



Welcome to Poetics for Cosmonauts.
We hope you enjoy it just as much as we did.

Remember that, even though this edition is free, we have edited a print copy with an exclusive design and many surprises. Your purchase will help finance *The Cosmonaut*, the film inspired by this collection of poems.

You can buy one of the 500 copies in shop.thecosmonaut.org/products or in bookstores.

We can assure you: you won't regret it :)

POETICS FOR COSMONAUTS



HENRY PIERROT

POETICS FOR COSMONAUTS

English translation by
Gabriela Lendo y Daniel Castro

Prologue by
Alberto Olmos

This is the second edition of
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BY HENRY PIERROT

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THIS EDITION HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE
THANKS TO JAVIER PINTO
(NEC DEUS INTERESTI,
NISI DIGNUS VINDICE NODUS)

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RIOT CINEMA COLLECTIVE

PROLOGUE

Io

“Io is the Galilean moon closest to Jupiter. It is named after Io, one of the numerous maidens Zeus was infatuated with in Greek mythology. It was discovered by Galileo Galelei in 1610 and initially received the name Jupiter I as the first satellite of Jupiter.”

Since Wikipedia was created, we can learn many things as long as we learn them in a hurry.

We can also learn them in Spanish:

“Ío (se pronuncia /'aI.ou/, o en griego 'Ιω) es, de las cuatro lunas galileanas de Júpiter, la más alejada y con un diámetro de 3,642 kilómetros, la cuarta luna más grande del sistema solar. Recibe su nombre de Ío, una de las sacerdotisas de Hera que se convirtió en amante de Zeus.”

We can also learn them in Euskera:

“Io Galileok aurkitutako lau sateliteetatik Jupitergandik gertuen dagoena da. Sumendi-aktibitate nabarmena du satelite honek.”

We can also not learn them:

(not learn them)

But not learning them takes much more time.

A prologue is the satellite of a text: something small, round, which only exists in relation to how well it turns its dance partner. Some prologues spin the text so many times that they leave it dizzy. Some prologues are like wayward insects. Some prologues eclipse. I suppose some prologues are good. Very short ones.

Poetics for cosmonauts is about love and universes: this would truly be a short prologue.

Poetics for cosmonauts is a universe of love: an even shorter prologue.

Poetics for cosmonauts pushes play and the music of the spheres sounds like David Bowie’s version of Wild is the Wind (let’s imagine God wearing headphones, quite focused: love me, love me, say you do): this would be a very short, but modern prologue.

The collection of poems you have in your hands was a blank notebook that Henry Pierrot threw into space after realizing he didn’t know how to write love poems. Space fondled it and returned it to him full of all those words that roam the universe, dirty and dis-

connected. Henry Pierrot found out that space didn’t know how to write love poems either, because no one knows how to write love poems, at least not in a hurry.

Because not knowing takes much more time.

This would be a short but expansive prologue.

More and more frequently poetry is like a complicated instruction manual for a simple device we never remove from its box. It would be corny to say that the device is called a heart. It would be reasonable to think that the device is called a heart.

Sometimes we put it in orbit.

Sometimes we land on an unknown planet and the flag we drive into the surface, more than waves, smiles.

Other times we desperately call the planet Earth. We have a problem; and we know it.

Because not knowing takes much more time.

ALBERTO OLMOS

POETICS FOR COSMONAUTS

For Paula

INTRO(MISSION)

*Forget the music,
only a pale buzz
(from a bee's belly)
will accompany you during ignition.*

*Protected in your suits
you will notice no thermal decrease.*

*The firmament may seem
by turns watery, light, or brittle.
It will be a time to rest.*

*The route of the spaceship is circular,
making it difficult
to calculate the weight of the hours...*

FIRST PHASE

Poems for Solaristics

THE VOYAGE

You can see matter advancing before your pupils, stars fanning out and coiling together at a greater velocity than in a film on TV.

You can bring your chest closer to Hers, you can touch the vulgar structure of the sink, shave the hair from her legs, throw notes onto the polychrome garbage, listen to the Stones, watch the president's conferences, caress her mane of straw...

You can find yet another motive; play with marbles that fly at the height of her caramel eyes, call up a stranger, wait for the return of physical contact, give her a nut to wear as a ring, follow the trail of the hygiene bags.

You can sleep without sleeping until you hear the whistle, and believe it is real (that She is also) that so am I. You can invest all of your time in it and glare at the dead bird with envy.

THE SPACESHIP

*There's no life from the hatch,
only a metallic silence
like that of a coffee maker.*

*The hibernated cosmonaut
hurls barbaric insults,
eyes moistened
(as if sadness were possible here).*

*The spaceship reminds me
of a fire alarm about to howl.*

*During "the activity"
my hands remain vacuum sealed,
immersed in a container
that won't stop repeating "I love you".*

HE (COSMONAUT)

*We crossed the hangar in silence,
he was three heads taller than me,
he must've mistaken me for an electrician,
I remember smiling at him as a friend.*

*After ignition
he took twelve capsules
and didn't say good night.*

*Sometimes she draws near his body
and calls him "dead bird."
She then laughs nervously,
as if she had broken a mechanism.*

I

*One day I received a call,
they said they had done me harm,
I remember hanging up
not shedding a single tear.*

*Sometime later,
a man came to the house.
He tried to force open the door,
scared away the neighbors with a golden badge,
pretended to be friendly.*

*Sometime later,
I signed a certain document
and shook a girl's hand.
Meanwhile, it rained heavily at the motel.*

*A deep human voice whispered in my ear:
"This is your new wife".*

SHE (COSMONAUT)

*She can't be that beautiful
(I don't believe her).
I think of her quotidian lies.*

*She tosses the suit to the floor,
enfolds my body with her embrace,
walks barefoot, makes me cry with joy.*

*After all, She too knows that
the whistle which makes us return
to our respective niches
always sounds.*

THE "ACTIVITY"

*At the beginning it was infinitely simple.
She would fall back onto the bunk
and tightly shut her thighs
and open them after,
and a beautiful V
would plough through my thoughts
consuming my time. When I blinked,
all was arid as in dreams.*

*The embraces began
and all seemed foreign.
Getting involved is a mistake, they warned us.*

*Then came the first tears,
stray drops floating across the atmosphere
like in a macabre orgy.*

*Then came her real name
and then mine,
then came her real body
and then mine.*

*At the beginning it was infinitely simple,
like driving at night or doing a crossword puzzle.*

THE MISSION

*It's not difficult to realize:
when a man barges into the house
where you were born,
where you have loved a woman you no longer
remember,]*

*shared fantastic times with her
and other times not so great
and others worse
than hell itself,
it's not difficult to realize
that some stupid mission
exists somewhere, for you.*

*My man explained vague concessions
they would make, I would make,
to achieve something no one
could have ever imagined.*

*The mission lasts a thousand days.
Today is always the first day.*

THE NICHE

*In the niche there are fabulous inventions.
A radio of impeccable acoustic quality
that allows one to listen to silence,
and a television that allows one to see space.*

The visible darkness hides infinite shades.

*In space, free men are imprisoned.
They feel like stowaways among garlands of energy.*

SEX

*She brings up the idea
and I can't say it's not funny.*

*To wake up
and walk around naked
through the cabins of the ship.*

*She brings up the idea
and I can't say it's not funny,
to make love in our free time.*

*No one should approve,
that's what "the activity" is for.
She shuts her thighs tightly,
to open them after...*

THE DEAD BIRD

*At the end of the first phase
our bird's heart beat
began to accelerate.*

*Everyone at the base must've asked themselves
what the hell was going on, but I knew.*

*She would wake up
and visit the cosmonaut
(trailed by the darkness of the niche).*

*At the end of the first phase,
we became a crew of three.*

SECOND PHASE

Or The End

THE COSMONAUT (HE)

*The bird, resurrected,
curved toothache,
suffers from jet lag.*

THE THREE COSMONAUTS
ASSIGN TASKS

“The activity” switches protagonists.

*I’m stuck with the part of electrician,
observing violet sparkling buttons.*

*The universe, as far as I’m concerned,
could cease to expand
and gather itself
into a scrap of paper in the shape of a ball.*

PARADISES

*Lately dreaming is a nightmare.
I’m not even capable of taking my medicine,
it’s impossible to find in this noise of flesh an able
vein.]*

*I write to the base that the hallucinations projected
by my mind]
are magnetized paradises from the very entrails of
space.]*

The reply soon arrives.

*I receive a drawing similar to a smiling face
and three dull warnings.*

THE COSMONAUT (SHE)

*We meet in the dining room,
she puts down her polarized tray, hugs me.
A thousand rings of light for my solitary body.*

*The suit trembles, we don't say a word,
security cameras revolve around their own bodies.
I imagine how pathetic the scene must seem.*

*Tears of angostura for the energy shake.
Today has been another marvelous shitty day.*

I

*I request medicine from the base.
They refuse to provide it,
they say it could affect the mission.*

Their whole tirade sounds highly ridiculous.

*A deep human voice says:
"Remember, she is your wife".*

WARNING ONE

*With respect to your new duties
we ask you not to leave the chamber
under any circumstance.*

*If you must equip yourself with a particular tool
we ask you to inform the two crewmembers of
superior rank.]*

WARNING TWO

*Find a better distraction in the ship
than the vagabonding you
have accustomed us to.*

WARNING THREE

Keep to your exercise regimen.

Decorate your room.

Compose a manuscript.

Count on close collaboration from your superiors.

They are there to help you.



THE MEETING

*The three of us meet in the chamber,
I tell them we should return to the original plan.*

Cackles in the cosmos.

PARADISE B

Paradise B is an enticing vision.

An apparently abandoned swimming pool.

*There seems to be nothing
beyond the enormous drain.*

*Then we see that man
performing underwater acrobatics.*

*Everything is instantly captured
by the voracious lens of a camera.*

*After a peaceful beginning
(almost worthy of a good dream)
the scene becomes debased.*

*The acrobat decides to come to the surface
and despite his effort
advances not a single millimeter.*

*Pale (miniscule) hands
loom over him.*

Despite his effort...

THE MISSION (AND TWO)

*“The tests have been finalized. You should be satisfied,
you have done your work with astounding efficacy.
There’s nothing left to do but congratulate you and
wait for your return home. Blah, blah, blah and etc,
etc, etc...”*

THE RETURN

*I have a fond memory of the landing
The cosmonaut hits his head on the ceiling,
the cosmonaut (she) caresses my glove,
the spaceship acts like a revolver
with a silencer screwed on.*

*The grove awaits us,
we spot the archipelago.
A group of men assist us,
we suffer an entropic alteration.*

I have a fond memory of the landing

*A beautiful hospital bed,
rooms replete with artificial plants
an old newspaper
and servile nymphets with nurse caps.*

*If I were dead, this version of heaven would be
tremendously sophisticated.]*

THE RETURN (HOME)

*They've constructed a mansion
that occupies half the avenue.
They've hung colored cloths on the street lamps.
A mural adorns the entrance.*

*The house is now the infamous mansion.
It seems as if, in my absence,
the entire world has progressed.*

*An old green-eyed woman
pushes her skeletal body against my chest.*

*Something extraordinarily familiar
incites me to love her.*

THE MOTEL

*It rained heavily.
It seems as if it happened one hundred years ago,
it turns out it has only been fifty.*

*The deep voice of the man,
the girl, the stupid mission,
everything remains mixed
like in a cocktail shaker.*

*I feigned interest in her,
but as she spoke to me of the future
I observed the black sky
populated by infinite stars,
by clouds of asbestos.*

*I pretended to love her,
I told her that one day I would return
to the beautiful house on the avenue.*

*“I’ll receive you as a hero,
in my eyes you’ll remember this magnetic moment,
you’ll return, I have no doubt.”*

THE ROUTINE

*Another man would have
accepted the new mission enthusiastically.*

*Another would have walked
Along the sidewalks
arm in arm,
telling the lies of the firmament,
laughing at the infinite paradox.*

*Another would have had
his groceries delivered,
washed his wife’s white hairs.*

*I look at the ochre photographs,
write letters to a dead friend.*

*They inform me of the past:
a hydrogen bomb,
a hundred thousand mutilated souls.
Two Bowie concerts cancelled
due to damned inclement weather.*

THE AIRSHIP

*I find an airship in the garage
to make excursions with into the countryside
on the most pleasant days of the year.*

*She talks to me then
of an older man
I must turn into.*

*I think of the man,
of his beautiful ultralight.*

*I think about the cosmonaut (she)
and an enormous keep out sign.*

THE COSMONAUT (SHE)

*I would like to cross the grove once more
with the helmet at my waist.*

*To smile at you once more
or hear the whistle and return to the niche.*

*I would like to write you a letter
and watch you open it,
(maybe even feel it).*

*A clock indifferently marks
the passing of our time.**

** The clock's second hand brings me
to impetuous laughter.*

PARADISES (AND THE END)

*I know I have returned
and nevertheless each night
those miniscule hands from paradise B
end up trapping him.*

*Those pale hands
give him immediate death.*

*I know I'm among you
but I continue burying the cosmonaut
in a field of clay.*

*Even a miserable shop window
brings back the image of
the cosmonaut (she) resplendent
in tedious Technicolor.*

*The image of my burning body
on the edge of her precipice.*

*Each night
no matter how much the acrobat tries
he can never escape the pool.*

A CERTAIN WEIGHTLESSNESS

*I think of a certain acid weightlessness
tasting of apple
and of how (suspended midair)
we cuddled between dirty bookstores.*

*I think of this weak space
shoving its way to enormity.*

*I think of the fertile land
I left behind.*

*I think of a certain weightlessness
and of how to pass the time
with a stranger inhabiting
the interior of my side.*

THE (DESIRED) ARCHIPELAGO

*The spaceship crashes.
We awake in the nude
with our helmets broken.*

*The cosmonaut
is a swollen cormorant.*

The stench blinds us momentarily.

*She embraces me with her naked body.
We survey this paradise
of leaves, at last, warm and green.*

*No one rescues us,
they consider us lost.*

*In the end, the Cyrillic alphabet
doesn't tell us a thing*

*We prostrate ourselves in front of the ship,
worshipping it...*

*I awake midafternoon
amid my wife's cries.*

LETTER TO A DEAD FRIEND

*I read your manuscript
full of placid perspiration
and I sense an abysmal mystery.*

*I try to write you the truth
but it rebels like a rabid toy
in the hands of a sulking adolescent.*

*There was a journey of indomitable origin
around the margins of actual existence.
A journey, try to imagine...*

*Calm was to wait for a return
without uncertainty,
to leave the keys in the chest of drawers,
turn on the television.*

*The girl should have waited for me;
you, celebrate it in a Chinese restaurant.*

*My face molded,
I find nothing but obituaries
and highways*

(...text missing...)

NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHERS

Riot Cinema was born in 2006 from a simple and beautiful premise: “to take cinema to all possible fields” with the firm conviction that a truly cinematic experience relies in good technique and having a certain look... never in the money. Ever since, we have not grown tired of repeating: “to film a car crash you need neither ten thousand dollars, nor a car, nor a crash”.

Our production company carries a name that has for years been relegated to grey literature. The term originated –with the arrival of video– in Detroit during the independent scene of the 1970s. It was mockingly used to call people who would refuse to abandon the use of celluloid rolls. For us, this term is more than just a nod to nostalgia: Riot Cinema is the belief that ‘a good eye’ will always transcend fashion trends.

Cinema (from the Greek word kinema, kinematos, movement) is something mysterious, unseizable. This collection of poems and how we discovered it is proof. Without us realizing Poetics for cosmo-

nauts would become the seed of our first feature film. Reading these poems allowed us to give form to a series of ideas from which *The Cosmonaut* was born. As they paraded in front of us, —exactly one year ago—, there was not much else we could do but smile, smile in disbelief, smile in amazement.

“Cinema”, said Truffaut, “is better than life”.

RIOT CINEMA COLLECTIVE

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The printing of this book was finished at the workshops of Kadmos, Salamanca, the morning of November 3rd, 2009. Precisely on a similar morning in 1957, Laika was served her last breakfast on Earth. Leonid Ryazanov, one of her keepers, would later describe how that morning the animal refused to eat: "the dog never grew accustomed to eating the paste that would become it's sole source of nourishment in Space. Because it was the animal's last day, we made an exception and slyly gave her beef. She was delighted".