

All of Us in Me

When we speak of having contact with art, as a rule, we imagine visiting a museum. Contemporary art, however, wants precisely to leave the museum, to blend with everyday life. To do this, it spreads through the streets, sometimes hijacks the Internet, and, on a hot summer's day, dives with you into the Sesc swimming pool.

Ana Teixeira's *Nós em mim* [All of us in me] intervention follows that line of art that does not only want to be contemplated. It wants participants, to pull you into the artistic field in a moment of leisure, to lend your routine a different color; the color of art. Your life is the canvas, and Ana Teixeira makes art with you, thanks to your gestures. This type of art, usually called relational art, insists on reestablishing social ties between people, on showing the collective nature of society; it has this ideology, perhaps utopic, of breaking individualism. Now, a painting is to be contemplated by one person alone, in silence; it is not a collective activity. The relational type of contemporary art, on the other hand, strives for the collective. You will become a plural. All of us in me. And it will do so tying "knots"¹ that join swimming-pool buoys. Beforehand, each buoy was one word; now connected, these buoys become a phrase, a poem. The luminous panel tries to guess who is in the pool. It is not merely "Today." It is "Even More Today."

On the blue-painted walls that skirt the swimming pools, the artist illustrated the explanation of this process: it is not the buoys with words that are connected, it is the people themselves, tied to one another, seen from above as if they were at the bottom of the pool. The walls become a pool too. With each phrase made with the buoys, an invisible link emerges between the people who played poet together in the water. And perhaps the drawing on the pool-wall is nothing more than a kind of visible shadow of that link.

As the buoys are connected, drawings in the swimming pool are formed, white lines in the blue water, which move with the dives and leg kicking. The white lines are even more interesting when people lie on top of the buoys, with their bodies conversing with the drawings on the walls. Even for those who don't participate by diving directly into the work, the piece provides aesthetic moments, at least of contemplation from afar. How many phrases can one make with the fourteen words offered on the buoys, without repeating any words? Something to the amount of 236,975,164,904. More than two hundred billion! With so few words, so many poems can be created. So imagine what could be created with all the words and encounters with other poets that life brings us. You could make your life into an endless artwork. Art as immortality. Just keep making us in me.

Paula Braga, 2012

¹ In Portuguese, the word *nós* means both the pronoun *we* and the noun *knots*. The title in Portuguese (*Nós em mim*) takes advantage of this play on words.—Trans.