

Yes, you were busy. In that piece I speak of a proposal I made to Salvador Allende in 1971, which was to transform roofs and city squares into gardens all over Chile. Back then, Allende laughed and said: "Chile is not ready, perhaps in the year 2000." And that same proposal is now a law in France, where everybody must now have a roof garden. I thought, how interesting, that we can have this kind of imagination, meaning as a collective emergent property, that springs from us, and yet why can we not admit this collective thought-feeling as a reality?

M: *Que buena tu pregunta. Si.*

What a good question, yes, why can't we?

V: *Yo creo que nosotros como artistas, somos cómplices de esa imposibilidad de pegar un salto hacia otro estado mental, en la medida que aceptamos la idea de que somos nosotros los que estamos imaginando, y no al revés, es decir, algo se imagina a través de nosotros. La idea de "Yo, el artista" se vuelve un impedimento. Frente a eso, ¿qué sería lo lógico sentir? Como dije el otro día en la reunión en Pioneer Works, toda mi vida ha consistido en hacer actos que son un fracaso, continuamente rechazados, no vistos, continuamente invisibles. Entonces yo podría pensar así, que son un fracaso. Pero también puedo pensar al revés, ¿te fijas? Cuando niña, escribí un poema sobre el fracaso, que tenemos que incluir. Y es la idea de que las marcas del fracaso son la posibilidad. Porque es a partir de admitir el fracaso que la ronda colectiva aparece.*

I think that we as artists have become complicit in making it impossible for us to leap to a new state of mind, in that we accept the idea that we are the ones imagining, and not the other way around, in other words, that something is imagined through us. The idea of "I, the artist" gets in the way. Faced with that, what would be a more logical feeling? As I said the other day at our meeting in Pioneer Works, my whole life has consisted of performing failed

acts, that are continually rejected, disregarded, made invisible. So, I could think that way, that they are a failure, or I can also think the opposite, you see? As a young girl I wrote a poem on failure that we must include. The idea is that failure is the mark of possibility. Only by admitting failure does the collective force emerge.

### Clepsydra

I embroidered on my head long ago  
the signs of abandonment and failure  
no one had the fortune of knowing  
to which galaxies I allude  
with my smile.

I opted for wild trails,  
the object of poetry  
was always to create  
spiritual and collective rings  
where conjecture,  
Juno, and Aristotle  
dance among new shrubs.  
From the beginning  
I relied on my stupidity  
and general lack of talent.  
Always I shipwrecked among  
nouns and verbs.  
I continue to feel I am  
a shitty preacher:  
I enlighten no one  
more than me.

—Cecilia Vicuña, 1966<sup>1</sup>

Another poem from the sixties says:

"Poetry is the means by which unreality invites reality to switch sides." (ibid)