



Making Middle Orange: Liner Notes

Loss Pequeño Glazier

"Middle Orange | Media naranja" was a film made with Japanese filmmaker, Yuichiro Yamada, in 2010. It was presented in various venues but had its international premier at the Palazzo delle Arti, Napoli, 2011, under the caring curatorial vision of Giovanna di Rosario.

What got "Middle Orange" rolling? As a professor of Media Study, SUNY Buffalo, with its focus on video and a history of filmmaking experimentalist work "Middle Orange | Media naranja" occurred to me as a possible project, drawing on the resources of Media Study at Buffalo..

Buffalo was buzzing with the innovative. In a nearby building, Gerald O'Grady founded a media study program that is now legendary. Artists -- including avant-garde filmmakers Hollis Frampton, Tony Conrad, and Paul Sharits, documentary maker James Blue, video artists Woody Vasulka and Steina, and Viennese action artist Peter Weibel -- investigated, taught, and made media art in all forms, and founded the first Digital Arts Laboratory. It all laid a foundation, a hum of innovation in the air, my contact "there" was a path that began with Creeley and from thence to the field that would yield a richness of presence, so expansive that one cannot even imagine it. When I arrived in Buffalo in 1988, the Olson Lectures series was just wrapping up, I was fortunate to subsequently work individually with Creeley, and then extensively and across decades experiencing the meticulous, benevolent presence of Charles Bernstein, nearly my contemporary, and company.

"Company" in Creeley's sense is a group of peers who precipitate their own flourishing through their interaction, or a group of *compañeros* in spirit, and the Poetics Program of the time offered just that:

the pacing and space between the words of Creeley, the leadership and range of cutting edge literary engagement of Bernstein, and the radiant musings of Susan Howe, who in her particular process of close reading traces emergent coastlines of thinking in itself. I brought to the group my own process of poesis, both on and off the screen, my mestizo inventiveness, a touch of timid gregariousness, earnest goodwill, and my organizing skills to related events. Amazingly, I somehow had also become part of "the company".

At this time in 2010, many of the founding members were gone. But the sense of company still remained, especially in Media Study. Such a company include the new filmmakers in the department such as Yamada and new forms of literature such as digital poetry.

My idea in "Middle Orange | Media naranja" was to engage the skillful Japanese video maker Yamada, whose sensibility to movement, form, setting, and observation were crucial to the depiction of digital poetry through pure and sensitive vision, perceptive observation, and the framing of media language works in the language of video media.

The three foundational works chosen, had been performed and published worldwide, and written about in a number of landmark critical texts. One had been translated into different languages, with the help of the author, a learning experience and unparalleled foray into collisions of digital meaning. Chosen were "White Faced Bromeliads on 20 Hectares" (observations, impressions, language immersion in Costa Rica), "Io Sono At Swoons" (collation, invention, and unexpected juxtaposition from numerous language morphemes, including Tibetan), and "Territorio Libre" (experiments in translation and efforts to express cultural realities of Havana, Cuba early in the Twenty-First century).

Through these three works, "Middle Orange | Media naranja" seemed to express a number of digital poetic impulses, to place them next to each other, to ponder the range of mixed poetries, languages, and images, and to produce a textual complex to be interpreted as one's own act of making.

It was a simple concatenation of ideas. "Middle Orange" meant a lot as did "Media naranja". The concatenation symbol seemed perfect. "Middle Orange" resonated with the orange robes of the Buddhist and the path of the Middle Way. "Media Naranja" is a half an orange, but in the Spanish sense: as if you were sitting in front of a pile of half oranges and you found the two halves that fit together perfectly. It is your match, your other, your mate -- in English, "your better half".

Thus the tripartite composition of "Middle Orange | Media naranja" reaches for lots of "other" senses, to put the orange together as a whole. It is a whole art: not something new, not a rupture with the past, not a prediction of the future.

It is a simple orange in the immediate present placed in front of you. May you savor with gusto.