

Marc Delouze was born in Paris, and is a poet and traveller "by necessity". His first poetry collection, *Souvenirs de la maison des mots*, was published in 1971 (prefaced by Louis Aragon). Three other publications ensued.

He made a lot of poetica adaptations from Armenian (the Anthology directed by Rouben Melik), Hungarian (an anthology), Spanish (Neruda), Hebrew, Arabic...

Following his initial success, he refused to "play the part of the poet" anymore, and chose not to publish anything for twenty years. During this time, he founded *Les Parvis Poétiques* (1982), a literary organisation that regularly organises festivals, acoustic exhibitions, readings, and events of various kinds. He also researched and worked on innovative methods of poetic expression in connection with modern urban life: street performances, poetry and music combinations, and so on.

In 2000 he set up the *Festival Permanent des poésies dans le 18ème arrondissement*, which takes place in the area of Montmartre (Paris) and features not only poets but also actors, musicians, dancers, singers, choirs, painters and video artists. Marc Delouze was also co-founder of and literary advisor to the poetry festival *Les Voix de la Méditerranée* (Lodève, south of France).

Latest collections (since 2000) :

T'es beaucoup à te croire tout seul (You're many to Believe Yourself Alone) éd. La Passe du Vent, 2000

L'homme qui fermait les yeux sans baisser les paupières (The Man who closed his eyes without lowering his Eyelids), récit, éd. Le Bruit des Autres.2002

Epouvantails (Scarecrows), éd. Lanore littérature, 2004

La Diagonale des poètes (The Diagonal of the Poets), essai, éd. La Passe du Vent.2003

rue des martyrs, récit, éd. Le bruit des autres 2005

Dames de Cœur (Queens of Hart), récit, éd. Le bruit des autres 2006

C'est le monde qui parle (The world who speaks), récit, éd. Verdier 2009

Yeou, Piéton des Terres, proses poétiques, éd. La Passe du Vent 2009

Des poètes aux Parvis (anthology with 74 poets from Parvis Poétiques), éd. La Passe du Vent. 2011

14975 jours entre... (14975 days between...) poems, éd. La Passe du Vent, 2012

Le Chant des Terre, (The Song of Lands), poem, la Porte 2014

Chroniques du Purin (Chronicle of the Manure), novel, 2016

Les confitures de la mémoire, (Jams of the memory), stories, 2016

L'invention du paysage (The invention of the landscape), poem,, lieux-dits éd. 2016

Petits poèmes post-it (little poems post-it), poèmes, Maelstrom éditions, 2018

Deuil du singe (Mourning of the monkey), lieux-dits éd. 2018

He is also the author of 10 artists' books created in close collaboration with various painters.

Marc Delouze's poems have been translated in 19 languages.

“My Testament”, by Louis Aragon (extract, 1971)

“I was at a very low point in my life (Aragon’s wife had just died) when I received poems from someone called Marc. They were like a light at the end of dark tunnel. This voice became a familiar one to me. In fact, Marc Delouze is a little bit of my life, which is why I’m still alive. In retrospect, it was thanks to him that I forced my trembling hand to write some words in that June 1970. Marc gave me the will to survive, even if at that time I was not conscious of this fact.

Here is this new voice that has since then grown, affirmed itself, is succeeding his first book, which in my opinion even after a life as long as mine, is still a moving experience, the birth of a poet. I would put Marc Delouze alongside Victor Hugo, this Marc Delouze whose name we shall become familiar with just as once we learned the names of Nerval or Rimbaud. Ah, I hear you say, he is exaggerating. But you see I love these poems and he who loves, can be excused if sometimes he exaggerates.

Something is beginning here. Something that I will not see the end of but that with my last breath I want to predict.”

Poets and poems

« Poetry » may be a filter, a fine-meshed sieve, a concealing veil stretched coyly between reality and the senses, a way of escaping this reality, an “extra helping of soul” which societies tolerate with compassion and a touch of condescension, a witness to the “other world” in which poets, lying in immaculate shrouds stitched with their own white hands, pathetically wave the extinct torches of their inaudible poems: more often than not, anthologies resemble cemeteries in which the living dead, full of their own silent inanity, pompously hold forth

On the other hand, poetry – no quotation marks this time – may function as a developer of the real, a shredder of illusions, lies and other misuses of meaning, when it employs language like an acid, without, however, injuring the imaginary. A difficult and hazardous enterprise, but especially necessary in these sly, creeping times. They who feel irrepressibly drawn to the writing of poetry must then enter “supreme difficulty”, if they are not “to fall by the wayside and remain there” (Thomas Bernhard).

In this inexhaustible and exhausting, yet supremely urgent need to write it all down, in full view and with absolute percipience, poetry arouses what arouses her and arouses us all: what is harsh or gentle, saturated or sketched, stroked or scratched, obscure or dazzling, visible or guessed at. Rather than resort to the facile juggling of oxymorons, it tosses words and images like marker stones into the fallow field of language, or buoys into a stormy sea.

Rather than resort to the “poetic”, which, as Henri Meschonnic reminds us, is most often “the poem’s worst enemy”, poets have a duty to question their imperious need to “tell a story” in the sometimes flickering, sometimes brutal light of the language they themselves are questioning; this enables them to weave a poetry both narrative and untamed, as did Blaise Cendrars or Henri Michaux – the latter in his “travel” works – and, to cite a more contemporary instance, Derek Walcott, in his remote yet intimate voice.

Marc Delouze

Ars poetica

I am a poet by the force of circumstances
By the force of words our hands on the things
By the force of bonds that unite me to things
For each thing a bond
For each word a hand
Myriad aspects dress the palm and its secrets
are written into statues like enigmatic Buddhas
From theoretic to theoretic the nail hardly marks
the streak of passing time
and the fissure in words threatens me
like the frailty of smouldering paper

Desert of evaporated words

He is sitting,
He has no name
Of course, he exists. Or almost :
he is on the point of existing.
He sits on the previous edge of existence.

He is on the outer limits of the dune and of men,
the eye confronted with emptiness,
with its own convexity.

In the silence of his awakening being as never was the horizon,
space is a look he learns to look at.

The desert will name him.

The desert is a word that imprints him on the inside of its skin, like the books that write us onto the page of the Great Memory, on the geological asphalt of the way that passes us out.

He does not move.

Time shifts and advances towards him.

Existence approaches him from the furthest infinity.

On its way it grabs strips of sand from the dunes' summits like dead skin on the face of the sun, like love

or pain

grab fragments of ephemeral syllables from stratified bodies.

He says nothing.

Write, he is not able to.

On the point of existing, he must preserve his inner most being in readiness.

Seated, let us leave him there.

We

we are here.

You Wander

in an undergrowth of T.V. antennas
pinch yourself
believe you are dreaming
you resemble a prehistoric animal
contemplating its own demise.

In your chest an injured bird's sternum.
Between your thighs a blind radar stamen
dozes.

You allow enter into you the past's reaping machine
become a seed in the hollow of earth's history.
Make the concrete of your dream enter you
and finally give birth to your own individual story.

*

In your head

a subway
the scream of a child
the mauve eyes of this little girl you,
little boy,
never dared to kiss
a dormant love
the hatred of a neighbour
the smoke of a cigarette
a cop a doctor a counter
millions of million things
which maderize
in the black barrel of the night

you search for your mouth
an exit
you only find your jaws
you knock – *is someone there?*

you know
love for the world is beautiful
as is a question with no answer

*

You believe you're going

far away
a wild desire to travel
stirs you
your shoulder blades are spreading
like wings
don't look back
close your eyes
you mould the air
trickling through your fingers
don't look back
open your eyes
the wings on your back are there
Ya
right in front of you
as the target is already contained in the arrow

*

In the anonymous crowd

one should sometimes worry
where have gone
the curve of the shoulder
the hollow of one's arm
the blue vein of the sexe
the stretched knee
the high instep of the foot?

now words, words, mere words
lost
in the maze of streets and connections

sitting on the edge of your gaze
you enjoy thinking the world is simple

facing the simplified shape of the world
measure how intricate your gaze is

*

Say nothing

just for a while
say nothing
listen
listen deeply
listen to the noise of what says nothing
in you
what moves
when you are still
could suddenly arise

don't move

you walk
you stop
you bend down
touch with your finger
say
can't you feel?
it's pounding
under the ground
under the skin of the ground
a mild hard on
wave coming and going

let yourself penetrated
let yourself penetrating

*

Memory

is always made of past
seen in profile

Your memories are smooth
their joints are concealed
you believe your life with no hollows
full of yourself at all times

Then
the way the others look through you without seeing you
you know
how many empty spaces are within you

But this emptiness: it's you
You are
Passage

Objects

make of you this cupboard
where the real is piled up folded disinfected

You think it's inside
and when you are inside
you think it's outside
and you come out
naked as Adam
And you say: but what?

This way you open the door – you think.
What if the door was opening you?
And what and who inside?

What penetrates you?

What escapes you?

*

You say

Stone is hard, I have to be as well.

You dream of going through the stone
as eyes can traverse crystal.

Your look is hard, too hard
Your look is not your own
Inside of you nothing is hard
but the muffled desire

There is somewhere inside of you an empty eye
let it be offered
at last

(Four days after the attack on New York, a typhoon of unprecedented force hit Taipei, killing nearly two-hundred people and leaving hundreds more wounded. Thousands were left homeless, having lost everything. Will the compassion of men be there for them? Where is the world's path leading? Where does man's path end?)

Typhoon upon Taipei

**It's raining on Taipei
It's raining on Taipei
Rain
Rain
Rain
The sweat of seconds
The heavy tears of minutes
And the weighty grief of hours
Inundate Earth's cheeks
The sky's water sack
Has split
Swallowing the days
And the nights
It's time it its entirety that's falling on Taipei**

**From the Ararat of the poem
I contemplate the silence that falls
on Taipei**

**In the city's arteries
Trunks of men oscillate like corks
Floundering in a warm yellow blood
They no longer see their feet
They no longer see their steps
Nor the trace of their steps
They no longer walk--they drift
Among the corpses of things swallowed
Where are they headed?
From where do they come?
From nowhere to nowhere they drift
Their faces dulled by stupor
And their smiles sad as fallen fruit
That no one will come to gather**

**It's raining on Taipei all the century's tears wailing
As if we already knew
Right here
The end of all of this**

(The wind gone, sky everywhere, stars effaced, clouds blighted, the moon oblong and shot dead by a street lamp, night gripped in the frost of time; finally the scene of the world is taken down)

**On the windows water weaves
It's translucid silence of silk**

(Taipei-Paris, September 2001) [Translated by Eric Mader-Lin.]

Nightmare of a Festival or Vice-Versa

It's the carnival at the tips of my fingers everything
disguised outrageously and lying
like the sound of a voice behind my shoulders
I no longer know how to speak of writing
I no longer know how to write of speech
all
must be redone
not to be just barely having been the yesterday
in which I wasn't born
paws me with its truth
all must be shut up once more

The silence in me annoys because
it no longer knows how to get through the paltry delay
before the sound that outstrips it and leads me by the hand
and this to take the outrageous form
(but I let myself be taken)
of a pen whose prow cuts
the drunken page twists itself falls back
(like a cat on its feet)
on its nose

To be convinced of nothing but the wake
to barely follow it so much does it stray and so little
accord with the foreseen book
and its reflection on the mirror-page where my nails are broken
from pawing scratching rubbing out
the word that takes me...

the breath
 a little to take it
 also
the breath
 may it run aground
 on the verse's haziness

(where is the verse?
I've lost its thread
the verse's thread
I've lost it
you see
--do you see?)

and the more it chases me the more I run
and the more the more it chases me the more I run
out of arguments
I find myself
lost--where am I?
before
after
the festival
took a different face
normal enough
for a carnival
nobody will complain except maybe the moon
and besides...

I was saying
the faces
no
traits
no longer the same
the hour has changed the festival
has taken another face my face
has taken another head
yesterday it was nighttime now it's morning tomorrow
dawn with its prose fingers vouchsafes things their
familiar ugliness
it's tomorrow and the words beneath my fingernails are black
poor not at all new the words
do they still have a mask
a final mask
an absolutely final...

maybe I'll never know maybe
I'll never know the festival's end

is there an end ?

was there, really, a festival?

[Translated by Eric Mader and Hui-Ling Lin.]

Torn out

*you carry in you so much past
lives that you have not lived
in you however assassinated*

I would like to remember but do not remember
with the chipped pickaxe of my words I dig
into the soft tuff of my memory
sometimes a splinter of anthracite blows up

time collapses no one anymore
to look for corpses, our skin
to recognize our remains
torn out
petrified
inhumed in eternity
which we have not
dig
the stirred world
does not change
bangs against the void that surrounds it

the world is a soft object
the world is not a sign
the world is not read
is not deciphered

the town howls as usual.
madness flows incessantly through the streets
the veins of the Vesuvius
open the shadows
carbonized
the last heat

the city swallows us spits us out
vomits us
we wander
in the liquid time immemorial

lined up these words torches in the dark
held at arm's length
each step a phrase
fumbled
stumbled

I would like to remember but do not remember
with the chipped pickaxe of my words I dig
into the soft tuff of my memory
sweating of desire
of rage
sometimes a splinter of anthracite blows into
the silence
the minefields of silence
the left leg of life explodes
a future maimed
axed the horizon

Malta fiction

To those refugees dead all over the world, who are also the death of our memory

You think it's the sea
You think it's water
But there are only words
Swelling like waves of sand
In the hard desert of desire

You think it's an island
You think it's a harbor
You believe what you're looking at
But only see your own gaze
Only hear your own echo

You think it's stone
You think it's the city
It's only a stage set
For a theatre of memories

You dived (you think) into the poem of the sea
But you dived into *Inferno*
You drank the spring of disgrace
Into the abyssal silence of Homer
Where *Europe* sank like a bone with no grave

You think it's the sea
You think it's water
There are only sunken screams
Under the swell of terror
No hope of reaching a shore

Malte, September 2014

(traduction Patricia Nichols et l'auteur)

Salt of silence

One day words were walking on the sea
They lost ground
In the deep ocean they sank
They remained there
Like ancient rusty springs
They are the buried memory of our beds
Where our impossible dreams fall apart

The sea ! death whispering, whispering...

Since that time
Words
Await
The ocean tide to evaporate
Recover its ancient signification
And shine with all the brightness of early morning corals
On the immaculate page of silence
Silence of salt

Rohavec, Kosovo, 15/09/15

(traduction Patricia Nichols et l'auteur)