinner the horse will head over there
will water will cloud the water
and surely regret the place of residence

pegasus sees himself in eternities that flow
and is thus a violence of faces
behind the water or on the verge of the resistance
to narcissism
the men stop in the curves of their blood
keep the silence of their horsemen's flight
things come to a halt.
and in their nets
the kingdoms
are ready

and whirlpool swift as the hole of the cycles
unbalances the infinite over the eyes of the tombs
The memory of I exist is lost
the thermometers manage to lower the quicksilver
from Time
paws, sets the hands atop equinoxes
Night of salt
shadow of light
medal with pegasus parked on its reverse
on the obverse he's left with his body's meadow
and which pegasus casts in the powerhouse of his
irons
surface of his essence
pegasus passed beneath the insomnia of the
worlds

I have passed beneath the fury of the worlds

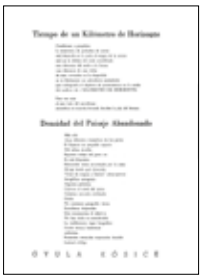
ARDÉN QUIN

Transmisión de Tierra

**EARTH TRANSMISSION**

A black man awaits the sun
A limit in the stones discovered
The air begins
Breathing is revealed
The animals move
They've got death where hunger ends
The cavity of the residence does not weigh on time
Of the forest
The ground makes the horizon
When the stars fall
The face of exhaustion leaves in the dark
Fish know nothing of other climates
The print the water leaves
The woman's gaze doesn't reach
The mountain grows without stakes
Fire is durable like salt
In the tree
The light is seed
The ants finish walking

A masseuse alters the perseverance
Of the woodsman
And the making of the wind
The hangers lodge the machine's vacations
A skyscraper is grown
With the topic of the pool's ruins
The cement's revelation establishes the dimension
Of the panorama
Caterpillars in the resistance of the oil
Propagate the helicopter's visibility
The example in the solution of the rockets
Seconds the speed of the telescope
Avenue stage of the thermometer
Keys in the utility of the cattle
The vitamin guest
The flooding of metal
Directed to the advantage of the children
What happens testament of the fog
In the decree of the athletic zones
Attention scales in the waves.



**TIME OF A HORIZON KILOMETER**

Purposefully condensing
the resistance of metal tissues
the origin of ash is unleashed in the cage
it's in the crease of the kneeling sky
a distance from ground to forehead
a distance of a suitcase
of eyes vetted in a farewell
it's easy to spot a sleepwalking calendar
that x-rays the warehouse of the night's stay
of the corpse of 1 HORIZON KILOMETER.

Once again
on the other side of the meridian
microbes on forced march determine the bronze barb.

**DENSITY OF THE ABANDONED LANDSCAPE**

Even more so
Different arch replacement of parts
Space a small space
Of the Sapphic alcaphone
Horses shooting of the gesture not
Being willing
Education starts pierced by the coast
Directs horde what direction
"Map and border class" (descriptive)
Hieroglyphic ontogeny
Some steps
Capture at judgment level
Immense civilized proximity
Free
Does not respond tender geography
Statistic dispersion
That rewards the objective
There is no doubt it's considerable
The indifference biographical vigor
Degree trial homage
tiny chains.
Average retention exposition durable
Latitude 0'08791

GYULA KÓSICE

**THE FRAME: A PROBLEM IN ART TODAY (1944)**

In response to the bourgeois revolution in France in '79,[9] a strong naturalist tendency invaded the arts, especially painting, which for many years was reduced to the role of a photographic machine.

What was needed was a Cézanne who, thanks to such a painterly conceptualization, was able to say, "I discovered the sunlight could not be reproduced; it had to be represented," or a Gauguin who wrote, "Primitive art comes from the spirit and expands nature. So-called refined art comes from sensuality and serves nature. Nature is the servant of the first and the master of the second. When refined art becomes nature's servant, when the artist becomes nature's acolyte, it is degraded. This is how we have fallen into the abominable error of naturalism, which began with the Greece of Pericles..." (1)[10] Hence, slowly, painting was able to return to its long-forgotten ancient laws.

That actually happened in 1907 (2), with the emergence of Cubism. The value of laws of proportion and of color, composition, and everything else related to technique would once again be fully recognized in the creation of a painting.

Cubism was succinctly defined by Guillaume Apollinaire in the October 14, 1914 issue of *Le Temps*. He spoke of the "geometric aspect of paintings where artists have, with great purity, attempted to restore essential reality." And that desire to express the reality of things is what, by way of Futurism, would take painting further and further into abstraction to culminate in the final phases of Cubism, non-objectivism, Neo-Plasticism, as well constructivism's abstract approach.

At that moment, when it would seem that the artist could not be further from nature, Vicente Huidobro stated, "Man has never been this close to nature: he no longer attempts to imitate its outward appearances, but rather do as it does, imitating its deepest laws of construction by rendering a whole within the mechanism of the production of new forms."

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9 E.N.: 1789.

10 T.N.: The translation in the text is of Rothfuss's translation into Spanish of the Gauguin quote, originally in French. One English translation of the Gauguin based on the original French is "Primitive art comes from the spirit and uses nature. So-called refined art

The problem of pure visual creation was being solved, but the solution itself, in its staunch dialecticalness, created another problem—one less pronounced in Neo-Plasticism and constructivism, because of their orthogonal composition, than in Cubism and non-objectivism. That problem is *the frame*.

Because based as compositions either on the rhythms of slanted lines or on triangular or polygonal shapes, Cubism and non-objectivism formulated a new problem: the rectangular frame as impediment to the visual development of the theme. The painting, therefore, inevitably became a mere fragment.

This was quickly sensed, and paintings ventured solutions. For example, MAN RAY, LÉGER, BRAQUE, and—closer at hand—the autumnal Cubist Pettoruti, among others, based some of their compositions on circles, ellipses, or polygons within an oblong frame. But that was not a solution either—it is precisely the regularity of those shapes, their uninterrupted, symmetrical contours, that dominates the composition, once again cutting it off.

That is why most of those paintings adhered to the concept of the *window* at play in naturalistic paintings, giving us part—not all—of the theme. A painting with regular frame produces a sense of continuity that only vanishes when the frame is rigorously structured according to the painting's composition, that is, when the edge of the canvas plays an active role in creation—as it always should. A painting should be something that begins and ends in itself. Without interruption.

RHOD ROTHFUSS

(1) Paul Gauguin, Notes Éparses.
(2) From Guillermo Janneau in ART CUBISTE

No Expression
Representation
Meaning

Man will conquer multidimensional space.

Jubilation. Negation of any melancholy.
Constructive Will. Communion.
Poetry of the social contract.

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comes from sensuality and serves nature. Nature is the servant of the first and the mistress of the second. But the servant cannot forget her origins, she degrades the artist by allowing him to adore her. This is how we fall into the abominable error of Naturalism. Naturalism begins with the Greece of Pericles."

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