

Poetry emerges from the whole body, not just the mind or the tongue. This is especially clear in the work of Italian poet Patrizia Vicinelli (Bologna 1943-1991). Vicinelli often said that her work and her life were one and the same, it's a nice myth to build around the poet-self. Words emerge from every limb, seep out, spill to the pavement to listeners' ears. Vicinelli worked in various forms but what has interested me most is her relationship to sound. When listening to tapes of her reciting her own work the power of poetry emanates; what is then found on the page is something resembling a score rather than the poem itself. It is only a trace, a record of the real event.

For this reason, I've made a translation on paper that attempts to perform its own recitation. There is the original poem in Italian as well as my English version, but there are lots of other handwritten notes to self and to potential reader. These range from definitions to theories to multiple versions to new poems inspired by Vicinelli. I wanted to make clear that translation is a series of choices of course, but there is also some spontaneity in the work, and that the results could have always been different. I was also inspired by Vicinelli's own visual poetry in her book *à,a.A.*.

A while back I read David Rattray's essay "Translating Artaud" which appears in his book *Becoming One of the Invisible*, (1992) and it's stayed with me through every translation I work on. He says you have to identify with the author, he says it's an occupational hazard. With Vicinelli it really is dangerous—she'd give anything for the sake of the poem. I can only try to live up to that in translating her.

①

PARTE PRIMA
LONTANI DAL PARADISO, STRADA NON ANCORA
AVVISTATA

...TOUNAVANO
gli spiriti dormienti santi
fino ad allora in siera o in passeggiata silenziosa,
veli, camicie, RESPIRI
tut'intorno le valli del desiderio

EMERGONO
E
abissi sopra abissi — crateri
che occuperanno valanghe
per altri nemici impugnabili.

...danze sfrenate
in cui si progetta lussuria
per l'incontentabile notte dell'uomo erangue
che parte, ULTIMO VIAGGIO
ocelli che si abbattono al suolo
e in qualche caso,
volano

Falso
senza sosta verso
tin
(tin

trano!)
e gli elmi di quelli uccisi questa notte
durante un'avventura con la morte, un INCONTRO
appunto
FATALE
t.u.c.a.t.e.
(d'estate) arrampicandosi su per la vite americana
che era verde
legato con fili di nylon e chiodi alla parete,
su fino ai battenti
della finestra chiusa della mia stanza di ospite
del tuo palazzo di campagna stile novecento,
o amico re!

CUT-UP ARTIST

ALL THE DIFFERENT LANGUAGES
My language could be

un altro mare

Patrizia Vicinelli
focus on changing
focus on verbs
how to make a (poem in)
translation how forward

Ho cercato di annullare quello
che già conoscevo perché non
mi dà scampo, non mi dà scampo,
ed è sublime invece il soggiorno
su questa terra
avrei voluto. PV

Cixous but even stronger —
that is her body speaks
but she also speaks about
her body, bodily functions

A particular voice but
without affect

Logophilia

Can we/me compare her
to Ginsberg reading "Howl"?

How does she write
nothing?

Signatures like New York
the 1980s

I tried to look out
because I wasn't cool
no more the safety
and it's still so unsafe
this stay on earth
I would have wanted

trans. Alison Grimaldi Dentone
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②

First Part Far from Paradise. The Road Still Unseen.

... THEY THUNDERED
the sleeping spirits saints
until now in siera or a silent walk,
veli, nightshirts/shirts/ breaths.
all around the valleys of desire

THEY EMERGE
AND
abyss over abyss — crateres
that will occupy avalanches
for other unassailable/impregnable enemies.

...unrestrained/uncontrollable/wild dances
in which one plans/projects lust/desire/licentiousness/
lasciviousness
for the irrepressible/uncontrollable night of the pale/washed
out/ bleed dry man
who leaves/departs, LAST TRIP/journey/voyage
birds that hit/
demolish/ tear down the ground/soil/land
and in some cases,
fly
without stopping/rest
towards the sky/up
tin (tin tin tin tin tin) [onomatopoeic sound??]

ding ding dinnning
and the hamlets of those killed this night
during the adventure with death, a MEETING
indeed
FATAL
t.h.u.n.d.e.r.
(in summer) climbing up by American vines
which were green
ned with nylon threads/strings and nails to the wall,
all the way up to the shutters
from the closed window of my guest room
in your twentieth century country palace
oh friend king/amico re! / amico king!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Allison Grimaldi Donahue the author of *Body to Mineral* (Publication Studio Vancouver, 2016) and the co-author of *On Endings* (Delere Press, 2019). She is translator of Carla Lonzi's *Self-portrait* (Divided, 2021) and *Blown Away* (Fomite, 2021) by vito m. bonito. Her writing and translations have appeared in places like *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Words Without Borders*, *BOMB*, *Mousse and Tripwire*, and she has recently performed at Guggenheim Venice, Kunsthalle Bern, Cabaret Voltaire, MACRO, MAMbo and Short Theatre Rome. She holds an MA in Italian literature from Middlebury College and a PhD in Philosophy from European Graduate School. She lives in Bologna.