



LOLA ZOIDO

1/2

The Garden I Will Never Get To Have

In March 2020, a story appeared in the news that took just a few hours to become a meme: A British woman, Caelie Wilkens, had been caring for a plant for two years, and it turned out to be made of plastic. Wilkens told the newspaper that she felt a huge disappointment, and that, “those last two years had been a lie.” I laughed. I forwarded it to contacts who also laughed. However two years later, and every so often, I am reminded of that woman’s devastated words. I wonder if, during those two years of care, or until the woman dissected the pot and discovered a piece of cork at the bottom, that the plant was really fake, or if, as in the Schrödinger’s cat experiment (impossible to verify), that the plant was real and fake simultaneously, until the very moment when it was taken out of the pot, and she had to decide on one of those two states. The question that comes back to my mind every month or two is the following: can something that produces real feelings become fake?

The first graphically recorded depictions of gardens came from Ancient Egypt, where in the plans of the temples and hieroglyphic representations of great houses, we find plants arranged around ponds. This custom spread to ancient Greece, where the idea of plants and vegetation began to be included in public places and places of learning. As in the famous philosophical school of Epicurus, where debates and classes took place in a garden, where trees and other plants listened to some of the fundamental debates about the atom and happiness, as a fundamental destiny.

Just as the lady who took care of the “realfake” plant, being contaminated, like all of us, by a prevailing binary logic, I cannot help wondering what is the line that separated the orchard from the garden with a clean cut. Early humans came to the garden knowing they were indebted to nature, and yet the garden is a way of proclaiming the power of humans over the natural. I don’t know the history of gardening, all I have are assumptions: a garden is beautiful. Beautiful, long, long ago, meant something favored by God. God is order. Order is language. Therefore, language gave rise to gardens. It makes sense if we think that in Egypt the first gardens were visually represented, and that, in Egypt too, hieroglyphs, one of the oldest forms of writing was born. This absolutely invented and arbitrary hypothesis (although I don’t know if the things we think about can be any other way), makes me think that the need to create through gardens, came only by means of a need to establish order, and preserve that order in the long run, to take pride in our ability to tame nature, which means that we were expected to stay in one place for the duration of a lifetime.

My generation, Lola Zoido’s generation, cannot aspire to a garden that demonstrates our ability to harmonize chaos. We make do with indoor plants resistant to our pace of life, which between precarious jobs and instability leaves little time to take care of anything, let alone a plant, often not even ourselves. When we reach our adult life in our 30’s, or even 40’s, most of us will never have a house with a garden, unless we win the lottery or receive a bit of inheritance where we can barely pay the VAT, that is to say: quite improbable things.

Opening:
Friday 23 September 17:00 – 21:00
On View : 23 September – 4 November Tuesday – Friday 16:00 – 20:00



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2/2

Zoido says, in her notes on this exhibition, that the idea of the future has vanished. “I look at the pieces in the exhibition and think of them as a series of structures, of columns that support the ideals we have left, the ones we transmit to machines so that they learn to think like us (poor people). Structures that can be transported, stored, collected. That is the only garden we can have: a folding garden, which I put in a suitcase and take with me from house to rental house, from country to country, a garden that seems to me something of my own, with which to create an ideal home wherever I go.” In addition to destroying the natural-artificial divide, in *The Garden I Will Never Get to Have*, Lola Zoido makes us wonder if machines have ever seen the countryside.

Mayte Gómez Molina
Writer and Digital Artist

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