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Ella
McCartney
/
To Act
To Know
To Be

Ella McCartney presents *To Act, To Know, To Be*, an exhibition of works made during a residency in the Department of Applied Linguistics and Communication at Birkbeck College, University of London, in collaboration with Professor Zhu Hua and supported by The Leverhulme Trust. Fuelled by an interest in gesture, process and translation, the works have been created in response to current research on ‘translanguaging’, a new way of under-standing the meaning-making process.

Ella McCartney (b.1985, UK) Lives and works in London. Recent exhibitions include *Science of Imaginary Solutions*, Breese Little; *To Act To Know To Be*, (performance *InDialogue*) Nottingham Contemporary; *Objects on the Moon*, London; *Felicity Black*, Caustic Coastal, Manchester; *Soviet Space Archive: Configuration II*, Calvert 22, London; *Midway through the Journey*, B.O.R.G, Antwerp; Tilt, The Royal Academy, London; *Light, Colour, Object*, Super Dakota, Brussels; *I Remove A Sphere Through My Head*, Göteborg Biennial; *Ella McCartney/Adrianna Palazollo*, Peter Von Kant, London; *Interkosmos*, Nassau, Bahamas, *On Language*: Performance program, ICA, London; *Original/Copy 1*, Peles Empire, London; *Original/Copy 2*, Peles Empire, Cluj Romania; *Containing the Possible*, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London

Jonathan Miles

Written for To Act, To Know, To Be

Going before, moving over, sinking beneath, flying over, circulating around, being between, falling away, reaching beyond, withdrawing from, jutting into, breaking apart, hovering around: the elsewhere of signification.

What is translanguaging: is it the very question of language or the combination of gesture, figure, and sense circulating in and around it? Perhaps it points both, to what is before, as much what occurs after but in ways that echo that which is within alongside that in circulation without. Is translanguage the coextensivity of the within and without of language?

How are such thoughts to be translated? Is language rooted in the question of mark, marks creating clearance (a gap), whereas gesture is rooted within the mobility of space? If language does pertain to the mark then this in turn indicates a relationship to being. So the relationship between being and language might be predicated upon a gap produced by language so that presence might occur in ways that allow for the circulation of all things waiting naming.

To speak of logo centrism is at the same time to speak of all of the displacements that have occurred in wake of its critique. Jean-Francois Lyotard writes: "What cannot be tamed is art as silence" and follows this stating that the position of art refutes the position of discourse. In refuting, art displaces but this displacement is necessarily outside of presence. That is why it might be claimed that art is evasive (undecidable) in its process of designation.

When Philip de Corcia stated that photography is a foreign language everyone thinks he speaks," he was pointing to the underlying difference between sense and language. The hegemony of the linguistic insists on everything being read whereas it might be better if it were simply seen. To read is to render flat whereas to see is multidimensional (but also unstable).

We talk about figuring something out, or giving a figure to thought. Thus figure is something in-between of not being and being: a becoming that disrupts the rule of representation. Is figure then to be figured as a form of slippage?

Gesture is an indication of something that is elsewhere, impossible, beyond, unsayable, unreachable, excessive, withdrawn, lost, and thus recognition of the punctuation of the ecstatic. Thus gesture is a trace of being out of something, whilst paradoxically indicating, that which is inside. The lines, which are drawn through and around them, appear to mirror those of language, but they are composed out of very different lines, more diffuse in one moment, sharper and more severe in others.

"The gesture re-imposes directions and dimensions on space, turning out of its course the teleology of time: past, present, future. It unfolds again the in-stance that it is sub-jacent to ecstasies. It confounds the erection of the transcendental. It makes turbulent what should remain unmoved in and for the commemoration of Being. It neutralizes the neuter/neutral character of a there is on which basis everything would be given — given back. Intact. Disfiguring the order of language."

(Luce Irigaray *The Forgetting of Air* Continuum P169)

How to produce a sketch, which is on the one side written but on the other side touched upon? A sketch is a techne recording a passage from absence into presence.

In that sense a sketch offers to presence whilst retaining memory of absence. That is why they contain the sense of the provisional because they are never a full manifestation but instead a mere contingent possibility.

What if an exhibition offered itself as a sketch, a working through, a process of announcing a becoming of something but undecidable at the same time? Thus an offering that is heterogeneous occurrence shifting across registers without adhering to any given rule that this or that medium might impose.

"What if" acted as the starting point for a heterogeneous eruptive spilling and turning over of language, visibilities and gesture?

What if "what if" stood as just a force within the field.

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Alice Hattrick
A Wholesome Herb

I used to smoke menthol cigarettes. There was something about the combination of smoke, produced by fire, and menthol, a chemical in every kind of mint that tricks your brain into thinking it’s tasting something cold, that was so appealing.

Alcohol is still the active ingredient in mouthwash but it is nearly always flavoured mint. Listerine was developed by the doctors who founded Johnson & Johnson after Josphe Lister became the first person to conduct a surgical procedure in sterilised conditions. In the 16th century, a number of herbs were used to clean the mouth and teeth, mint but also sage and rosemary in vinegar, alongside practical solutions like wine, which replaced urine (containing ammonia) as a popular disinfectant. In the 20th century, mint became the predominant flavour of mouthwash and toothpaste because it was widely available and made the mouth cool, counteracting the fiery sensation of astringent products. When menthol binds with a particular receptor in our brains – TRPM8 – it has the same effect as exposing it to cool temperatures. It’s the menthol that makes it feel like it’s working.

There aren’t many perfumes that smell predominantly of mint, but they do exist. *Aqua Allegoria Herba Fresca* by Guerlain (1999) smells uber clean, like actual hygiene: mint gum, and then lemon and grass as the mint fades like a . . . *mint?* Apparently, Jean-Paul Guerlain wanted to evoke the memory of playing barefoot in the grass as a child, crushing mint leaves underfoot, which is probably why this smells like the kind of green you imagine, but have never actually experienced. This lame story reminds me of the myth of the water nymph Minthe, who, as punishment for her affair with Hades, was transformed into a small garden plant Persephone could crush underfoot. That Minthe was also sweet-smelling was meant to be some kind of consolation.

Mint features in two iconic ‘masculine’ fragrances of recent decades. Davidoff *Cool Water* (1988) appears to have mint in it – it’s the most prominent note according to user reviews on Fragrantica. Then again, ‘Sea Water’ – so, sewage and garbage? – comes in a close second. Gautier’s iconic *Le Male* (1995) is mint, lavender and bergamot. The reviews keep on about how much women love it, but I can only remember shape of the bottle – the stripy tank

top and the ring pull choker – and the adverts: buff sailor guys smouldering in the same stripes, the object made man. *Tommy Girl* smells of the girl version of the 90s: lemon and mint. It’s more floral than *Le Male* but still fresh and clean. It smells of a time before girls preferred to smell like Sensual Woods and White Chocolate Orchid. *Tommy Girl* doesn’t last long, like girlhood. I imagine it’s the women in their thirties who are still buying it now.

Mint and lemon are edible, often appearing as flavours in sweets and puddings, but they are also frustratingly cleansing, and detoxifying. As components in scent, they evoke cleaning products too immediately. Perhaps the smell of mint and lemon has been cheapened by cleanliness. Their effect – cooling, or evoking freshness, the sensation of actively being cleaned by a product because otherwise you would not feel like it was working – is too useful. Maybe the problem is that everything is scented. Even if you do your best to avoid it, every space, and every body part, is associated with a smell from a product designed to make you feel clean and fresh. A reversal occurs: mint smells like products you clean your mouth with, rather than the other way around. Lemon is the smell of cleaning products.

My hands are mint and bergamot. My teeth, everyone’s teeth, are cool mint with cooling crystals. Skin is lavender. The bathroom sink is ‘lemon citrus’, a mixture of limonene, the aroma chemical that lends products their citrus smell, with the obligatorily vague ingredient ‘perfume’. You can’t use this particular ‘lemon citrus’ product on lino or leather but it removes 100% of dirt, whatever that means. The floor is grapefruit and eucalyptus, another plant with a scent that creates a cooling sensation, which is often combined with menthol – Vicks VapoRub is camphor, eucalyptus and menthol. The ingredients list for this product also includes limonene – it’s in *everything*, including the perfumes listed above – and ‘*parfum*’ because it is from the posh supermarket. These scents communicate with me. They aren’t meant to last, like incense, or, indeed, cigarette smoke. As they linger on my skin or in the air, the scent of mint and lemon and eucalyptus and lavender make me believe that I am not special, but, for a fleeting moment, I am clean.

The act of translanguaging then is transformative in nature; it creates a social space for the multilingual language user by bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into one coordinated and meaningful performance, and making it into a lived experience. I call this space “translanguaging space”, a space for the act of translanguaging as well as a space created through translanguaging. (Li Wei, 2011 p.1223)

Human beings have a natural Translanguaging Instinct, an innate capacity to draw on as many different cognitive and semiotic resources as available to them to interpret meaning intentions and to design actions accordingly.

This innate capacity drives humans to go beyond narrowly defined linguistic cues and transcend the culturally defined language boundaries to achieve effective communication.

(Li Wei, 2016 p.521)

El Aleph

Borges, J.L.

Borges, J.L., El Aleph, in *Sur* (131),
September 1945, p.62.

Thanks to
Dr Bojana Petrić for the translation
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Google Translate

El Aleph

Todo lenguaje es un alfabeto de símbolos cuyo ejercicio presupone un pasado que los interlocutores comparten; ¿cómo transmitir a los otros el infinito Aleph, que mi temerosa memoria apenas abarca? Mistici, suoceni sa istim problemom, pribegavaju simbolima: da označi božanstvo, jedan Persijanac govori o ptici koja je nekako sve ptice; Alanus de Insulis o sferi čiji je centar svugde a obim nigde; 伊斯科尔，一个可以在同一时间向东西南北移动的四面天使。（这些类比虽不可思议，但并非徒然；他们与阿列夫有些相似。） Можда ће ми богови дати сличну метафору, али онда би овај исказ упрљала књижевност, фикција. Заиста, оно што желим да учиним је немогуће, јер свако набрајање бесконачног низа осуђено је да буде бескрајно кратко. In that single gigantic instant I saw millions of acts both delightful and awful; not one of them occupied the same point in space, without overlapping or transparency. What my eyes beheld was simultaneous, but what I shall now write down will be successive, because language is successive. Nonetheless, I'll try to recollect what I can. Tamen, mi penos memori kion mi povas.

Translanguaging is both going between different linguistic structures and systems and going beyond them. It includes the full range of linguistic performances of multilingual language users for purposes that transcend the combination of structures, the alternation between systems, the transmission of information and the representation of values, identities and relationships.

Translanguaging space is a space for the act of translanguaging as well as a space created through trans-languaging. It is a space where the process of what Bhabha calls “cultural translation” between traditions takes place. The notion of translanguaging space embraces the concepts of creativity and criticality, which are fundamental but hitherto under-explored dimensions of multilingual practices. (Li Wei 2011, p 1222)

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Visual and Verbal
Communication
During a Football
Match

Parts

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Interpretations of
an interview with
Gemma Grainger
National Specialist
Coach Women,
The Football
Association
Pro Licence,
UEFA



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Open up when you get the ball and play a different way,
try and open your body up.
When you get the ball,
try and open up your body,
try and play a different way.

When you get the ball keep it on the ground.
Keep it low when you are playing, keep it on the floor.

Squeeze up with the ball,
move up,
move out,
move as a team,
Squeeze up,
move out.

Work together,
come together,
stay close.

I would like you to work on that area of the pitch,
try and work up and down there.

Calm down,
its OK,
everything is fine,
keep going.

Calm down,
Keep going its fine.

Well done,
keep doing that.

Try and work on the right on the left hand side,
try and work in this area of the pitch.

Tell them where you want it,
tell the other players where you want it.
That's what I as the coach would say.

If there are a few passes, I might say to the player 'tell her where you want it – or 'get it to feet'. It could either be me telling the player to get it to the feet or it could be me saying you need to tell her where you want it. If you are passing, you need to include a bit of visual information there to let the other player where you want it.

To trick the other team, you might point here and you would leave the ball in the space that I have left. It is something that gets worked on in training. The more you play with people the more you learn those signals.

If someone calls 'Jacks' behind me, I know that even if the pass looks like it's coming to me – I'm leaving it for the person behind. My cue is to leave it.

In football, there is a rule that you can't shout 'leave it'. You can't shout 'mine' and you can't shout 'leave it'. That's why people often shout 'jacks' so if you are taking a corner, people might put one hand up or two hands. The referee will give a free kick if you shout 'mine' or 'leave it' because it can confuse. If you were about to receive the ball and I was on the opposition I could shout 'leave it'. It would put you off, you wouldn't know who had shouted it. 'Jacks' is one or 'Sid'. If you hear someone shout 'Sid' it means leave the ball and let it go through. You make signals up as a team. The speed that the communication happens is so quick, it can be hard to determine where the shouts are coming from.

If you are taking a throw in, you will have different set ups. We will practice about four or five different moves. We might change positions and we will practice them, ready to go on the pitch. In corners we usually use hand signals or a little bit more discreetly you might just pull your right sock and if anyone on your teams sees you pulling your right sock then they know what you are going to do.

I watch at lot of the opposition and try and guess what the signals are. If the player is touching her right foot often the ball goes to the back of the goal, so be aware that you might have to defend the back. That's something I can then communicate to my team in half time.

When we played an international game with a team that had very precise movements, they have maybe six or seven of very intricate signals. The players don't even have to look at each other. When a player moved it communicated to the next player where to move, it was very consistent.



An orthographic transcription in non-proportional Courier font,
based on conventions from Wray, A. & Bloomer, A. (2006),
of a recording of Gemma Grainger's voice.

↑0::pen up when you get the ball and play a ↑differ↓ent way try and
o::pen your ↑body up (..) when you get the ↓ball (.) try and open ↑up
your body (..) try and play a ↑different ↓way (...)when you get the ball (.)
↑try and see ↑both ways (...)see ↑this way try and see ↑this way (...) >when
you ge::t the ball keep it on the ground< (...) kee::p it low when you are
playing (.) keep it on the floor erm (0.4)squeeze ↑up with the ↓ball (..)
move up move ↓out (.)move as a ↑team (...) squee::ze ↑up move ↓out (.)

work together (.) ↑come together (..) stay ↓close (0.3)

I would like you to work on ↑tha::t area of the ↓pitch (0.4) try and work
up and down ↑there (0.8) ↑calm ↓down (.) its o↓k (..) ↑everything is ↓fine
(.)keep going (0.3)calm ↓↓down (.)keep go::ing its fine (0.4) well done (...)
keep doing ↓that (0.8)↑try and work on the ↑right (.) on the left hand
side (...) ↑try and work in ↑this area of the ↓pitch ((pause))

tell them where ↑you want ↓it (..)↑tell the other players where you ↑want
it (0.3) that's what ↑I as the coach would ↓say (0.6) if there are a few
↑pass↓es (.) >I might say to the player< (...)↑tell her where you ↑want it
(..) or (.)get it to~ fee::t (0.6)

erm (.)it could either be ↑me telling the player to get it to the ↓feet
(.) or it could be ↑me erm saying ↑you ↑need to tell her where you want
↓it (0.4) if you are passing (.) you need to in↑clude a bi::t of visual
infor↑ma::tion there (.) to let the ↑other player~ erm where you ↑want ↓it
((pause))

>to ↑trick the other< ↓tea::m (..) you might point ↑he::re and ↑you would
leave the ↓ball in the space that I::ve ↓left (..) it ↑is some↓thing that
gets ↑worked on in trai::ning (0.4) >the more you ↑play with< people the
↑more you lea::rn ↓those ↑signals ((pause))

if someone calls ↑jacks be↑hind ↓me (.) I know that e::ven if the pass
looks like it's coming erm to ↓me (..)I'm leaving it for the person
↑beh↓ind(.) ↑my cue is to lea::ve ↓it ((pause))

in football (...) there is a rule that you ↑can't shout (.) ↑lea::ve it
(...) you can't shout ↑mi::ne ↓and you can't shout ↑lea::ve it >that's why
people often shout< ↑jacks so if ↑you are taking a ↑cor↓ner (.) people
might (hhh) put one ↑hand ↓up or ↑two hands (..) the referee will give
a ↑free kick if you shout ↑mine ↓or ↑leave ↓it because it can confuse
(0.4) >if you were a↑bout to receive the ↓ball< and erm ↑I was on the
oppos::ition I could shout ↑lea::ve it (..) it would put you ↑off (.)
you wouldn't know who had ↑shouted ↓it (0.5) ↑jacks is one (.) or ↑sid
>if you hhear someone shout< ↑si::d it means ↓leave the ball and ↑let it
go through (..) you make ↑signals up as a team (.) the ↑speed that the
communication happens is so ↓quick it can be >hard to determine< where the
↑shouts are coming ↓from (0.6)

↑if you are taking a ↑throw ↓in (.) you will have different ↑set ↓ups (.) we will practice about four or ↑five ↑different ↓moves (.) we >might change pos↑itions< erm and (hhh) we will ↑practice them (..) ↑ready to go on the ↓pitch (.) in ↑corn↓ers we usually use ↑hand sig↓nals (.)or a little bit more di↑scree::tly you >might just ↑pull your< right ↑sock and >if anyone on ↑your< teams~ sees you ↑pull↓ing your right sock then they ↑know what you are going to ↓do ((pause))

I watch at~ ↑lot of the oppo↑sition >and try and ↑guess what the< ↑signals ↓are (...) if the player is touching her ↑right ↑foo::t >often the ball goes to the< ↓back of the ↑goal (.) >so be a↑ware that you might have to de↑fend the ↓back< (...) ↑that's something I can then co↑mmunicate to my ↑team in half ↓time (0.4) ↓when we played an inter↑national game with a ↑team that had very precise movements (.) they have >maybe ↑six or ↑seven of very intricate ↑sig↓nals< (...) the ↑players don't even have to ↑look at each oth↓er (..) >when a player ↓moved< (.)it co↑mmunicated to the ↑next player where to move (.) it was ↑very con↑sis↓tent. Wray A. & Bloomer A. Projects in Linguistics: a practical guide to researching language. London: Hodder Arnold, 2006.



Gemma Grainger (GG) is in conversation by email with the artist (EM).

EM Do you use the same set of signals with each player or do you develop a specific set of signals for each player?

GG Signals will be developed for the team and individuals. Individual signals are created for specific positions and specific moments in the game e.g. Set plays.

EM In team sports do players form visual signs or hand gestures that communicate information to each other but is concealed to the opposition?

GG Yes, in set play situations, corners, free kicks, throws etc.

EM Is there a name or phrase that is used when players do not want to communicate their next move to other players and might double bluff the opposition?

GG A player will call for the ball and make a move for it but will not receive it. Alternatively they could move quickly in a direction and use a hand symbol to gesture where they would like it and then someone else moves to receive it.

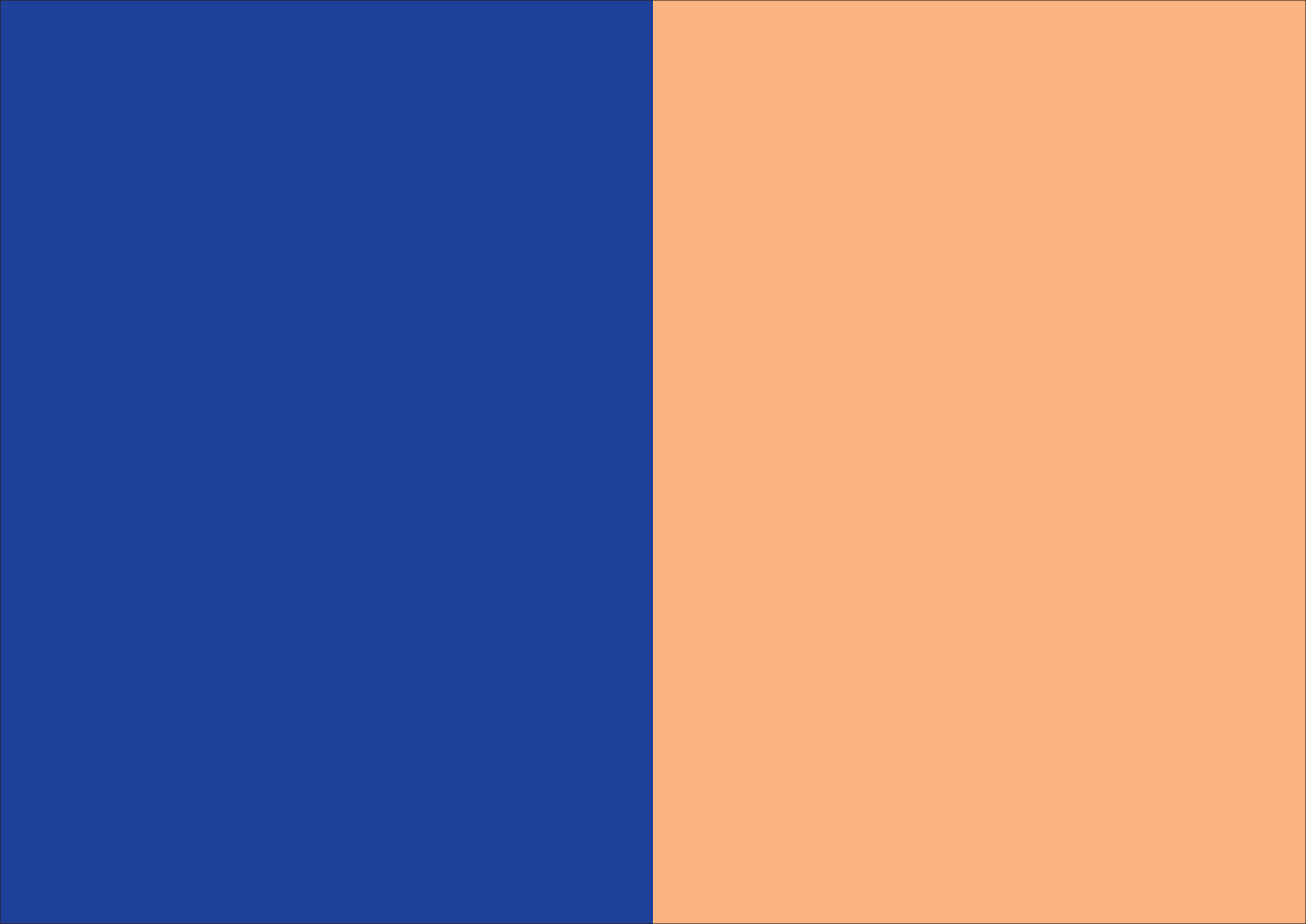
El Aleph

Borges, J.L.

Edited and translated into English by Norman
Thomas Di Giovanni, in collaboration with Jorge
Luis Borges. London: Pan, 1973, p.19.

El Aleph

All language is a set of symbols whose use among its speakers assumes a shared past. How, then, can I translate into words the limitless Aleph, which my floundering mind can scarcely encompass? Mystics, faced with the same problem, fall back on symbols: to signify the godhead, one Persian speaks of a bird that somehow is all birds; Alanus de Insulis, of a sphere whose center is everywhere and circumference is nowhere; Ezekiel, of a four-faced angel who at one and the same time moves east and west, north and south. (Not in vain do I recall these inconceivable analogies; they bear some relation to the Aleph.) Perhaps the gods might grant me a similar metaphor, but then this account would become contaminated by literature, by fiction. Really, what I want to do is impossible, for any listing of an endless series is doomed to be infinitesimal. In that single gigantic instant I saw millions of acts both delightful and awful; not one of them occupied the same point in space, without overlapping or transparency. What my eyes beheld was simultaneous, but what I shall now write down will be successive, because language is successive. Nonetheless, I'll try to recollect what I can.



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