

## The Beast

Juan Diego Covarrubias

December 6, 2021

I was feeling lost. The pandemic was starting and it was the dawn of isolation. It was a boring and hot afternoon and we were laying on the couch of the living room. It had the appearance of another long day, but one of my roommates sug-

gested taking acid. Of course we agreed. We had a fun day, did a lot of creative stuff together and that's when I started the first drawing of the series.

I spent the next two weeks trying to finish the piece, but I felt like I wasn't really manifesting the idea. Somehow like in *The Painter* by Paul McCarthy; full frustration that ended in the destruction of an unfinished artwork. An absurd caricature.

I was feeling lost. The pandemic was starting and it was the dawn of isolation. It was a boring and hot afternoon and I wanted to start a new drawing. I needed to lose this feeling of being doomed. So I started from there.



*Apparition under the influence of a negative mechanic*

Surprisingly everything came out naturally and the result amazed me. In the scenery we can see a subject with its head connected to the machine while pressing a button; a demon in the shadows with its fingers cutout and something coming out from the machine that I named 'the beast'.

I was surprised to see that the characters were an accidental representation of my recent state. The devil was the negative influence on the atmosphere of my psyche, the subject in the middle is the portrayal of my intuition (or the mechanical engagement) and the beast is the artwork, the final result.

It seems like unconsciously I created something that came out from the underworld. A space in your subconscious where you can find your most utter horrors. It was no coinci-

dence. This was a byproduct of a chaotic emotional process.

The resolution gave me nothing but peace and later on some curiosity to find out more about the history that could be hidden behind these characters.

I was particularly interested in the beast, since it was the graphic representation of the drawing itself. It made sense to me to start from there because it was like getting in touch directly with the manifested language.

The first thing I noticed is that it had a diffuse shape. A shell to be filled. Like a really unconventional newborn. Someone completely empty in the field of living experiences. So I gave it a story.



Gift



I tried to repeat the process for the next drawing. I let myself create something out of 'nowhere', if you can call it that. Only now taking into consideration that everything would be depicted in the same framework. A kind of theatrical scene, where the action happens in a room that is accompanied with a large horizontal window, where you can see that there's a beyond.

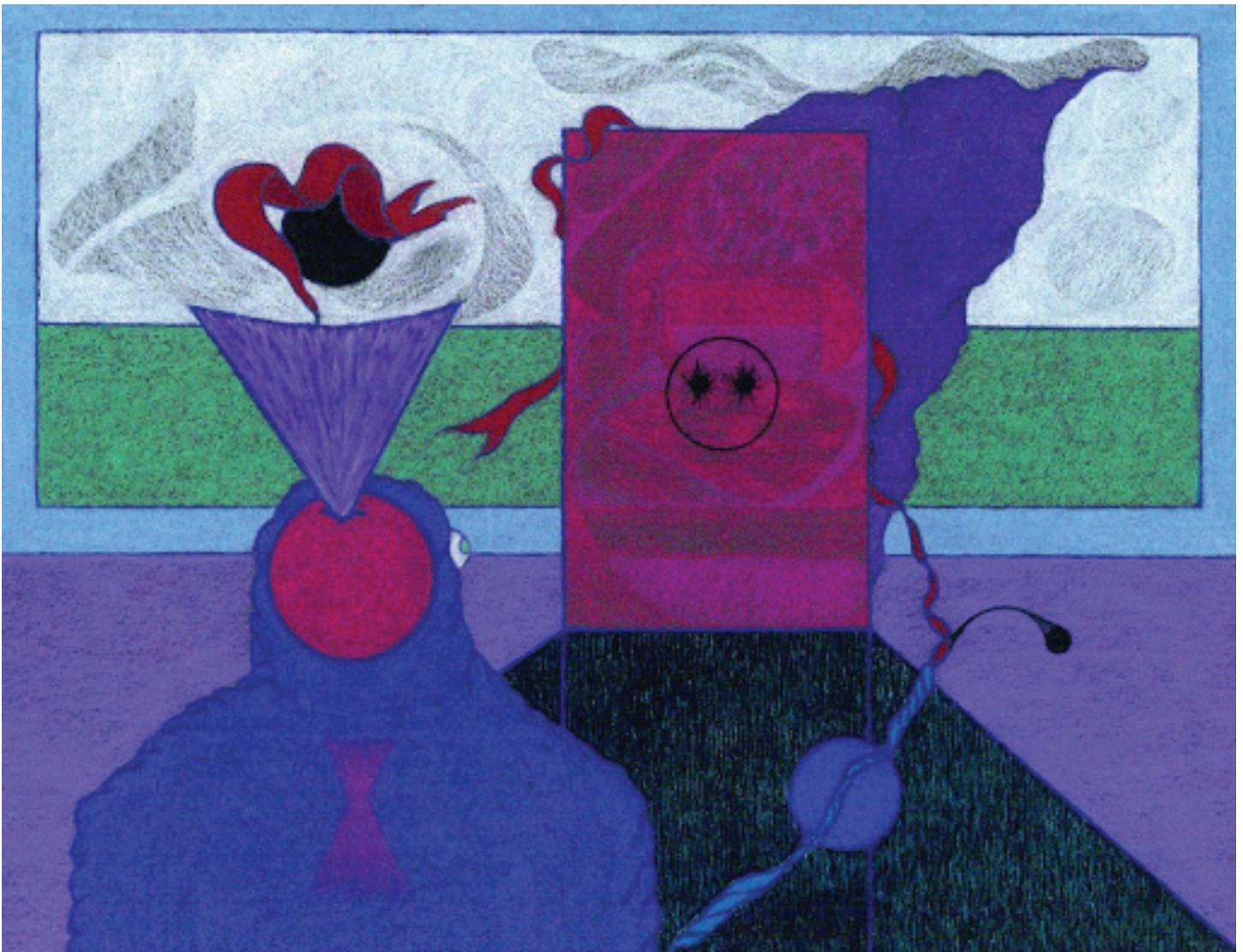
A relationship between the interior and the exterior. As if these rooms were portraits of a particular interior of the interior of my psyche and the exterior is the extensive land of the subconscious where these stories arise.

Death appears with a gift. Something occult. A shared projection. Knowledge of the imminent.

This came out as the first significant event for the character and it also changed my approach for the next drawing.

I felt the mutation of two muscles. My involvement with fiction started to dictate my decisions to proceed. My vision schemes were altered and I was feeling as if something started to grow within me. This immediately reminded me of *The Brood* by Cronenberg, where a psychologist uses a therapeutic technique called "psychoplasms", a treatment that pushes patients to engage physiologically with trauma, to the point where one of the main characters starts producing bodies parthenogenetically.

I started to perceive this language as a form of life. Since the beast was an extension of myself in this fantastic world, I



Identity



was curious to see how it would resonate inside me if I gave it essential human traits.

That's how I did *Identity*, where the beast appears with eyes after its encounter with death, as if it got from it the sufficient vision to recognize the self. Then *Memory*, where it remembers how it was born and a projection shows the scene of the machine.

These pieces were the outcome of a process I called “*embodiment*”, where the beast transformed its appearance progressively as an effect of the engagement with its interior attributes. But it was also like putting on a suit to explore this place, to set an avatar that allowed me to extend my journey there.

All this functioned as an antecedent for *Language and Technology*, which is about getting knowledge to manipulate reality consciously. To go from the intuitive exploration of the mind to becoming rational and externalizing something that can be useful.

At this point I was curious to know what this character could create. I wondered... What would this beast bring into existence? What kind of desires would it have? What could be able to externalize? And then one night I had a fever dream. I was in a market in an Arab country. A lot of people were gathered under an awning that had nothing but soil and stones, but something was underneath it and it was moving fast. I was looking with attention at how its motion was



*Memory*

runner

paired with the murmurs. Then it showed itself through the ground and I could appreciate a part of its wing and a little bit of its feet moving. It was a spirit visit.

Suddenly everyone was pointing at me with their faces covered in anxiety while screaming “It chose him, it chose him”. I felt it fused with me. I looked down to see my hands but I had wings instead and before I could look up I was transported to the interior of a dark spaceship, where aliens were conversing in front of me, but I couldn’t see their faces.

I woke up in the middle of the night and searched for a mythological character like the one who took “possession” of me. I found Ninurta, an ancient Mesopotamian god that helps

men to be released from the power of demons. I couldn’t help but to associate this to the beginning of the series, of how everything started because of the negative influence of the demon without fingers. So I knew that the next drawing had to be about this.

This made me realize what the purpose of the beast could be, both in the story and for me. I transformed the character into a sigil. A symbolic feature that I could activate to get rid of that demon.

Its motive would be to create a new machine with the knowledge it got. To invent a device that gets another being into existence, but this one with the purpose of killing the demon.





In this sense, *the beast* was only a means to another mean.

In the penultimate artwork, we can see how the bird encounters death too, but he receives a sword and the intention is set clearly.

Right now I'm still in the process of finishing the last piece and I'm not really sure what take I'll have in the end. Probably nothing happens, maybe everything will remain the same and I will have no significant change whatsoever, or maybe I'm gonna be surprised with more mysticism. Who knows?



*Dreams and Imagination*

In the end I'm not trying to find anything too specific. I just enjoy the thrill of looking in deep waters of the self, sometimes using Jungian archetypes as guidance tools, but in the end it's all about getting in contact with the stuff dreams and nightmares are made of, because we wouldn't *be* without it.



*Poesis*





*Deliverance*

*runner*