

Associative field notes of a citybaby in the park

Yellow green and white.

The smell of wet plants and soil.

Teardrops stuck on leaves.

Rectangular strokes of grass divided by the straight line of the path.

White polka dotted grass fields filled with daisies.

Moist.

Last week the sun was shining like it uses to in a summer break, now its back to the traditional dutch rain. The bright white sky of clouds with the sun behind it. Not the dark and menacing clouds filled with liquids fluid or solid.

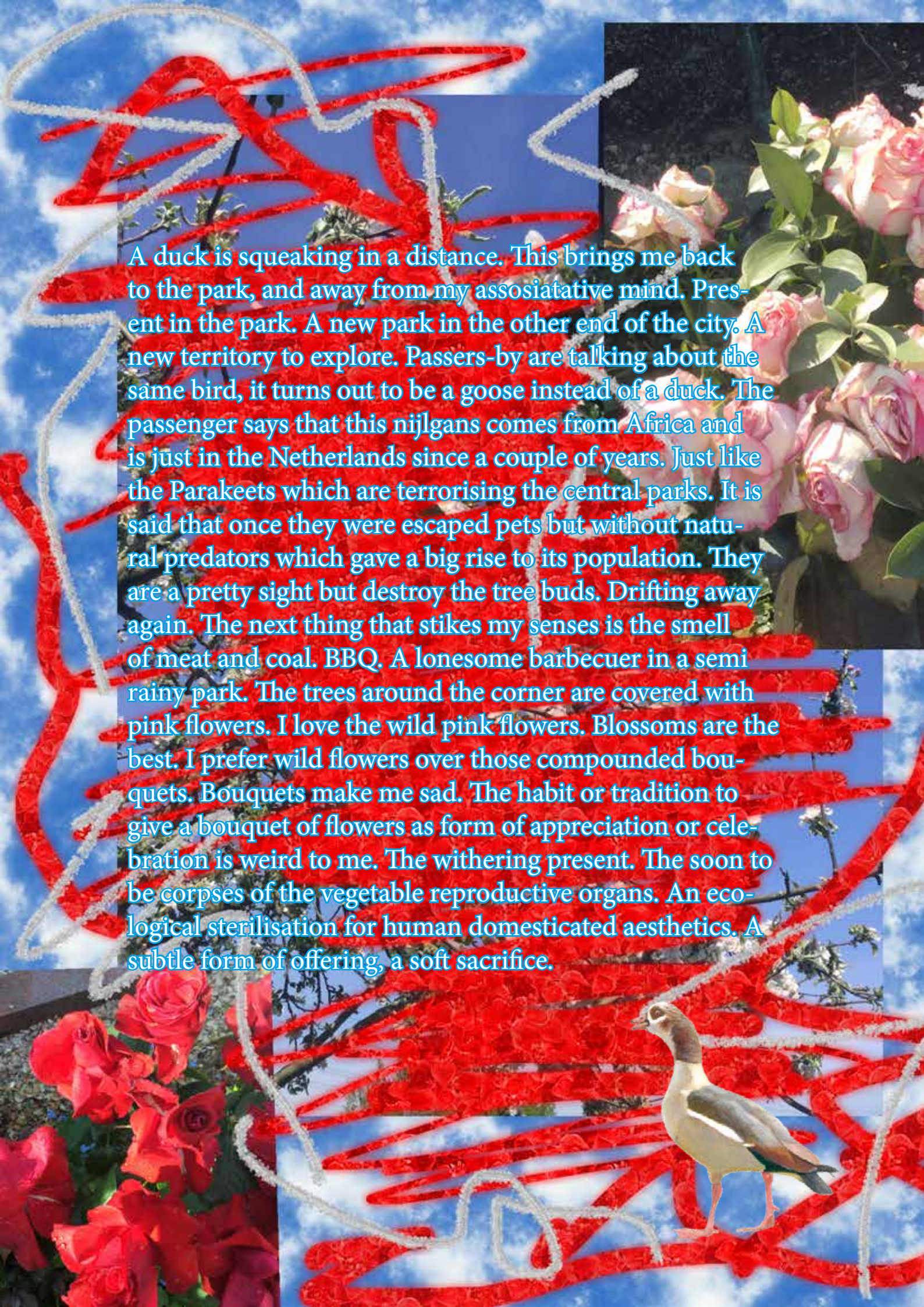
The plants in the park are among the very little I know and I am not even able to name the trees.

The ever surprise when my mom knows all the names of the wildflowers. She was a villager I am a city baby. Yet always looking for an escape out of the concrete jungle. The roof of leafs give me a feeling of security and serenity. Relief. In times in distress I tend to evade the city and to submerge in the woods. In a state of dissociation the dim sunlight filtered by the vegetation and the continuous subtle sounds enabled me to reconnect with my body. Reset. SERENITY. SECURITY. A feeling of connection, content, alone but not lonely. The green womb. The energiser the nurturer. My natural resource of tranquillisers. It calms my mind. It rests my soul.

A Landscape, soundscape and smellscape where sensual and sensitive sentiments arise.

Naturalist romanticism.






A duck is squeaking in a distance. This brings me back to the park, and away from my associatative mind. Present in the park. A new park in the other end of the city. A new territory to explore. Passers-by are talking about the same bird, it turns out to be a goose instead of a duck. The passenger says that this nijlgans comes from Africa and is just in the Netherlands since a couple of years. Just like the Parakeets which are terrorising the central parks. It is said that once they were escaped pets but without natural predators which gave a big rise to its population. They are a pretty sight but destroy the tree buds. Drifting away again. The next thing that stikes my senses is the smell of meat and coal. BBQ. A lonesome barbecuer in a semi rainy park. The trees around the corner are covered with pink flowers. I love the wild pink flowers. Blossoms are the best. I prefer wild flowers over those compounded bouquets. Bouquets make me sad. The habit or tradition to give a bouquet of flowers as form of appreciation or celebration is weird to me. The withering present. The soon to be corpses of the vegetable reproductive organs. An ecological sterilisation for human domesticated aesthetics. A subtle form of offering, a soft sacrifice.



The park behind the rectangular strips of grass is kind of wild. A sign notes that this part of the park is based on the ecology in the south of the Netherlands, Limburg. It is full of 'Daslook', wild garlic, it's one of the very few wild plants that I know that is edible. I used to pick it with my dad for his restaurant as a kid. It brings back the childish joy, curiosity and imagination, delight. Natural spaces awake my inner child. The feeling of security and the explorative gaze. The path continues into another ecological part of the Netherlands, the central east. Here the vegetation is dominated by ferns. Another youth association pops up. The smell and the touch of this plant bring me back to the shacks I used to build in the woods in this part of the country in during the summer. The ferns were the perfect plants for roofing.





Last week in the garden center I came across the same fern, A very tiny one. The smell of it directly brought me back to the woods and the fields of ferns where I used to collect the roofing for my shack. This sudden time travel by the experience of a subtle sensation almost brought me to tears. Later in my car back home I got struck by the absurdity of domestication. The commodification of organisms. Plants, living entities appropriated for profit. 'Propriation'. The outstrip of the cultivation for collaboration between the human and nonhuman entities.

In the park I get confronted by my selfish need. I have an urge to dig up the fern in order to take it home. To have it close to me. Not for the sake of the fern, but for the sake of me. I feel bad. I walk on.

My experiences with nature are purely recreative, and are not inline with real wilderness. I feel more in place, centred. resonated. Aligned. salvaged. I don't feel in a position to be able to take care for nature, I feel to tiny. But I feel of nature to be taking care of me. By the outer exploration of the natural landscape and simultaneously an inner exploration of the self and sentiment evoked by natural associations. The sensitivity of nurturing care and connectedness. Walking through nature wakes up my inner child with its explorative, open and curious gaze and at the same time is awakens a sentimentality about youth memories. I was a nature kid a little witch collecting herbs to brew extraordinary concoctions. A survivor, domesticating by building shacks and passages.



