

NHU' HOA  
LIKE FLOWERS  
COMME DES FLEURS



LUU NGUYEN DAT

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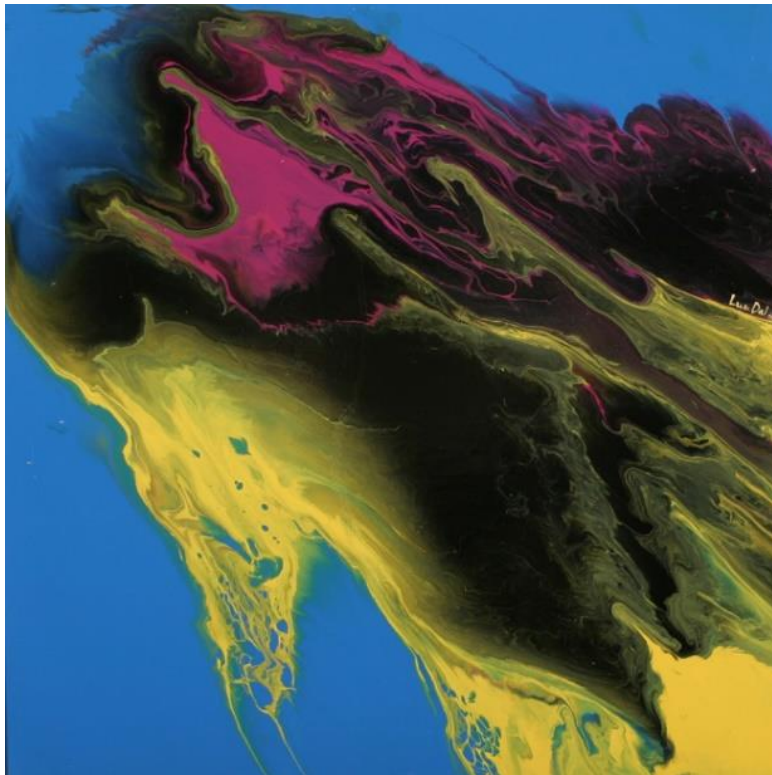
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- General Secretary, Association des Jeunes Peintres, Saigon, Vietnam [1973-1975].
- *Painting & Art Exhibitions* in Vietnam, USA (Michigan, Virginia).
- *Hand of Hope*. Memorial Statue, Camp Pendleton, San Clemente, California (July 4, 1975)





# POETRY AS FLOWER MANTRAS

To speak of poetry is to experience anew the intense feelings when we first read a poem that moved us, shook us, and left us breathless amid flower fragrance.

With poetry as flower mantras, nature perfumes and changes colors, becoming mystical and impalpable. Poetry reveals love and beauty, with its metaphoric language at once fragrant, mysterious and universal; revels in light, in timeless auroras past, present, and future; between the last ray of sun and the night spark, when nature freezes aromatic silence, and the words immolate themselves in their original splendor.

Poetry is demanding and claims the allegiance of the totality of life and being. Poetry asks that all rivers join the ocean and wonders why the inspiration dries at the end of love.

Poetry is the first cry of life, the voice of conscience, and the source of the inexhaustible passion. Specular and decentered, poetry transforms symbols and incantations into metaphors, drunkenness, and minimal destitution.

Poetry is real and abstract, flooded with signs, absences, links, and gaps. The poet falls in love with words full of life, complete and unfinished, with multiple dimensions, halfway between the absolute and the relative.

Poetry insists on its existence and can be spiritually powerful when extraordinary. It claims its imperishable existence outside of social conventions, beyond academic formalities.

Poetry floats at the water's edge and temporarily drowns in its waves within each existential cell, a droplet of love or tear shed.

Poetry assumes open questions without being able to give a direct answer or a satisfactory interpretation. It is an endless wave, recomposed itself in the occult and the enigmatic motto:

If all rivers are sweet  
Where does the sea get its salt?[1]

Poetry and its gaping meaning sometimes reach out to reveal a pact written in sympathetic ink, veiled intimacy of scrupulous innocence, or wobbly wisdom, as a multiple reality under the terms of its deconstruction:

How far is the light of the moon  
From the moon?[2]

The poetic word thus hangs in the shadow of a smile of sand, buried in its desert of silence. Sometimes, it turns away from human presence to metamorphose into petrified forests, transparent flowers, sky roots, or crystallized sources.

The poet then isolated in his terrestrial journey, mute with terror and anguish, returns to the path of creativity and thence shortens the way to the unknown and the sacred, whose indicator boundaries look like brilliant meteors, or precious stone, caressing:

When you touch Topaz  
topaz caresses you [3]

Poetry thus has its universe, that of the human soul being reincarnated at the confines of universal creation, against the limits of practical and conventional speech, beyond the reminiscence of ancient myths and collective oblivion.

Poetry, opening the way to the immensity of emptiness and the gaping faith of the endless quest, digs into multiple depths to find the vital source and the origin of time and space. It is already hope within despair.

As boundless incantation, poetry is thus the initiation towards the loving essence and the unique reality of the human condition.



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[1] Pablo Neruda, *The Book of Questions* (El Libro De Las Preguntas) Copper Canyon Press: Port Townsend 1991.

[2] Pablo Neruda, *The Book of Questions* (El Libro De Las Preguntas) Copper Canyon Press: Port Townsend, 1991

[3] Pablo Neruda, *Stones of the Sky*, (Las Pierdas Del Cielo), Copper Canyon Press: Port Townsend, 1987.





# NHƯ HOA

nhà em như hoa em ở trong hoa  
lá vờn theo gió mặc áo da trời  
thơm tho tóc lụa nắng ngủ ngọn vơi  
tay khuya ép mộng nụ óng dăng mời

hồn ta như em ta ở trong em  
màu xanh duyên đá rêu vén môi hoà  
thân em khép mở dòng tím ngân nga  
đón nhau vời vợi cánh ướm ngân hà

nhà em như sao em ở trong ta  
thơ sương tâm khói đọng nốt đêm trường  
một giây thế kỷ vòng ngát thân thương  
bâng khuâng reo hạt tình cuối vô thường.



LƯU NGUYỄN ĐẠT



# COMME DES FLEURS

ta maison est comme des fleurs, tu vis en fleurs  
les feuilles jouent au vent de robe bleue de ciel  
sur tes cheveux de soie parfumée dort le soleil au zénith  
mes mains dans la nuit te pressent de rêves bourgeonnés

mon âme est comme toi, je suis en toi  
la mousse verte soulève tes lèvres au rocher  
ton corps entrouvre le ruisseau violet en fredonnant  
notre accueil aux ailes mouillées de galaxie

ta maison est comme des étoiles, tu es en moi  
ma poésie de brouillard et d'encens la nuit entière  
s'attarde une seconde pour un siècle d'extase  
perlant d'amour jusqu'à la dernière goutte d'impermanence.



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# LIKE FLOWERS

your house is like flowers; you live in flowers  
the leaves play in the wind of sky-blue dress  
on your perfumed silk hair sleeps the sun at the zenith  
my vesperal fingers squeeze you with budded dreams

my soul is like you; I am in you  
the green moss lifts your lips to the rock charm  
your body opens the purple stream, humming  
our welcome to the wet wings of the galaxy

your house is like stars; you are in me  
my poetry of fog and incense, the whole night  
lingers for a second, already a century of ecstasy  
pearling love to the last bead of impermanence.



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