

**I AM NOBODY.**  
*Are You Nobody Too?*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Objects in the Mirror  
are Closer than They Appear

**SELEN ANSEN**

10

Acoustical Justice:  
A Theory of Listening

**CANA BOSTAN**

68

Artworks on Display

121

Saving Narcissus

**FATİH ÖZGÜVEN**

268

List of Works

311

# OBJECTS IN THE MIRROR ARE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR

SELEN ANSEN

*"I am you, when I am I."*<sup>1</sup>  
— Paul Celan

*"I am the are-you."*<sup>2</sup>  
— Clarice Lispector

*"Look in thy glass and tell the face thou viewest,  
Now is the time that face should form another"*<sup>3</sup>  
— Shakespeare

BEFORE anything else, let me tell you that winter felt like it would never end / that a skin-clad stone lies on the kitchen table, close by my side. Know that I write *I* so that I can say *you*.

School taught me that *I* is both singular and primary, which I have long believed. Long have I believed that *I am* THEREFORE *you are* THEREFORE *we are*. Later on, I unlearned, by dint of repeatedly standing before mirrors that would not reflect me, bearing my father's name and speaking my mother's tongue, being inhabited by voices, bits of lives lived, faces that were stranger to me. I concluded that *I* is both plural and secondary. I am *IF* you are. Understand that if you did not exist, I would have to

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1 Paul Celan, "Praise of Distance," in *Selected Poems and Prose*, trans. John Felstiner (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 24.

2 Clarice Lispector, *Água Viva* (New York: New Directions Books, 2012), 6.

3 William Shakespeare, "Sonnet 3," in *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (London: Thomas Thorpe, 1609).

KORAY ARIŞ, UNTITLED, 2021-2022



## NARCISSUS AND ECHO

OVID

When the prophetic vision awoke / Behind the blind eyes of  
Tiresias / And stared into the future,

The first to test how deeply he saw / And how lucidly / Was  
Liriope, a swarthy nymph of the fountain.

She was swept off her feet by the river Cephissus / Who rolled  
her into the bed of a dark pool, / Then cast her up on the shingle  
pregnant.

The boy she bore, even in his cradle, / Had a beauty that broke  
hearts. / She named this child Narcissus. Gossips

Came to Tiresias: 'Can her boy live long / With such perfect  
beauty?' The seer replied: / 'Yes, unless he learns to know himself.'

All regarded these words as a riddle--- / Till time solved them  
with a strange madness. / A stranger death completed the  
explanation.

In his sixteenth year Narcissus, / Still a slender boy but already a  
man, / Infatuated many. His beauty had flowered,

But something glassy about it, a pride, / Kept all his admirers at a  
distance. / None dared be familiar, let alone touch him.

A day came, out on the mountain / Narcissus was driving and  
netting and killing the deer / When Echo saw him.

Echo who cannot be silent / When another speaks. Echo who  
cannot / Speak at all / Unless another has spoken. / Echo, who  
always answers back.

# ACOUSTICAL JUSTICE: A THEORY OF LISTENING

C A N A B O S T A N

*“pas pas paspas pas  
pasppas ppas pas paspas  
(...) passionnément”<sup>1</sup>*

*“He went through the alphabet.  
E didn’t help him. I didn’t help him.  
Only U. He roared with all the force he  
had in his lungs, ‘Uu!’”<sup>2</sup>*

Nuumte Ote, meaning “the true voice,” is a critically endangered language, and out of only a handful of remaining speakers in Mexico, there are two men, Manuel Segovia and Isidro Velazquez, who do not like to communicate with each other. There are ongoing efforts to keep the language alive, thanks to the community itself and efforts by researchers such as linguist and anthropologist Daniel Suslak. More than ten years ago, for an advertising campaign, a well-known telecommunications company purposely distorted the situation by exaggerating the hostile relationship between these two men and positioned them as potentially “responsible for the death of the language” because they were “cross” with one another; they utilised this situation to market a product, placing it into the mise-en-scene of two people who refused to speak to each other (and then, of course, did).<sup>3</sup> Just as communication is worth a lot of money, there is a price for lack of communication in life. Therefore, the theme of resentment,

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1 The stuttering poem “Passionnément” by Ghérasim Luca.

2 Leonhard Frank, *Der Mensch ist Gut* (Zurich: 1919), 153, quoted in Helmut Lethen, *Cool Conduct: The Culture of Distance in Weimar Germany*, trans. Don Reneau (California: University of California Press, 2002), 197.

3 Daniel Suslak, “Who Can Save Ayapaneco? How Vodafone Exploited an Endangered Language to Build its Brand,” *Schwa Fire* Season 1, Issue 2 (2014). [http://stories.schwa-fire.com/who\\_save\\_ayapaneco#story-cover](http://stories.schwa-fire.com/who_save_ayapaneco#story-cover)

EMILY DICKINSON,  
*POEMS: PACKET VIII,*  
FASCICLE 11.

INCLUDES 20 POEMS, WRITTEN IN INK, CA. 1861.  
HOUGHTON LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY, CAMBRIDGE,  
MASS. HOUGHTON LIBRARY - [35A, B] "I'M NOBODY!  
WHO ARE YOU?" J288, FR260; "I HELD A JEWEL IN MY  
FINGERS," J245, FR261.

++ 3

I'm not! Who are you?  
 Are you - really - too?  
 Then there's a pair of us!  
 Don't tell! They'd laugh at  
 us - you know! advertise

How many - 10 to 1000?  
 How public - like a frog -  
 To tell <sup>one's</sup> own name - the incoming  
 Sun -

To an Admiring Boy!

I held a Sand in my fingers.  
 And went to sleep.

The Day was warm, and winds  
 were poor.

I said "I will keep."

I woke, and laid my honest  
 fingers.

The Gem was gone.

I'm Nobody! Who are you?  
Are you – Nobody – too?  
Then there's a pair of us!  
Don't tell! they'd advertise – you know!

How dreary – to be – Somebody!  
How public – like a Frog –  
To tell one's name – the livelong June –  
To an admiring Bog!

*Emily Dickinson*



VOID, L'HOMME QUI TEND UNE PARABOLE VERS LE CIEL [THE MAN WHO HOLDS A SATELLITE TOWARDS THE SKY], 2021. EXHIBITION VIEW



AYÇA TELGEREN, ON THE ROAD 1,  
2022



AYÇA TELGEREN, ON THE ROAD 3, 2022



BETTY BUI, SERIE 'LES AMANTS': L'UNE DANS L'AUTRE [ONE IN THE OTHER], 2010. EXHIBITION VIEW

# SAVING NARCISSUS

FATİH ÖZGÜVEN

*“I don’t know,’ said Alexander.  
We don’t believe in human nature  
in the old Greek way any more.”*

— Iris Murdoch, *A Severed Head*

There are three fascinating stories among the legends of Greek and Roman mythology about *looking* (‘being unable to not look’) and *seeing* (the perilous outcome of “looking”). All three are gold dust for those of us who often find ourselves thinking with stories.



A SCENE FROM  
PURPLE NOON (PLEIN SOLEIL).  
PURPLE NOON (PLEIN SOLEIL),  
DIR. RENÉ CLÉMENT  
[MIRAMAX FILMS, 1960].

## 1. Actaeon and Artemis or Actaeon and Diana

*“Violence, except on the screen,  
is always pathetic, ludicrous and beastly.”*

— Iris Murdoch, *A Severed Head*

Actaeon, whose name means action in Greek, is the child of Autonoe daughter of Cadmus, the founder of Thebes, and

# MYSELF (FOR WANT OF ANYTHING BETTER)

THE SIREN IS BEGUILLED  
BY HER OWN VOICE .

CLAUDE CAHUN

*Self-Love.*

The death of Narcissus has always seemed totally incomprehensible to me.<sup>34</sup> Only one explanation seems plausible: Narcissus did not love himself. He allowed himself to be deceived by an image. He didn't know how to go beyond appearances. Had he fallen in love with the face of a nymph rather than his own, his mortal impotence would have remained the same.

But had he known how to love himself beyond the mirage his would have been a happy fate, the epitome of living paradise, the myth of the privileged man, worthy of envy down the centuries.

That beautiful child was able to extract the infinite from his reflections, while we remain vibrations away, always the same, incapable of going any further.

Oh Narcissus, you could love yourself in everything: sun, your brother, even more beautiful in the weary night, who reflects a pallor on the moon which he never wearies of admiring; moon, who can only see his body in the lake where he lies stretched out until dawn; all colours scattered and each seeks out the most faithful copy of itself among the valley's multicoloured columbines; honeys that the bees, your sisters, are so fond of, and where the flowers seek out their fragrance...

You were able to love yourself among wood spirits and nymphs, flattering or truthful mirrors, unconscious instruments of a separate will. And you remained apart because you would have been able, through your divinity, to isolate yourself from the universe, experience your existence, know and love yourself.

## I AM NOBODY. ARE YOU NOBODY TOO?

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