

## *Jornada (Journey)*

by Íris Schmitt

*Jornada (Journey)* makes you think about death in a beautiful and banal way. People die. But here, between the deaths and the dead, we live.

Visits to the cemetery are usually rare, brief and associated with feelings of regret, but there are those who do not feel that way, having a somewhat more familiar and intimate relationship with that space, be it from the solid habit of visiting restful acquaintances or out of the genuine will to be there, perhaps feeling more at ease and at peace among the dead than among the living. In any case, in order for any kind of metaphysical contact with death to be possible inside a tomb, its doors must be open. Someone needs to open them up, just as it is crucial that someone frees up space for new bones while someone else prepares the cement to close up a new grave, watching those in charge of sweeping the floor with the remains of withered flowers from the past week that the visitors, touched by their own loss, wouldn't like to see, because they would remember that every living thing one day withers, dries up and dies, and that time doesn't stop for anything or anyone. Most of us do not accumulate more than a few dozen hours in cemeteries throughout our lives, but, in one way or another, we are sensitized by those spaces. How would spending every day working in a cemetery change that relationship? The thoughtful way *Jornada* addresses this issue is extraordinary.

Every one of us has a mystic, religious or ritualistic way to face the inevitable idea of the end, but, like everything related to life, dying also has its bureaucracy, its protocols, and its practical implications. We continue to resolve issues while dying. It is only after we examine ourselves, register, bless and say goodbye, that we can begin to think about resting. In the best of scenarios, the final destination of the body has been previously established and will, as soon as possible, be directed to the place chosen by the consciousness that inhabited it. Buried, mummified, safeguarded in urns, dispersed in the air. We will be in every corner, making history. If families are going to deal with the grief, the people who take care of the bodies will have to deal with the rest...

There is an entire ecosystem carefully built and managed in the cemetery so that the process of remission of the loss can be felt without distractions by those who watch over a body, so that, whatever be the farewell procedure, it will be respected. That's something the sensitive director of *Jornada's*, Maiara Rocha, seems to have understood well. While a family mourns the death of a beloved grandfather, someone is preparing his grave, brushing his hair, assembling his flower garland... For a family to be able to mourn, every day it is necessary to dig, demolish, cement, rebuild, clean, collect, blossom...

*Jornada* offers us a sublime vision of a living necropolis, it shows the invisible in daylight, the hidden and the discreet, the curious, the morbid, the everyday. Not as antitheses, but all at once. It is a single piece with many affections, which does not need to be dismantled to make sense, nor does it require us to have an intimate relationship with the theme to make us feel, as it grows in the encounter with the lives of those who embark on it.