



Already, everyone has taken out their little computers and started writing poems.

Something animal

Every year, I experience spring as being accompanied by an energetic renewal of writing. There must be something animal in this seasonal jubilation in writing, even if so few animals, for now at least, when they feel the sun's first rays caress their fur, immediately open up their laptop computers and lay down a few thoughts amongst the buds and young shoots. There is something bodily, physiological, in the surge of ideas, in the desire for them to surge, even if writing passes as a cerebral activity at first glance. Physiological, for example, in that morning writing is a completely different matter from afternoon writing. The afternoon is unbridled, a time when elastic bands snap, barrages collapse, leaving a desire to come undone, to brim over and to zigzag. It is said that some authors, precisely because they write better after sleeping, take naps so as to regain, several times a day, a post-sleep state.

The infinite setting up of Playmobil

Writing is a constraint that weighs on you. In fact it's an extremely painful activity. It holds an element of bright happiness, but this happiness only springs up towards the very end. Writer Olivier Cadiot said in an interview that he spends the very first stages of writing a book laying out the playing field, the lines, the goals, etc. Only at the last moment does he pull off a really great game, and then it's over. This is the way of children when they've been setting up their Playmobil since eight in the morning, and when at six in the evening they're asked to put away their toys because it's bath time: they refuse because they haven't started playing yet. *We thought* that they had been playing. But not at all, they were only *setting up* – something entirely different. The same goes for writing: we think that it's pleasant – but not at all. You need to force yourself, to mentally psyche yourself up, to promise yourself a thousand treats in the future, and to play tricks on yourself. To ease the pressure, I've discovered something other than naps: I've doubled activity. Basically, this is perhaps less savvy than taking naps because it comes down to working twice more instead of sinking gently into a slumber filled with amazing dreams. Still. I've *developed performance*.

Relaxing performance

When I say performance, I'm not talking about putting on sports shoes to beat a local record for the 100-metre hurdles. I'm not talking about raising the profits of a stock company. What I'm talking about is getting on stage, starting on a lecture, broadcasting films the way that people show their holiday videos, singing songs with Gilles W, a friend. In short, a very relaxing activity for someone used to being pent up in a room, getting annoyed in front of the computer, ears plugged up and crowned with noise-cancellation headphones: it's very relaxing to find oneself in the heat of action, addressing the public, singing a song, fiddling with mikes, paying attention not to make mistakes, fixing technical problems related to equipment or the broadcasting format. It's very relaxing to be there in the light. Well... relaxing is perhaps not the right word. Let's just say that it's a relief in relation to writing; and conversely, once back home, it's an intense relief to rediscover the wonderful, solitary calmness of writing. So it's relief that goes both ways.

Chimera

In recent months, during autumn and winter, I prepared *Chimère*, one such relaxing performance. In this work, I present the main outline of my current book, an outline on which one can zoom in and see this or that episode in film. For example, in this book, a woman lives with a dog-man, a genetically modified organism: not exactly easy... I interviewed a reproduction biologist to find out how to make this dog-man, then I made this genetically modified dog-man, then I filmed him, then he was multiplied by four, so I filmed him again, then I took him onstage and showed him to the public.

Playmobil and hydrangeas

Now that the book has been filmed, there's nothing left but to write it. Yes, I know. The method is not exactly orthodox. The written book will only be slightly related to the imagined book, because the writing process consists precisely in revealing surprises, the unknown, the unexpected, in bringing into being a book that you didn't know about at the outset. In any case, timing is perfect calendar-wise as spring comes after autumn and winter – and spring is the season for the renewal of writing. Already, everyone has taken out their Playmobil toys and started setting them up at four in the morning on the living-room floor; already, everyone has their laptops in front of them, the animals, the trees, the orchids on the balcony, the camellias in the garden, the neighbour's hydrangeas, the oaks, the maples, the colza and the corn; already, everyone has switched on their little computers and started writing poems. So much so that while we're on the subject, so as not to get behind on either Playmobils or hydrangeas, I'd best get back to it!

Emmanuelle Pireyre
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After commerce studies that worked her up, then philosophy studies that calmed her down, **Emmanuelle Pireyre** (Clermont-Ferrand, 1969) attempted to put things into perspective by writing. She writes, very slowly, books on the borderline between novels, poetry and essays (*Congélations et décongelations et autres traitements appliqués aux circonstances*, Maurice Nadeau, 2000; *Mes vêtements ne sont pas des draps de lit*, Maurice

Nadeau, 2001; *Comment faire disparaître la terre?*, Seuil, 2006; *Foire internationale*, Les petits matins, 2012). To speed things up a bit, she alternates her books with various mixed forms such as fiction for radio, the theatre and above all performance-readings on stage combined with videos and music. She enjoys artistic collaborations – such as the long path of discussions with Olivier Bosson who makes short films of her performances, writing with Jean-Charles Massera, taking text to the stage with Myriam Marzouki and her actors, or music with Gilles Weinzaepflen who accompanies her on stage – for the thrill and surprise of working with others, bringing out with each a different type of complementariness that is often completely unexpected. Emmanuelle received the Prix Médicis for her novel/poetic essay *Féerie générale* (L'Olivier, 2012).