

Eternal Return

Two Shores, One Stream

The painting “Eternal Return” is part of the series “Duas Margens, Um Fluxo”, which delves into the interplay between nature and memory, serving as a universal conduit for a sense of belonging. This artwork transcends both geographical and emotional boundaries, crafting a hybrid space where personal memories of Brazil intertwine with present experiences in Hungary.

The series is influenced by introspective reflections, the poignant literature of Fernando Pessoa — particularly “The Book of Disquiet” — and the philosophically optimistic writings of Friedrich Nietzsche. “Eternal Return” specifically references Nietzsche’s cosmological hypothesis, which inspires contemplation regarding the essence of existence. This concept motivates a full embrace of life, urging an affirmative approach where every decision is perceived as eternally significant, promoting an ethos of living without regret or denial.

Nature plays a crucial role in my creative process, acting as a foreigner during moments of inadequacy and nostalgia triggered by memories of Brazil. Through leisurely walks in Szmrecsányi Lajos Kert park, located near my residence in Eger, I have discovered that my current experiences — both positive and negative — evoke vivid recollections of my past in Brazil. One significant moment occurred on a park bench, where I immersed myself in Pessoa's writings, which offered encouragement and a sense of reassurance as I grappled with self-understanding. His assertion that self-awareness is often a delayed realization — “to be is to linger” — resonates deeply, paralleling my sketches of local flora and the wild ducks inhabiting the adjacent river. In my sketchbook, the realms of nature and literature converge; where forms and colors may clash, I find space for literary passages and reflections, each vying for expression among mundane notes and the indelible memories I carry.

Growing up in São Luís, in Brazil's northeastern region, I navigated a Protestant Pentecostal upbringing within a tropical island milieu. This cultural landscape, rich in tourism and deeply embedded in Catholic, African, and indigenous traditions, initially distanced me from local cultural practices. It was only in my late teens that I began to engage with the vibrant heritage of my city. Despite this awakening, I often felt a profound disconnect — an invisible barrier that hindered a genuine connection to my homeland's culture, resulting in feelings of discomfort and a sense of imposture. This dissonance sparked my inquiry into belonging and identity, propelling me toward environments conducive to reflection and growth. The pursuit of new experiences ultimately guided me to Hungary, where I commenced my artistic studies. This transition introduced novel challenges and rekindled memories related to my identity, familial heritage, and the traditions that unwittingly shaped my being, even in the absence of a profound connection.

Initially, my research aimed to explore the feelings of alienation and discomfort I experienced as a foreigner in my own country. However, as I engaged more deeply with the subject, I uncovered a more intricate web of emotions and experiences underlying this sentiment. A pivotal moment in my exploration was the introduction to Bell Hooks' seminal work, "Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom" (1994). One particular reflection resonated strongly with me: "I came to theory because I was hurt." This statement underscores the idea that personal experiences, especially those characterized by oppression and struggle, can catalyze new ideas and theoretical frameworks.

Hooks' insights prompted me to consider how my own painful experiences could shape my worldview and inform my artistic expression. This realization illuminated the path toward a deeper understanding of my identity and the complexities of my environment, ultimately revealing how my art could serve as a medium for articulating this nuanced perspective. Through this process, I began to appreciate the transformative potential of personal narratives in the quest for both self-discovery and broader societal commentary.

The concept of estrangement experienced in one's native country can often be traced back to historical injustices, particularly in the context of colonization. In Brazil, for instance, the enduring impact of Portuguese colonization has left a deep-seated legacy of racial tension and cultural delegitimization. The systemic implementation of racist policies throughout history has perpetuated a sense of alienation among marginalized groups, particularly those of African and indigenous descent. This prolonged estrangement is not merely a personal experience but a collective wound that reflects the ongoing struggles against historical oppression and the need for cultural recognition and reconciliation. Understanding this dynamic is crucial in addressing the current socio-cultural landscape of Brazil and fostering a more inclusive society.

The intersection of culture and religion often reveals complex dynamics within individual identities. In my case, despite a rich ancestral heritage influenced by both cultures, Christianity has imposed a significant mental distance that is challenging to navigate. My grandmother represents the last generation deeply connected to indigenous traditions, but she had to migrate to urban areas due to the drastic decline of her cultural practices. Similarly, my mother, who was raised within a quilombola community, also relocated to the city and sought solace in the Protestant Christian Church. For her, this church provided crucial emotional support to confront the harsh social realities of Brazil, intertwining faith with resilience amidst societal oppression. This lineage suggests a negotiation of identity in the face of cultural displacement, reflecting broader themes of migration, adaptation, and the complexities of faith within marginalized communities. Likewise, my mother, who grew up in a quilombola community, also had to migrate to the city and join the Protestant Christian Church, which offered emotional support to face Brazil's oppressive social reality with faith.

My engagement with Indigenous and African cultures has primarily been indirect, often emerging during moments of need, such as illness. My mother prepared home remedies with a ritualistic approach, reciting verses of healing and longevity while incorporating ancestral knowledge from her childhood, particularly from Indigenous and quilombola traditions. However, outside of these specific instances, there was minimal direct exposure to the broader cultural or religious practices of my ancestors. This experience raises

important questions about the preservation and transmission of cultural identity across generations.

This complex relationship of intimacy and distance with my Brazilian roots has significantly influenced my understanding of identity and my engagement with the world. Recognizing this dynamic was essential for reconciling the inherent distance in my existence, allowing me to channel it into a poetics that informs my artistic practice. I have come to value the perpetual sensation of existing in the world while feeling a sense of detachment, utilizing this experience of foreignness as a catalyst for creativity.

My painting "The Eternal Returns" embodies this inquiry into belonging and the intricate interplay between identity and memory. It draws inspiration from Nietzsche's philosophical notion of fully embracing life, promoting an affirmative existence without regrets. In alignment with Nietzsche's perspective, I endeavor to transform feelings of estrangement into a source of creative energy, discovering in the interplay of nature and memory a landscape for introspection and artistic expression.

The series "Duas Margens, Um Fluxo" (Two Margins, One Flow) explores the intricate interplay between my Brazilian roots and my experiences in Hungary, serving as a platform to examine my sense of belonging — or the absence thereof — that has consistently influenced my life. The artwork addresses profound themes of displacement and identity, inviting viewers to reflect on their own unique boundaries and experiences in relation to these concepts. Through the lens of my personal history, I emphasize the importance of embracing life's complexities, recognizing the significance of imperfections, emotional scars, and the ongoing quest for understanding that informs both my perspective and my artistic expression.