



Caribbean
Technopoe-
tics:
Episode 01
Eduardo
Kao



CARIBBEAN TECHNO POETICS
EPISODE 01

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The following year, the Department decided to support the second

phase of the project, which focused on post-production of the interviews, subtitling, and the development of a web archive hosted on GitHub. The archive provides access to the complete bilingual episodes (English-Spanish), the posters designed to establish the visual identity of the video capsules, PDF editions in both English and Spanish, and links to access the podcast on YouTube and Spotify.

The publication and archive are part of an ongoing research project on Caribbean techno-poetics and seek to contribute to the documentation, circulation, and preservation of these



CARIBBEAN TECHNOPOETICS

Translation by Nicolás Gerardi Rousset

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EPISODE 01

EDUARDO KAC
NICOLÁS GERARDI ROUSSET



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EPISODE 01_ EDUARDO KAC

Conventions: titles of works and publications, personal names, and historical movements or events are set in italics; dates are set in bold. Speaker turns are marked NGR (Nicolás Gerardi Rousset) and EK (Eduardo Kac). The text has been edited from the episode transcript: fillers, repetitions and false starts were removed, and names and facts corrected, while preserving the meaning and the voice of each speaker.

NGR: *Welcome, this is Caribbean Technopoetics, a podcast that explores the relationship between poetry and technology in, by, for and from the Caribbean, insular and continental. Today we are with the writer, researcher, artist and poet Eduardo Kac.*

A little biographical information: Eduardo Kac was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1962 and, from 1980 on, began to stir up the cultural landscape, first with the porn art movement; since the 1980s, he has been moving poetry into electronic media with digital poetry, holopoetry, biopoetry, aromapoetry, and his latest projects, tied to carrying poetry into zero-gravity environments and into space,

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which is space poetry.

We're going to have a chronological conversation: we'll trace his work from the 1980s to the present, and try to understand what and how that point of intersection between poetic language, technology and contemporary culture is. Welcome to the podcast, Eduardo, it's a pleasure to have you here.

The first thing I want to do is start with some questions about the 1980s and Brazil, and specifically about a group of poems from that period that resonated with me a great deal when I first came to know your work: the yell poems. How were they born? What was the context you were living through at the time, and

where were they presented?

EK: Thank you so much, it's a pleasure to be here. Coming back to Brazil in 1980, the first thing to say is that we were in a context of dictatorship. The military dictatorship in Brazil had been imposed since 1964, and in 1980 we were still under that regime; the president was a general. There was censorship, there were various forms of repression. There was a small shift in 1980, but the context was still very harsh: January 1980, politically speaking, was still the seventies. The date changes, but the spirits don't change, minds

don't change, ways of seeing the world don't change, nor do the internal colonizations of disposition, of attitude, of outlook.

Culturally, we were still under the principles of the 1970s: a decade informed, on one hand, by conceptualism; on the other, by a return to lyric poetry, so to speak; and also by what I usually call an *aesthetics of violence*. In the seventies, all over the world, we saw art forms that used aggressive devices, real or potential physical force or violence. *Marina Abramović*, for instance, had a performance in which she laid out on a table various instruments that could

torture or cause pain, and she stood there while the audience had the right to do whatever it wanted to her with those instruments. There were artists who killed animals live within the context of a performance —Ana Mendieta, for example— where the blood and the ritual of real, dead animals were part of the work. And it's clear that in the early seventies we also have the *punk* movement. There was, then, an aesthetics of violence that, for me and my companions in the *porn art movement*, needed to be overcome. We needed to develop an aesthetics of joy, not of violence: the revolutionary power

of joy. The *porn art movement* was not a practice of commercial pornography—commercial pornography didn't even exist in the Brazil of that context—and commercial pornography reproduces all the ideological mechanisms of repression of an authoritarian society. The idea was, precisely, to invent a pornography that was free for everyone, for every social disposition: a pornography that defended everyone's right to equality and respect. A political pornography, therefore. It was the moment to invent a political pornography. In Brazil we already knew, for instance, *Freire's Pedagogy of the*

Oppressed, the *Theatre of the Oppressed*, liberation theology. The *porn art movement* then invents the pornography of emancipation: a creative, free, poetic, political, new pornography that subverts the oppressive semiology of commercial, industrial pornography.

And so we practiced a series of methods, of new devices, through which new visions of the world were shared with society. Since everything was so new, humor also played a very important role — and I don't mean only the joke, the incongruity we already knew from the Baroque: *Quevedo*, *Góngora*, *Don Quixote* itself.

I'm talking about a new kind of humor, with several functions. The first comes from novel poetic and artistic procedures. The word "fuck," for instance, which should always carry a pleasurable sense, is frequently used in a violent, negative one; we built poems in which, whenever a word with that negative charge appeared, its meaning was transformed into something positive and pleasurable. The reader, the participant, would then find words that normally carry a negative charge carrying a positive one instead, which caused surprise, and that surprise frequently produced a reaction of humor — a humor

stronger than reason, that takes hold of the body and produces a spasm which, virtually, is like a kind of intellectual orgasm, a somatic orgasm through poetry: a physical reaction stronger than reason.

The *yell poems* were born from that, and also because performance had an important aspect: on one hand, developing the form of performance itself; on the other, the fact that the notion of public space in the Brazil of that moment was fundamentally absent, because under the repression of the military dictatorship there was no public space, no free expression in public space. Through

performance on the beach, in the park, in the square, we reclaimed and redefined public space as a creative space for artistic and aesthetic expression. The *yell poems* were poems written for silent reading, but conceived for those situations of public performance.

NGR: *It's interesting, because one would think the yell poems point toward protest, toward that violent register, and yet they are fed, instead, by humor. Do you think that, in a way, they responded to a kind of aggression, the way the porn art movement's performances did? Were they seeking confrontation, or, on the*

contrary, an integration of their surroundings into these ideas?

EK: The *porn art* movement didn't work with that logic, which we already understood to be very old. It sought, precisely, to share with the public, to give them the lived experience of the revolutionary power of joy. We weren't trying to say no to the world around us: we were trying to show how we wanted the world to be. We modeled the desirable world, not only to say no to what existed, but to show how it should be.

NGR: *And how should the world be?*

EK: It should be free; it should respect all people equally, every way of existing in the world, including the whole spectrum of sexual identities. All voices should be respected equally. And it's important to say that the *porn art movement* was not what today would be called *queer* — that's a North American way of looking at the past in the tropics. The *porn art movement* also embraced heterosexual people, because we understood that both heterosexual men and heterosexual women also lived under systems of oppression, systems that demanded they behave in the way society expected. So it

wasn't only a *queer* movement in that North American sense, but a movement in which every way of existing in the world had to be respected, and had to have the freedom to be natural, without living under the traditional, oppressive, conservative ways of understanding what a man is, what a woman is, what a gay, lesbian or trans person is. Everyone had to be respected and allowed to be who they truly are.

NGR: *A question I've always had, going through your work: when does all of this begin – the idea of the joy of the body, of poems as triggers of emotion, of*

laughter, of orgasm, of internal sensations? What's that process like, from porn art toward the first holopoems, the first digital poems?

EK: The *porn art* movement, as an organized activity coordinated among all its members, happens essentially between 1980 and 1982 — about three years, so to speak. From 1982 on, the participants kept developing individual projects within that aesthetic: books came out, various publications, a few performances too, but already in a more individual way, no longer so coordinated as a movement. In that context,

above all between 1980 and 1982, I worked with traditional black-and-white negative photography, with *Polaroid*, with the photocopier in a very handmade way — switching papers, with variable technical procedures —, with film, with cassette sound recording, with mail art, with offset printing and with alternative printing, with movable type: every technological way there was of reproducing an idea.

What happens is that, from 1982 on, it became very clear to me that the digital wasn't just one more way of working. I understood that the digital was a profound change

in culture. For me, all the analog practices before 1982 could be seen as related to one another, on a personal level, because I begin with the digital in 1982. But the digital isn't just a change of instrument, one more way of working: it's a cultural change, a change of thought. I make my first digital poem in 1982, my first holopoem in 1983, and by 1985 I'm already working online with my *Minitel* poems, which were even presented recently at the Tate, in the *Electric Dreams* exhibition. I kept developing digital poetry from 1982 on, and holopoetry from 1983 on. But these aren't just technolo-

gical changes: they're completely different ways of thinking about what a poem is.

NGR: *If you could define three or four specific things that make a poem developed in a digital environment different from one developed in an analog environment... I ask this because, in most cases, most people who consider themselves poets keep writing poetry for the digital environment while anchored in an analog paradigm. Could you define what that shift in the logic of understanding a poem actually is – what changes, in the way of writing, producing and distributing poetry, with the emergence of the*

digital?

EK: I can speak from my own practice; there are many ways of thinking about the digital question, and everyone will have their own way of looking at it. For me, one way to think about it is this: when we write a poem on a flat surface for silent reading, the words have a permanent sequence, pre-established by the poet, that reproduces itself the same way every time — the poem has only one configuration. An interesting aspect of digital poetry is precisely being able to have variable configurations. I don't

mean randomness, but thinking through a syntax that keeps its expressive power while having an internal dynamic — a dynamic that can be lived, that can be experienced directly: that can be read as lived experience, not as an idea, but as a lived, temporal, phenomenological experience.

Every poem has a rhythm, but perhaps the simplest way to put it is this: if we compare it to a musical score, the composer puts the notes on paper; we can read those notes and imagine the music, but that's different from having the lived experience of hearing a performan-

ce, an interpretation, because in that interpretation the performer can give it variable rhythms, can communicate different emotions, because there's an internal dynamic to the interpretive act and to the listener's engagement with that sonic phenomenon. A digital poem can combine not only words, but also sounds, colors, movements, three-dimensional forms that can change completely. We're not talking only about a dynamic of moving words, but about the possibility of shifting meaning and dynamic interrelations between sound, color, form, movement, and also interactivity: that is,

the reader can play an active role in navigating and shaping the poem's meaning. It's completely different from the fixed, static, immobile poem on paper.

NGR: *How do you leap from there to biological poetry, to mixing your own DNA with other living species? What's the bridge that connects digital art and biology? At what point do you say, "I'm exploring all the logic that the digital paradigm implies, computers, electronic tools," and when is it that the idea of working with DNA is born as part of that path? And what's its relationship to poetry?*

EK: We're talking about different periods: I begin working with the living in 1997, and holopoetry is from 1983. Between 1983 and 1997 there's a period with other developments that help make sense of the passage. One thing that can be said is that, even when working with visual, dynamic elements — of color, of sound, of movement, of three-dimensionality — we're always working, even when those elements aren't themselves linguistic, with a linguistic reference, because there's a line of thought that comes from the history of poetry, from *Homer* at least, if not from *Sumer*, which is

older still. The history of poetry has passed through so many phases — the visual poetry of Ancient Greece, the visual poetry of the Baroque, so much from the Middle Ages worth recovering — it's a marvelous history. We're always talking about language. And language, for human beings, is an instrument, a technology: an instrument that enables communication, and which, in the case of poetry, takes a specific form, poetic communication, distinct, say, from journalism. But one way or another, we're always talking about a communicational phenomenon. The question that arose was this: if

for humans language is central to the different phenomena of communication, and once we understand that on Earth we share the planet with other, non-human beings, we also understand that the communicational phenomena among non-human beings are very different from ours. Other animals have communication systems that can be thought of as similar to ours; primates, *bonobos*, have semantic units that don't quite amount to words but that communicate meaning. Beyond that, bacteria, for instance, communicate through the exchange of molecules: there are other ways of

communicating among non-human living beings. And I see there a poetics waiting to be developed — not only to expand our human sensibility from the non-human, but also to recognize creativity in the non-human, and to open a path toward the possibility of conceiving poetic works for the non-human as well. So it's three things: accepting communication in the non-human in order to broaden our horizon; recognizing creative activity in the non-human; and opening a path between the two — that is, allowing for the creation of works for non-human beings, once we understand

how they are in the world, how they perceive the world. Starting from an understanding of communicational mechanisms, which is something fundamental to my work, the communicational universe expands in the direction of the non-human. That's the connection: through an inherently human technology — that primary human technology which is language — a door opens onto other, non-human languages, with which we somehow have to coexist, which can enrich our own, and in which we can take part creatively, proposing compositions that are meant for non-humans.

NGR: *When do you decide to start working with genetics to make the rabbit, or the plant-animal, Edunia? What's the process of reflection that leads you to those works, and what's the process of making those poems like? Do you consider them poems, or not?*

EK: No: the work *GFP Bunny* is not a poem, it's a work of bioart. The work *Natural History of the Enigma* is not a poem either, it's a work of bioart. But *Genesis*, from 1999, has a double ontological status, so to speak, because it has a creative engagement with the notion of expanded writing, and at the same

time it's a work of bioart that can be interacted with.

NGR: *For listeners who aren't familiar with it: Eduardo Kac coined the term bioart. Could you give a brief, one-line definition for listeners who don't know the term?*

EK: *Bioart is a new art form that I developed starting in 1997, based on actually working — not as an idea, as painting, as concept, as allegory or metaphor — with molecular biology itself as a medium of artistic creation. Out of that come writing projects, like *Genesis*, and others that are far more complex, like *Bunny* —*

the piece's full name is *GFP Bunny*:
Green Fluorescent Protein Bunny.

NGR: *Where do you carry out these bioart projects, with what team? Did you work in genetic engineering yourself, or did you team up with a group of geneticists who helped you? What was that exchange like, how do these pieces come together?*

EK: When you need a car, you don't call an airline; when you need a plane, you don't try to rent a car — everything is highly specialized. Labs that work with rabbits don't work with bacteria; labs that work with

bacteria don't work with flowers. In this universe of science and technology everything is highly specialized, so, depending on the piece I want to make, I have to work in whichever lab has the conditions to develop that particular project.

NGR: *And which lab did you develop the rabbit in? Which one, the flower? How long was Edunia alive?*

EK: *Edunia has seeds, so it can live whenever, precisely because it's a construct: it's a transgenic flower that I developed as part of a project, such that, once I'm no longer here,*

it can be remade, recreated from its genetic structure.

NGR: *Let's recap a little for the audience who might not be familiar with it.*

Can you explain, in a few brief sentences, what Edunia is, what the project is, and why you say it can go on living once you're no longer here?

EK: Just as you have a flower behind you — it's a real flower, isn't it? — *Edunia* is also a real flower: it can be planted, it has seeds, it grows. But, unlike that flower, it's not one that exists in nature: I created it, through a transgenic procedure

that, in this particular case, is also a poetic procedure, so to speak. It's the expression of a genetic sequence from my own body, which I took from my blood and transposed directly into the flower's red veins: from my red veins to the flower's red veins, a genetic sequence of my body directly in the flower's red veins.

In nature, flowers don't carry human genetic sequences: we separated from plants in the history of evolution a very, very long time ago. It's curious to use the most cutting-edge technologies to, at the same time, travel back in time, to the beginning

of the history of the evolution of life on Earth, when we were still closer to plants. What matters here is precisely that proximity. Maybe a simpler way to put it: you can't take an airplane engine and put it in your car, because it won't work — a plane's engineering is very different from your car's. But if you take a genetic sequence from your body and it works in the body of a flower, that makes it very clear that we remain very close to the flower, to plants: that we're part of one same community of life. For most people it's obvious to look at a primate and recognize something of ourselves,

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because we're physically close to primates — the head, the eyes, the fingers, all of it — but when you look at a flower you think of something very different, very distant. My work makes it clear that we also remain close to plants, because our genetic sequence functions, works, integrates itself into the plant's genetics.

NGR: *Which is to say we could understand, even on a poetic level, that interest in returning language to its primary, pictorial state. In your own poetry, this genetic experiment poses, once again, a kind of return: it seems as though all the works are about a return to a primary*

moment, but by another path. There's a piece that, looking at your whole body of work on a timeline, has always intrigued me: aromapoetry. How does it fit together with all this work in bioart, with this idea of technique and technology used to explore these – I don't like the term "posthuman," because I always think we still put the human at the center – realities? What are the points of contact with those other works, and what aren't? Because, for instance, when one reads *Media Poetry*, from 1996, there's a sense that the printed medium is, in a way, not the best vehicle for poetry in this era. And yet, in 2011, Aromapoetry appears. How does that work

come about, and how does it connect to what else you were doing at that same moment?

EK: *Aromapoetry* is a book of twelve olfactory poems that I published in an edition of ten copies: a book meant to be read with the nose. The book works like this: when you open it, at the bottom left is the title of each poem, in a typeface you can read with letters; but the poem itself is on the right-hand page, with no text at all — there's nothing there. There's a title on the left, but to read the poem you have to read the page with your nose. There's no ex-

planation, no narrative content: there's a sensory stimulus hung from the poem's title. The title doesn't enclose the poem, it opens it. The poetic experience results from how you interpret the title in words, and from how you interpret the sensory experience of that olfactory content, which I created specially for each poem — each one different from the others — so each person will surely arrive at their own interpretation. Notice that we were talking about the various species we share the world with. For us, smell is important, but it isn't the most dominant sense: the most dominant is sight. A

dog isn't blind, but its olfactory capacity is four hundred times greater than ours — it's enormous; a dog's olfactory sensory resolution is four hundred times more refined than ours. A dog perceives the world through a sensory sphere of very high resolution, as if it were, say, 4K or 8K: the resolution is far higher than ours. To create a book of olfactory poems meant to be read with the nose is, in a way, to put ourselves in the dog's position, which has a perception of the world in which the fundamental semantic value comes from smell. We could say that *Aromapoetry* follows that same path:

trying to negotiate between human experience and non-human experiences, searching for that shared language, that common code.

NGR: *And today, almost simultaneously – a little before Aromapoetry – space poetry was already beginning to take shape. So we hadn't even finished thinking through our relationship with the other species that inhabit this spaceship called planet Earth, and you were already prefiguring a kind of poetry for zero-gravity environments and for space. How do you arrive at space? How do these explorations of non-human, non-verbal relationships lead you there? What's the*

sequence?

EK: I conceived space poetry within the context of holopoetry, because in 1986, when I was an artist in residence at the *Museum of Holography* in New York, I conceived a holopoem — a holopoem — to be sent into space. In 1986 I was twenty-four years old; my base was still Rio de Janeiro, and it was very hard to complete that piece between New York and Rio de Janeiro. A holopoem for deep space was, at that time, almost utopian. But when I talk about the things I talk about, I'm not talking about utopia,

about concept, about allegory, about metaphor, about idea: everything I do, and everything I say and write, are things I want to do, or that I actually do. I'm not interested in hypothesis, in idea for idea's sake, in abstract concepts: I'm interested in the materiality of the projects, in actually doing them. That's why I don't talk about fanciful or utopian ideas, but about things I've done, that I'm doing, or that I actually intend to do.

That poem from 1986 took me thirty-eight years to complete. The flight into deep space finally happened in January 2024: it was the piece that

took the longest to complete, thirty-eight years since 1986. And now the poem remains in heliocentric orbit, around the sun, forever. It's called *Ágora*: it's not a signal, it's a holographic poem in glass, inside a titanium capsule, inside the rocket.

NGR: *And the most recent one, the one you managed to put on the Moon – can you tell us a bit about it?*

EK: It's a glass cube, laser-etched on the inside – not on the surface, but inside – with certain symbols engraved in it. It's a piece that belongs to the *process poems*; the text

was written by *Álvaro de Sá*, and the cube was made by *Neide de Sá*: it's a collaboration. Nor is it true that I invented the cube as a form, or that *Neide* invented it; several artists have already worked with the cube as a form, not to mention cubism, which is another matter. But in my case, it's a piece conceived for the Moon, and that gives it a very particular character. When we talk about art and poetry on Earth, it seems obvious — we live on Earth, we make art and write poetry on Earth — but it isn't obvious at all, because the universe is immense; the word "immense" doesn't do justice to

its scale. Earth is a very specific environment, with a very specific gravity, and all the art, all the poetry produced here is conditioned by the conditions of this planet. To think of art and poetry off Earth, in other cosmic environments, means thinking of them in other ways, because those environments are different, with different gravities, different environmental conditions.

On the Moon, for instance, a lunar day is equal to two Earth weeks: the notion of time is completely different. Environmental conditions are different too — temperatures are extreme, very hot and very cold, and

the transition from one extreme to the other happens very quickly, which can produce thermal shock. My piece can withstand that extreme heat, that extreme cold, and the rapid transition between the two. It's built on four symbols — there are no letters, no words — engraved in three dimensions, that can be read from every direction. It's what I call an *antigravitropic writing*, something I developed in the early 1980s with holopoetry. According to the theory of holopoetry, writing on Earth is *gravitropic*: written language is conditioned by gravity, in the sense that on Earth gravity

pulls every body toward the center of the planet — that's why we don't fall, we don't float, we're held to the surface; when we let go of an object, it falls toward the center of the Earth. That's reflected in the fact that every writing system can run to the left or to the right, but is always read from top to bottom, in keeping with how we perceive objects under gravity. So the question that arises is this: without Earth's gravity, without any gravity at all — under microgravity conditions, as in Earth orbit — thinking about language in environments other than Earth means opening other paths for

expression. Hence the notion of an *antigravitropic* language: with the cube, everything works in every direction, and there are no letters, only symbols.

NGR: *I understand there are some seeds inside the installation of the poem.*

EK: No, it's something else. When you take a flight on a plane, you're never alone on it: there are other passengers. Rocket flights are very expensive, there's never just one thing on a rocket — there are satellites, NASA experiments, devices for scientific studies, all kinds of

things. On the lander that touched down on the Moon there are several things: whoever paid for the flight was NASA, and there are ten NASA scientific instruments on it. There's also a pyramid, which is a separate thing, and inside that pyramid is my piece — though even inside the pyramid there are other things that aren't mine, because there are several scientific entities sharing that flight; in this case, seeds too. You have to make the most of the available space, because the spaces are very small.

NGR: *So, in a way, your poem in space*

is part of something larger, where there's work from other entities – a kind of larger artist's book.

EK: It's not artistic, it's mostly scientific: it's different. I don't think it's a case of comparing them, because space art and space poetry have their own logic, their own theory, their own environmental conditions. You have to let go and enter that universe and understand it on its own terms, instead of trying to reduce it to forms we already know – the artist's book, for instance – because working in space is different. But, to close: one interesting thing is that

those scientific instruments weren't designed to function forever. The lander had a lifespan of about one lunar day, some two Earth weeks; by the end of that lunar day, nothing worked anymore. So people started talking about that lander no longer as a spacecraft, but as a monument, because it stays there, in the future, for the space archaeologists of the future, who will discover it and look inside: they'll find that scientific instrument, those seeds, this work by *Eduardo Kac* — just as archaeologists discovered, inside the pyramids, all the elements of ancient Egyptian culture.

NGR: *Of course, I imagine that's why they chose a pyramid.*

EK: But this pyramid is small, it's your size.

NGR: *And to close, let's move to a bigger reflection. Why explore poetry and technology, when you could develop a completely linear kind of writing, docile before technology? At what point do you decide "this is it": that you have to look for the relationships between this form of poetic estrangement and all the technologies that make it possible? When does that point of reflection arrive where you say "this is the way"? And what are you*

preparing for the future? Those would be the last two questions to close the interview.

EK: For me it's a very natural development, because the *porn art movement* was an avant-garde movement, on the cutting edge: for more than thirty years we were doing things very different from our time — and today many people work the way we worked back in the *eighties*. On one hand, there was a specific context, as there always is in any creative activity; but at the same time we weren't only reacting to that context: we were modeling how we saw the futu-

re, how we wanted it to be — more open, freer, with more respect and more creativity, without censorship and without fear of the body and of sexuality. In that search to invent a language that would subvert the semiology of pornography in order to create a pornography of emancipation, we worked across many media, crossing forms: graffiti, for instance, is something made on a wall, and it stays there; but we made graffiti that traveled through the network and arrived on the other side, as part of an act of communication — a completely different experience. These are crossings of forms, of inventions,

of new ways of working; that experimental activity is at the base of everything I began to do, and with that constant search to expand my universe and my expressive power, I kept working, broadening, expanding and developing new forms of art and poetry. For me, it was something very natural.

And what I'm developing right now is a piece called *The Silent Circle*, in three parts. I've already completed the first, I'm very close to completing the second, and I'm beginning to work on the third — it's going well, though everything is very complex and takes its time. The piece is

conceived for a satellite in Earth orbit; it's a visual work, but it can also be understood as a poem, because it has language as its basis. It seeks to render the three fundamental phases of a person's life — youth, maturity and old age — because everyone, regardless of culture, history or politics, passes through them. In a world so segmented, with so many conflicts and so many differences, it seems important to me to remember that we share that fundamental aspect of life. The expression of each phase is tied to an English word: *morning*, *midday*, *midnight*. I work with artificial intelligence,

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creating dynamics, colors, textures, movements, ruptures, fusions — very dynamic, very plastic, like a dance — something very particular to each piece, to express, through color, movement, texture and change, each phase of human life. The first phase, *morning*, has already been in orbit; I was very close to completing *midday*, and at the same time I've already begun developing *midnight*.

NGR: *When you say they're already in process, does that mean the satellite is in orbit, circling the Earth?*

EK: It completes one orbit every

ninety minutes.

NGR: *And once the project is finished, once these three satellite flights are complete, what will the final fate of that work be, materially?*

EK: The satellites have a built-in video camera, so the work is conceived to be seen by that camera: to function on the satellite's body, to actually be in space. The work isn't inside anything: it's directly in space, conceived to be seen by the satellite's camera within its own spatial environment.

NGR: *So what we'd actually get to see would be the documentation of the work.*

EK: That's an interesting question, because a work conceived to be recorded on video, specifically in space — once you record it, is it a document, or is it the work? That's why I'm thinking, on an archival level, about what that document would be: we run into those problems of the materiality and immateriality of electronic media. It's a bit like shifting the terms of the question: as *Ortega y Gasset* used to say, "I am I and my circumstance";

we could say this work is itself and its environment.

NGR: *With that, we'll say goodbye.*

Thank you so much, Eduardo, for this time, for taking the time to talk with us and walk us through, little by little, each of the branches of poetry you've ventured into and theorized. We hope that, once this episode is out, we can leave links to all the books in the description, so people can look into and revisit the theory we need so badly here in the Caribbean: to revisit some theory, and stop reinventing the wheel, in order to understand that what we might call an avant-garde really comes from a long process of transforma-

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tions, theorizations and borrowings. And Eduardo Kac is, without question, one of those pioneers who has, again and again, expanded the field of the literary, of writing, and above all of poetry, to the ends of the universe and beyond. Thank you so much for your time.

EDUARDO KAC