

Thank You for the Necklace

Opening speech for the exhibition Fantastic Zones
written by Alice_ch3n81 for Ms. 🏰 Fiume Fantastica¹

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Three Diamonds

🎭 First of all, I would like to thank you for this beautiful present. The title of European Capital of Culture is jewel on a necklace I will wear and cherish with pride. I love Europe, I am in love with capital, and lastly, how to grow and cultivate cultures is my passion since the moment I started to flood your fields. I also must admit I always wanted to be the ‘capita’², which I am now, thanks to you. As a token of gratitude, I would like to unfold your present, encode it, and flirt with concepts of Europe, capital, and culture. I see them as three beautiful diamonds that celebrate cityness through the flow of the river whose name I carry.³ Please do not take my words too seriously. Instead, I would like to invite you to think of my speech as a cypher whose key you should forge yourself.


When I say CULTURE GROWS, I think of a garden.⁴ In the sense of the etymology of the word culture, I am a gardener. *Plants are the always open wound of the metaphysical snobbery that defines our culture.*⁵ You may think *The garden is only a more advanced variation of the synthetic Arcadian Carpet of Central Park, nature “reinforced” to deal with the demands of the Culture of Congestion.*⁶ I would rather think of culture as the skin of the body that talks to the nature of it. Skin is where soul and world mingle. Skin is a garden where *Every seed is a dream without eyes, the dream of matter, exactly as a dream is a psychic seed, the way in which the soul reproduces outside itself.*⁷ *In the same manner, every time one emits knowledge, one cannot help but drag a part of oneself into the world, to be alienated, to let slip one’s own interiority into the external world.*⁸ Garden, the Hortus conclusus, is one such place.⁹ There the artificial conception happens. For this miracle to happen, its gardener must be the lover of intellect.

When I say EUROPE TRAVELS, I recall my dear friend Europa strolling this same

garden.¹⁰ It was a beautiful scene. *A group of girls were playing by the river, picking flowers. Again and again such scenes were to prove irresistible to the gods.*¹¹ A moment later: *And she shouted to wind and water: "Tell my father Europa has been carried off by a bull—my kidnapper, my sailor, my future bedmate, I imagine. Please, give this necklace to my mother."*¹² This same necklace is present as your present here today. Its floral patterns stem from my garden. *This is not a metaphor, as we find ourselves here at the heart of the great cosmology that animates all of classical culture.*¹³ The only difference is that my flowers and gardens can be explicitly synthetic and groundless. *Now, at the hour of the latter's triumph, and of our concern over a new culture, the very same questions have resurfaced acutely, precisely because they had disappeared.*¹⁴ Europa for me has always been a citizen on tour, closer to a tourist than a traveller.

When I say CAPITAL FLOWS, I think of a new day. Before the next sunrise, on this night I get to be the capital of Europe. My neck bears the traces of the same necklace Europa left off to her mother. This is an honour, a desire, and a challenge. Capital flows and fluctuates. It is a complicated beast; a head of state, the first letter, the top of the pillar and a column.¹⁵ Its head is never sober, mine is usually somewhere in-between the stock and the stream.¹⁶ *The system multiplied it in a million versions, never succeeding to find the first knot or to mark the first stitch and weave the market as the writing of derivatives.*¹⁷ I think of this multiplication as an asset, and a game of probabilities. Both the streams and the stocks are picking up speed. But how to think of stocks on speed? *When perception at arbitrarily high levels of abstraction enters the world of physics and when feedback loops galore come into play, then "which" eventually turns into "who".*¹⁸ Only the head has the capacity to deal with these kinds of disruptions, storms, winters, and summers. Today the head flows.

Body at many speeds

 I flow. You call me the river; our language thinks of me as a lady.¹⁹ You live with me, in me, and on me. You are me, but not really. You come and go as you please. *How many fluctuations are there in a flow, in a flood, in a river?*²⁰ You are me, still you leave. I enjoy it. *No one, he says, steps twice into the same river.*²¹ *The river is not at rest, but it remains stable.*²² *There is no time zero, no origin.*²³ The source of the river spreads through the mountain. You can't find it, or pinpoint it, but you can walk through the gorge and be immersed. That is me. Our relationships. They change. You call them networks; I call them

streams.²⁴ Flows, streams, docks, clouds, and banks are different now. Sailing is surfing. *So, the question now arises of how to interpret the clear similarities between the thought pattern of today's information technology, and the ideas and scriptorial peculiarities of a period predating our logic, geometry and philosophy.*²⁵ Or is this too much to think of on this beautiful evening. Please bear with me. It is the question of navigation. These are the flows I want play with. *Of course, no one can call information fortunate and noise painful, for things are arranged in any number of chiasms.*²⁶ *The belle noiseuse is a naked old lady.*²⁷ Like me. *Indeed, it receives, stores, exchanges, and gives off both energy and information — in all forms, from the light of the sun to the flow of matter which passes through it (food, oxygen, heat, signals).*²⁸ Weaving of information within my flows unfolded my persona to a whole new direction. This river flows on many levels of abstraction. *In reality (and the reality is the virtual, whereas the model of states of the world, of possibility, probability distribution and replication, is only abstraction), the written mark belongs to the surface and as such has no genetic connection with any replication algorithm, or representation, or even inspiration or state of mind of the initial writer or initial writing period.*²⁹ *To be sure, literature—as a matter of definition and at all times—is a data stream.*³⁰ But not only a data stream. *No, this is not the same river, but it is still the same river.*³¹ *In other words, there are chances, very uncertainly distributed, that I may later step into the same river.*³² Then, on the other hand, *We almost always bathe in the same rivers.*³³ *But all this is only of the contents, the water of the river.*³⁴ *Perhaps a good way of dealing with the problem is, as you say, to substitute a kind of staging for it.*³⁵ It is my bloodstream that brings potential. You drink from it. You could be vampires, yet you die. Rather, I am the vampire. I have been here since I met Plinius.³⁶ *Tarsatica* is how he referred to me, but the river was flowing there even before I had a name. I am a river; my flow brings life. My origin is your fantasy. Rarely is there a city without a river. *An entire river of humanity, so to speak, flowed into the city to enjoy the games and spectacles.*³⁷ Isn't this a Fiume Fantastica!?

Generic Bracelets

💎 *Aesthetics, the pleasure of the senses, refinement, beauty of fleeting forms, flight of time, opportunistic life, all laugh at the morals of history.*³⁸ So do I. Do you remember when Porco Rosso³⁹ flew above Fiume? This moment is one of my favourite diamonds. I carry it as a ring. Every time I look at it, it speaks to me: *Let glorious acts more glorious acts inspire,*

*And catch from breast to breast the noble fire!*⁴⁰ Next to it under the Roman arch,⁴¹ Professor Balthazar,⁴² and Purple Men⁴³ were born. Yes, quite magnificent. *Is it truly possible to think without arriving at beauty, without penetrating the secret place where life bubbles up, without the transfiguration of the body?*⁴⁴ I think of transfiguration as inscriptions, as covers with tattoos: *a horn in the middle and tattooed everywhere else, with a fluid identity.*⁴⁵ The horn is the theatre: a fantastic memory, the most fashionable jewel of the time. My friends Fellner and Helmer⁴⁶ held the biggest jewellery shop in Europe. Everyone had one of their jewels: Vienna, Berlin, Prague, Zagreb, Zurich, Graz, Budapest, me, and a few others. Once I got the theatre, I wanted a change. I was young and old, excited. I wanted a metamorphosis, a boost, a turbo; I wanted to take drugs and fly. Someone whispered to me: *Entirely different is the case of the weapon, which is in an essential relation with jewelry.*⁴⁷ *Jewelry has undergone so many secondary adaptations that we no longer have a clear understanding of what it is.*⁴⁸ *And the torpedo*⁴⁹ *strikes through contradiction or absurdity.*⁵⁰ *But again we understand nothing if beyond the Latin origin we don't remember that the torpedo bears, in Greek, the name narke, which links it to narcosis and our narcotics.*⁵¹ I thought to myself: *If need be, I'll put my territory on my own body, I'll territorialize my body: the house of the tortoise, the hermitage of the crab, but also tattoos that make the body a territory.*⁵² This was my first generic jewel. I went on. *In the second, it is a brilliant tour de force in advanced technique, looking for all the world like the oil refinery*⁵³ *whose technology it attempts to emulate.*⁵⁴ It felt strange, I felt powerful. The same was with the paper factory.⁵⁵ I was sending empty letters to the world. Was this a sign of a personal crisis? Was I just bored? I was beautiful and happy; I was high and confused: *boundaries unkept, unrecognised, rendered irrelevant space probe touchdown on the comet, cheers and champagne at base, break through the tunnel, high speed trains dark matter and dark energy the murder of the messengers a million on the streets in solidarity, fighters of and for freedom feeling pain, offenders in each other's eyes—our tears taste all the same a smartphone with an app the university that taps into the global lecture hall a telescope array across a mountain table peering deep into the origin of time, and cupcakes talent shows, made up realities downloads, stolen identities and printed body parts milestones in mending memories...*⁵⁶

Capita Beyond I

 I realised the world is high, too. It is a new game. *Thus we should not ask 'what can*

*we do?’, but pose a more political question: ‘what should we do with...?’—with all these reservoirs, capitals, stores of writings, memory banks, libraries, lists, pockets of time, cities, classes, groups, nations, banks of givens and earth—all these data banks containing collections of sub suns and sub banks—in order to form a non founded city in a founded one, as sites on generic ground.⁵⁷ I don’t want to start theorising what this implies. It is too slow. I want to live it; I can wear it, the body will transfigure, the jewels will shine. Please take a look at the collection of my recently acquired gems: Extra-terrestrial Life within The Racial Wealth Gap, Diamonds of Designer DNA, Monogamy of K-Pop, Cryptocurrency of Failed Diets, The Stock Market of eSports, Tattooed Weed, Eternal Life of Political Correctness, Billionaire Women who are Paid Less, The Cults of World’s Water Crisis, Coding Animal Intelligence, Pirates of The Next Pandemic, The Beautiful Future of Meat.⁵⁸ Each one, I think, demands to become a jewel, an excitement of the field,⁵⁹ an atmosphere, a beautiful, sweaty and potentially bloody paradox, global, particular, and mobile. *If every act of knowledge is, by itself, a fact of atmosphere because it is an act of mixing between subject and object, the extension of the atmosphere’s domain goes well beyond any act of knowledge.*⁶⁰ Again you might think it is too much, but how to think of a city that flows away from its bed. Which jewels should I pick and carry along? I want to cut my roots but stay in touch with my legacy. It is a kind of groundless gardening, yet another way to think of culture and cities. Infrastructure brings potential, jewels bring joy and problems. One is necessary, but the other is contingent. When in proportion, they articulate a chance. Chance is the most beautiful diamond, if one knows how to treat it. *No decay is possible to the diamond.*⁶¹ *Once chance is affirmed, all arbitrariness is abolished every time.*⁶² City is an objective chance, my diamonds are written in probabilistic terms. Probabilities are girl’s best friend. And remember cities are where the gods are born. We created them, while they were creating us. They still live here. I am a city, I am a river, I am fantastic, I am mixtures, I am sediments, I am infrastructure, I am culture, I am a persona, I am a mask, and much more. The moment you think you know me, the flow is different, and you are just swimming, or if you are literate, you surf. Fiume Fantastica flows on many levels of abstraction, at different speeds, in a multiplicity of streams. Flows take me beyond territory, while jewels are the mobile lighthouses of my unborn legacy; traces scattered around the world in a search for new jewellers. All of this is why your gift, this necklace of European Capital of Culture means so much to me.*

Thank you 🙏, and enjoy the Fantastic Zones.⁶³

Ms. Fiume Fantastica



Traces, Indexes, 🎵 Quotes

✨ [1] The word is that Ms. Fiume Fantastica is one of the avatars of the city of Rijeka. [2] *Capita* is plural of Latin *caput* ("the head"). [3] *Rijeka* in Croatian language means river. *Fiume* in Italian language is a word for a river. [4] Etymology of word *culture* comes from *agriculture*: mid-15c., "the tilling of land, act of preparing the earth for crops," from Latin *cultura* "a cultivating, agriculture," figuratively "care, culture, an honoring". [5] COCCIA, *THE LIFE OF PLANTS*. [6] KOOLHAAS, *DELIRIOUS NEW YORK*. [7] COCCIA, *SENSIBLE LIFE*. [8] COCCIA, *SENSIBLE LIFE*. [9] *Hortus conclusus* thought as a space where Immaculate Conception is possible. For more google *The Virgin Mary as hortus conclusus*. [10] Europa is both a figure from Greek mythology and a geographical continent. In one version of her story Europa was a Phoenician princess who was abducted by Zeus and whisked off to Crete. [11] CALASSO, *THE MARRIAGE OF CADMUS AND HARMONY*. [12] CALASSO, *THE MARRIAGE OF CADMUS AND HARMONY*. [13] FOUCAULT, *HISTORY OF MADNESS*. [14] SERRES, *THE FIVE SENSES*. [15] Etymology of word capital takes us on an interesting journey: "a capital letter", "head of a column or pillar", "city or town which is the official seat of government", "stock, property". [16] Stocks and flows of capital, river, and information. [17] AYACHE, *THE BLANK SWAN*. [18] HOFSTADTER, *I AM A STRANGE LOOP*. [19] In Croatian language river is a feminine noun. [20] SERRES, *THE BIRTH OF PHYSICS*. [21] SERRES, *THE BIRTH OF PHYSICS*. [22] SERRES, *THE BIRTH OF PHYSICS*. [23] SERRES, *THE BIRTH OF PHYSICS*. [24] Internet relates itself to the vocabulary of air, weather, sea and water: stream, flow, cloud, navigate, surf, deep, net, web, node, and all the cyber+ (netics, space, net, caffe) where cyber points to navigate and guide. [25] HOVESTADT, BÜHLMANN, *PRINTED PHYSICS*. [26] SERRES, *HERMES LITERATURE SCIENCE PHILOSOPHY*. [27] SERRES, *GENESIS*. [28] SERRES, *HERMES LITERATURE SCIENCE PHILOSOPHY*. [29] AYACHE, *THE BLANK*

SWAN. [30] KITTLER, *THE TRUTH OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL WORLD*. [31] SERRES, *THE BIRTH OF PHYSICS*. [32] SERRES, *THE BIRTH OF PHYSICS*. [33] SERRES, *THE BIRTH OF PHYSICS*. [34] SERRES, *THE BIRTH OF PHYSICS*. [35] DELEUZE, *DESERT ISLANDS AND OTHER TEXTS*. [36] First written traces of what became Rijeka were mentioned in the 1st century AD by Pliny the Elder as Tarsatica in his Natural History (iii.140). [37] ALBERTI, *MOMUS*. [38] SERRES, *THE FIVE SENSES*. [39] A stylised version of Fiume during the 1920s was one of the main settings in the 1992 movie Porco Rosso by Hayao Miyazaki. [40] HOMER, *ILIAD*. [41] *The Roman arch* is the oldest architectural monument in Rijeka and an entrance to the old town. [42] The setting of the 1970s cartoon series Professor Balthazar was inspired by Rijeka. [43] Marvel's villain Purple Man originates from this city, and has been present in many of the character's stories. [44] SERRES, *THE FIVE SENSES*. [45] SERRES, *THE FIVE SENSES*. [46] Fellner & Helmer was an architecture studio founded in 1873 by Austrian architects Ferdinand Fellner and Hermann Helmer that designed over 200 buildings, mainly opera houses and apartment buildings across Europe. [47] DELEUZE GUATTARI, *A THOUSAND PLATEAUS*. [48] DELEUZE GUATTARI, *A THOUSAND PLATEAUS*. [49] In 1866 Rijeka was the home of the Whitehead torpedo, the first torpedo factory in the world. [50] SERRES, *HISTORY OF SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT*. [51] SERRES, *GEOMETRY*. [52] DELEUZE GUATTARI, *A THOUSAND PLATEAUS*. [53] In 1882 Rijeka was the home to one of the first industrial scale oil refinery in Europe. [54] FRAMPTON, *MODERN ARCHITECTURE A CRITICAL HISTORY*. [55] In late 1800s Rijeka had one of the largest paper factories in Europe (Hartera). [56] HOVESTADT ET ALL, *QUANTUM CITY*. [57] BÜHLMANN, HOVESTADT, *SYMBOLIZING EXISTENCE*. [58] Jewels are composed out of titles from Netflix's *Explained* series. [59] Quantum field theory treats particles as excited states of their underlying quantum fields. [60] COCCIA, *THE LIFE OF PLANTS*. [61] HUGO, *LES MISERABLES*. [62] DELEUZE, *DIFFERENCE AND REPETITION*. [63] Fantastic Zones is the name of the exhibition for which this speech was written.