

FROM NORTH TO
SOUTH, RHYTHMS

Anna-Eva Bergman

ANNA-EVA BERGMAN
IN SPAIN,
COMINGS AND
GOINGS

Romain Mathieu

To speak of Eva Bergman's trips to Spain implies taking an interest in her holidays, looking seriously into that different time, the time outside the studio, which is nonetheless at the heart of the artist's approach and proves to be essential to understand her oeuvre. If Anna-Eva Bergman considered for a moment moving to Spain with Hans Hartung to build an atelier and re-connect with the setting of their first years as a couple in Menorca, she was foremost attracted to a place. "Carboneras, still wild and unchanged, only inhabited by peasants, fishermen and bohemians, as Hans and I liked it".¹ It was distance, then, that characterized this place, and that was what Anna-Eva Bergman was looking for, a distance in regards to the contemporary world and to life in Paris, where the artist had her studio. Her first trip, in 1962, coincided with the appearance of the *Horizons*, a motif which effected a transformation in the artist's work and would become recurrent until the end of her life. She returned there in the company of Hans Hartung almost every year, in 1963, 1964, 1966, 1970 and 1971. In 1970, Bergman reviewed her entire vocabulary of shapes with India ink on large pieces of white paper. This repertory was completed with the series *Pierres de Castille* [Stones of Castile] made with the same technique. This unusual series associated with that inventory indicates a passage, a moment of evolution that would materialize afterwards in the work she did in the atelier in Antibes.

A decade went by between the first and last trip that Anna-Eva Bergman made to Spain. During this time the work of the artist experienced a transformation.

This period was also marked by numerous trips and journeys by the couple Bergman-Hartung. The most important was certainly the one they took to Norway in 1964, during which the artists voyaged along the coast until they reached North Cape. Bergman took a great number of photos. She said she didn't sleep in order to take fullest advantage of the special light of the midnight sun, of the landscapes which presented themselves to her and went on to nourish her painting. The artist also visited the United States that same year, and then again in 1966. She therefore became very familiar with American painting and emphasized her interest in the work of Mark Rothko and Ad Reinhardt.² In addition to these trips, they made a number of visits to the south of France up until they moved to Antibes in 1973. But this decade also corresponds, almost exactly, with the artist's acquisition of her first large studio which she moved into in 1959.³ In that space she could work with large formats and on different paintings at the same time, accommodating to the drying times required by her metal foil technique. It was also during the course of these years that Anna-Eva Bergman's work benefited from the sound recognition she gained with her first solo show in the

Galerie de France in 1962,⁴ and then a travelling show in institutional venues

in Norway in 1966.⁵ She also participated in group shows around the world. In France, her work was fully integrated into the events of the abstract painting scene with, for example, her participation in the *Salon de mai* in 1968⁶ and in *L'art vivant*⁷ the same year, which included French and American artists. During that very concentrated period, punctuated by trips to Spain, there were many comings and goings, not just between Spain and Paris, but also between the studio and the outdoors, which in Art History is traditionally called “the motif”. The entire approach of Anna-Eva Bergman gives that term a specific meaning.

During the 1950s, Anna-Eva Bergman progressively abandoned an agency of symbol-related forms inside of the canvas, as was the practice in post-war French painting, for a construction that tended to exceed the surface. The use of larger formats, after moving into the studio on *rue Gauguet*, reinforced this move, leading to a physical rapport with painting, to an immediacy of the form. This also led her to an enhanced relationship with the landscape that she expressed through titles referencing Norway after the trip in 1964: *Montagne, Glacier, Finnmark, Fjord* [Mountain, Glacier, Finnmark, Fjord]. Two unusual pictures from that period, *Néant d'or* [Golden Void] and *Néant d'argent* [Silver Void] from 1963, radicalised that immediacy of the surface to the point of the disappearance of form and the emergence of the monochrome. The absence of the motif, underlined in the title itself, leaves only the light from the metal foil. The painting becomes somehow dematerialized by the radiance of the foil that spreads above the surface. It shows a desire to expand the painting beyond its limits through a kind of fusion of the body with that luminous space. These pictures point to an extreme benchmark in the artist's approach in relation to other work where the lighting particularises itself in a relationship of shapes, retaken, reworked as a kind of archetypal vocabulary.

The horizons would become a central motif in the work of Anna-Eva Bergman, and they fully brought about the opening of the pictorial space. The division of the surface crosses the canvas and could be compared to Barnett Newman's *zip* paintings, though shifted into horizontality, and therefore linked to landscape.⁸ It is remarkable, however, that this motif did not originate from Norwegian landscapes, but from the great arid expanses which the artist could see during her first stay in Spain. Although the first horizons were made in 1962, the earthy colours with brown and ochre hues attest to that link.⁹ Nonetheless, a similar structure is found in the *Finnmark* pieces made in 1965, which were inspired by the icy surfaces Bergman was able to see during her expedition to the North Cape. These paintings erect in front of us an immensity which is both the feeling of an unattainable distance and a surface devoid of depth, resulting in a wall that the

eye butts up against. Speaking on the subject of Caspar David Friedrich's *Der Mönch am Meer* [Monk by the Sea], Kleist remarked, "while contemplating it, we have the feeling that our eyelids are cut off",¹⁰

to describe the absence of a plane and a frame, which has the effect

of putting the painting at a distance. Beyond the formal approach, Bergman's relationship to landscape could be catalogued as a continuation of Romantic painting. The motifs of the horizon and Finnmark, give rise to an experience of limitlessness regarding the perception

of the landscape and regarding the painting, which seems to only be a fragment of space. The artist herself explained that "behind the horizontal limit lies, I think, a realm which, though physically and bodily *unattainable*, is, however, real and of an *experimental* nature".¹¹

It is not a question of portraying—and, in that sense, the work of Anna-Eva Bergman is quite abstract—but of delivering an experience comparable to that which is offered by nature, the experience

of the infinite that escapes the traveller, as the frontality of these surfaces prevents any kind of projections of the body to their interior. The artist substitutes an indefinite confusion of depth with a plane that removes all spatial markers. In some of her works, the use of torn sheets of metal produces a sort of weaving on the surface which is contrary to any division by planes.¹² The motifs of walls and cliffs are not the opposite of horizons, but rather their inverted double by the direct confrontation with this material and mute frontality, resistant by its very otherness. Bergman's painting produces a passage from the depths to the surface, from the unattainable to the immediate though elusive presence of the paint. The near and the distant are confused through a process of sedimentation in the thickness of the surface. With the canvas placed horizontally, Anna-Eva Bergman worked by depositing successive layers. The metal foils cover prior layers of paint and, sometimes, they are covered in turn by liquid pigments or varnishes which change their appearance. They come after that thick material, the *modelling paste*, a mix of acrylics¹³ whose reliefs or incisions produce at first an imperceptible design which is later revealed by the luminous reflections of the metal. But these strata intermingle as well, the bottom comes to the top, climbing back to the junction of the shapes, between the sheets of metal, altering the perception of colour depending on the light and the movement in front of the picture. Here again, it is the physical and material experience of the painting that conveys the experience of the "unattainable", the presence of an infinite within the finite.

This process of sedimentation must also be perceived within its temporal dimension. The near and the distant are not only spatial

notions; they also refer to a duration which is deposited in the materiality of the painting. The time of painting echoes a longer time, that of the comings and goings between the studio and the times of travel, the numerous movements punctuating the 1960s. The accumulation of photographs Bergman brought back from her trips, notably from Spain and Norway, are a recollection, a trace where the vivacity of memory is expressed together with the feeling of distance, and even loss.¹⁴ The photos could therefore be a medium for memory, a document from which motifs could be extracted by the artist, but also a capture of the forms painted previously, thus reactivating the experience of the landscape. The feeling of loss is connected with the destinations of the artist and, therefore, with her relationship to the landscapes, since the Norway she left so young is related to her childhood memories, whereas when she went to Spain, at first she was looking to retrieve the landscape of those first years with Hans Hartung as a couple in Menorca.¹⁵ Thus, Bergman's painting evokes a lamination of time where the time of the work also comes into play through the memory of a motif, retaken and transformed over the years. It doesn't come from a direct relationship, but from the distance between the painting and the perceived landscape. That distance brought together the landscapes of Norway and Spain, but those of southern France as well. It is also conveyed by the use of the golden number to organize the composition. The numerous drawings and repetitions of shapes that Bergman did on paper in 1958 and in 1970 also attest to this autonomy of painting in relation to landscape. Painting became abstract through memory and through the pictorial process, seeking a first experience, not necessarily in a chronological sense, but as an expression of unity between the visible and the invisible, the feeling of limitlessness within the limits of nature.

In her travels, Bergman looked for distance, for a preserved, even archaic world. The voyage to North Cape came from that aspiration but so did her stays in Spain: she was motivated to go to Carboneras by the desire to find "a place still wild and unchanged".¹⁶ During her journey through Spain in 1970, she travelled in the region of Las Hurdes, intrigued by this place which was described as extremely isolated. There was also the desire to experience a virgin world where she could find a powerful expression of the principle of the transformation of nature, the energy running through it, an immateriality layered on the materiality of the canvas. That experience could then free itself from any ties to a landscape, in order to focus on the building blocks of the world: water, air and fire. We understand that the "motifs" of the elements—and by extension Anna-Eva Bergman's collection of shapes—are not "images" but "that which sets the world in motion", what animates it and, by analogy, what animates the paintings: the luminous vibration of fire, the sparkle of water and the evanescence of *Air*.¹⁷ Furthermore, we find the

elements in the paper series *L'or de vivre* [The Richness of Living] as well as in *La vie*¹⁸ [Life], that accumulation of spiral shapes that develop concentrically and can be directly associated with the dome of the Alhambra photographed by the artist in 1962. But this swirling movement is also the movement of drawing—the line coming back on itself to develop a potentially limitless process—and the movement which is at work in nature, a principle of creation from the Renaissance called *natura naturans*. This search for unity in the generation of the graphic and the natural form is also present in the engravings where Anna-Eva Bergman uses the grain of the wood as a motif, producing a design which, made by a passing movement of colour, is also found in her India inks from 1969.

Anna-Eva Bergman's painting is inseparable from that experience of the world and from the enigma of its existence, both a wall erected in front of us and a horizon line that flees in the distance. That enigma materializes both in the farthest and in the nearest in the series of *Astres* [Stars] as well as in *Pierres de Castille*, whose burst of dark masses extracts itself from the limits of the medium and exceeds the gaze. For the artist, Spain was an essential place for that experience and she associated it, as a counterpoint, with Norway. It is part of this movement of comings and goings between the studio and the world, where one is not confused with the other; all the contrary, it reveals a distance which is at the source of Anna-Eva Bergman's painting.

1. Anna-Eva Bergman, interview with Andrea Schomburg, unpublished, Archives de la Fondation Hartung-Bergman, Antibes. Between 1983 and 1984, Anna-Eva Bergman dictated her memoirs in German to the artist Andrea Schomburg. The couple's move could not take place due to legislation, under Franco's regime, prohibiting artwork produced in Spain to be taken outside the country.

2. Anna-Eva Bergman, interview with Andrea Schomburg: *Op. cit.*

3. Anna-Eva Bergman and Hans Hartung moved into a new apartment in Paris in 1959, *rue Gauguet*, which they modified so that they could each have a studio.

4. *Anna-Eva Bergman, œuvres récentes*, Galerie de France, Paris, 1962.

5. *Anna-Eva Bergman*, Kunstneres Hus, Oslo and Bergen Kunstforening, Bergen, Norway, 1966.

6. *24^e Salon de mai*, Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris, 1968.

7. *L'art vivant 1965-1968*, Fondation Maeght, Saint-Paul de Vence, 13 April – 30 June 1968. This exhibition was very important because it allowed the discovery of an American body of work largely unknown in France, notably minimalism.

8. The opening of the pictorial space in Anna-Eva Bergman's work could be linked to what was happening in the work of American Abstract Expressionism artists, such as Mark Rothko or Barnett Newman. Beyond the formal similarities and differences, there is a transformation in the relationship to painting, which Georges Boudaille grasped in his article on the exhibition at the Galerie de France in 1968, when he wrote that Anna-Eva Bergman's large-format paintings become the environment. That transformation of the pictorial space indeed implies a new relationship with the canvas, which is no longer closed and independent, with forms arranged as signs inside the frame, but a space which offers itself to the viewer in a physical way and tends to absorb him, something that Meyer Schapiro, referring to American painting, summarized as a transition from communication to communion with the painting. BOUDAILLE, GEORGES: "Anna-Eva Bergman", *Les Lettres françaises*, December 31st, 1968.

9. In 1963, one *Horizon* even has the title "Carboneras", demonstrating that link between the motif and the place where the artists were staying. Anna-Eva Bergman,

N° 6-1963 *Carboneras*, 1963, oil and metal foil on canvas, 114 × 162 cm, Fondation Hartung-Bergman.

10. KLEIST, HEINRICH VON: *Empfindungen vor Friedrichs Seelandschaft*, in *Berliner Abendblätter*, ed. by H. von Kleist, 13 October 1810, n° 12. Reprinted in KLEIST, HEINRICH VON: *Petits écrits*, translation Pierre Deshusses, *Œuvres complètes* 1, Gallimard, collection Le promeneur, 1999.

11. Anna-Eva Bergman, interview with Andrea Schomburg: *Op. cit.* Emphasis added.

12. N° 30-1963 *Panorama*, oil and metal foil on canvas, 89 × 116 cm. N° 31-1965 *Finnmark*, vinyl and metal foil on canvas, 130 × 162 cm.

13. Very early on, Anna-Eva Bergman used acrylic paint rather than oil. Her work process and the traditional metal foil technique made her very aware of new products that would reduce drying times between the different layers of paint.

14. This relationship with photography could be linked to the narrative of her own life that the artist produced through a book of memories published in 1942, or through the writing of her memoirs, dictated to her assistant in 1984.

15. She returned to Menorca during her trip in 1970 and found that there was nothing left of the place where she had lived with Hans Hartung.

16. Anna-Eva Bergman, interview with Andrea Schomburg: *Op. cit.*

17. N° 26-1962 *Feu* [Fire], 1962, oil and metal foil on canvas, 250 × 200 cm, Fondation Hartung-Bergman. N° 14-1964 *Eau* [Water], 1964, vinyl and metal foil on canvas, 114 × 162 cm, Hartung Bergman collection. N° 15-1964, *Air* [Air], 1964, vinyl and metal foil on canvas, 162 × 130 cm, Fondation Hartung-Bergman.

18. *L'or de vivre – La vie* [The Richness of Living – Life], 1965, tempera, pastel and metal foil on paper, 49 × 34 cm, Hartung-Bergman collection.

WE ARE STONE



Teresa Lanceta

Women do not enter into the world of art to say things that have already been said, or to say them in the same way. What has been built through the centuries using an artistic language which has not included them is not acceptable. They want to say things, and say them in a different way. Anna-Eva Bergman defended her place and revealed what it was that she wanted to say and how she would say

it by pursuing a way of doing, a process, by using techniques and materials that other artists of her time were not using; not even the ones who, like her, were seeking radical abstraction. Women want to say other things because they have lived other things. They receive and transmit knowledge in different ways, like, among others, Anni Albers, Bridget Riley, Eva Hesse, Ana Mendieta, and Tacita Dean. In the case of Bergman, her work is not an act of rebellion, but of exchange, an inclusive act that completes the existing artistic language and stretches its limits. Being there, participating, being.

The stone keeps its arcane secret hidden, or is simply unaware of it, like she was when she looked at it. We don't know the questions, we only know that she didn't avoid them.

Those who have never been face to face with Bergman's paintings, and have only seen them in the pages of a book, cannot appreciate the transcendence of her work. The fixed image distorts her work because, in spite of her ability to synthesize forms, Bergman is not a formalist. Her goal and her achievements go beyond her refined abstraction.

Bergman distilled forms, but also hatched her own practice, with artisanal reminiscences and links to Byzantine art and icons. Her medium: sheets of metal, gold, silver and other alloys. But also, her entire being, her fingers, her nails, her strength, her intelligence, and her emotions recall precious metals and their arcane timelessness. Beforehand, a painter from Vienna had used gold leaf on a kind of secular icons in which the metal, without mixing with the paint, framed the figures. However, in Bergman's work it doesn't act as a frame, but as pigment, as background, and especially, as a means and an end, giving new meaning to an old tradition.

Bergman became commanding, demolishing the limitations of a medieval decorative tradition. She created a way of doing that belonged to her. She transformed the fine layers of metal with colour sediments, glazes, and transparencies, but above all, she created light that was changing, imprecise, atmospheric, and full of nuances that altered the colours, the shapes and our experience. She developed a medium which is expression in itself and the vehicle of

what she wants to tell us. Nothing that can be seen in the pages of a book.

The perforated mountains, deprived of one of their faces, returned her gaze. Things were repeated and answers came to her in the form of ice. Because not everything is on the surface of the cloth, Anna-Eva Bergman looked again and again at the rocky walls of the fjords, the sky that cut through them, the cliffs and the sea renewing their movement and reconstructing the horizon; she was surprised at the emptiness and plenitude they conveyed: cosmic emptiness and human plenitude.

A viewer who stands before her paintings, who sees them directly, participates in the atmospheres, in the chromatic and in the light transformations that take place in the metal reflections. Anna-Eva Bergman knew that the medium speaks, and she let it do. Rather than mastery, it is a question of understanding. She generates a process that cannot be interrupted and that revives that Nordic atmosphere made of layers of light, where the contours of things are constantly subjected to evanescent ethers of borrowed luminosity, like the luminescent moon that shines by the reverberation of an external light. Any change, be it position, light or shadow, shows a new possibility from the infinite ones that are captured on the surfaces of these silvery or golden pictures, in a way that makes it seem that the metal is breaking down into particles.

Metal, oil and, again, the sea. Unshared beauty eroding the deepest part of her being, she is going to communicate what she has perceived, what she has seen outside and inside of herself. We don't remember Bergman's pain, her desperation, or fear; her paintings appear before us in a continuum, in affirmation, in conciliation.

Bergman again was commanding in the choice, resolution and expression of her subjects, in which she conveyed the strong determination that occupied her and marked the last and fullest period of her work. The subjects refer to nature, stones, fjords, cliffs, horizons or archetypes developed since the beginning of humanity—boats or steles. All of these paradigmatic motifs are so refined that they become reflections of elementary geometric figures, triangles, straight lines and circles. They are not so much symbols, but primary signs so recognizable that they escape us. Skeletons or armour. The size of the format isn't important—the mountain, the cliff or the moon completely fill the surface of the canvas, while the landscape is excluded, and very little room is left for the background. The motif bursts in categorical forms repeated again and again, shining in the versatile surface created by metal.

Bergman did not draw the place where things happened, but the thing itself. Far from the geometric dryness of the art of her

contemporaries, for this artist, shape and colour come from the power of nature—the way in which the arcane manifests itself. For this reason, she felt committed to the how and the what. Being the motif that is painted and the person who paints it. The reason to paint is nothing more than she herself—her patrimony.

From the sea, the land doesn't stop tossing. But it isn't the land, rather the sailors' gaze which shakes, conquered by the rolling waters, while the sea from land is a fixed horizon, so powerful that for centuries it was confused with the edge of the world. Whichever way they looked, they were unable to unravel the mystery.

There isn't a red or blue more beautiful than in her paintings, nor a silver that shines more. No lines deeper than her horizons, nor circles subtler than her stars. When she left, the adult Anna-Eva was no longer that young girl who was searching, she was the woman that said out loud that art is a never-ending return. We are not dust, we are stone, we are cliffs, we are Finnmark, we are horizon.

Therefore, between palpable reality and intangible knowledge, she listened, saw and painted. Neither she herself nor anything around her soothed the silence that is produced by eternity's moans. It is her legacy, what she received and what she has given us. It is human plenitude.

From the South, which Anna-Eva Bergman so loved, thank you.

GRAND HORIZON BLEU



Michael Tarantino

If you are in front of a screen, at the cinema, you have the tendency to follow everything that unfolds on it, which is different from the theatre, where the words move through space and exist there, hanging in the air. At the cinema, as soon as they have left the screen, the words die. Therefore I tried to make little pauses in order to give the spectator the possibility of assimilating what he hears, of thinking about it.

—Carl Dreyer, interviewed in *Cahiers du Cinema*, 1965

What does this quote from the great Danish filmmaker, Carl Dreyer, have to do with the Norwegian painter, Anna-Eva Bergman. It certainly does not have to do with any kind of “Scandinavian” sense of distance or reserve, since those same qualities could be found in filmmakers like Michelangelo Antonioni, Jean-Marie Straub or Yasujiro Ozu or painters such as Mark Rothko, Giorgio Morandi or Piet Mondrian, to name just a few disparate practitioners of a distanced point of view.

Besides, Dreyer’s quote addresses just the opposite sensation: the notion of drawing the spectator into the work, of creating a situation where he/she is actively (almost physically) involved in the reception of images and scenes. For Dreyer, in fact, distance and presence acted in concert, with a seemingly objective method of presentation being the means of eliciting a subjective, personal response on the part of the spectator. His films are, at one and the same time, infused with the clarity of formal perfection and emotional intensity.

I would argue that these same two elements are present in the work of Anna-Eva Bergman, particularly in her series of horizons. Throughout Bergman’s oeuvre, one finds a tension between the particular and the general, the detail and the overall view. In terms of painting, of course, these concerns may be translated into the space that exists between abstraction and figuration. The horizon is, of course, the perfect subject in order to examine the area between these categories: it is nature’s colour field, a harmonious division of landscape between land (or sea) and sky, in which colour and light are constantly changing. To fix this subject, to freeze it on a canvas is a goal that must be approached with the same degree of flexibility that characterizes the subject itself.

In *Grand Horizon Bleu* [Large Blue Horizon] (1969), we find three designated planes. The largest is the dark blue area which occupies the bottom portion of the frame and represents the sea. Running along the top of this area is a thin, uneven line that marks the transition in the picture to the sky above. Made with a combination of metallic silver leaf and vinyl, it is a sky that seems to literally wash

over the surface of the canvas. Patches below the top layer appear, like breaks in a cloud surface. One can also detect the presence of squared patterns which the painter used in constructing the image. The image represents nature at its most direct and, at the same time, its most elusive.

But, of course, that is only one way of reading Bergman's painting, indeed one way of reading the subject. For it also functions as a study in colour, a study in the relationship between different kinds of shadings, different volumes, different geometrical forms. It functions as an abstraction, a work where the ostensible subject has disappeared, to be replaced by an emphasis on form. In the end, the painting argues for a multiple reading: as both the representation of a particular event and a non-figurative approximation of something quite different.

It is at this point that we may return to Dreyer and to his balancing of the spectator's point of view between a distanced one and one that is emotionally involved. In fact, his use of "little pauses", devices through which he attempts to get the viewer to reflect on the image, to go beyond its immediate presence seems particularly appropriate regarding

Anna-Eva Bergman's painting. *Grand Horizon Bleu* demands a second look, demands a "little pause" on the part of the viewer as he/she tries to assimilate the multiple views that the artist has assembled.

The painting simultaneously draws us into its surface, to examine the ways in which the artist has layered (and laboured) this representation, and asks us to step back, to trade the detail for the entire picture. And, it is between these steps, between "going into the picture" and going out of it, that we arrive at the realization of what makes Bergman's paintings of the natural world so powerful.

It is, perhaps, this ability of incorporating multiple views into her paintings which drove the artist to concentrate on specifically defined categories. In addition to the horizons, there were rocks, *Stele*, mountains, *Nunataks*, *Barques*, *Draugen*, the sea and waves, oceans and houses. It is as if, by limiting the amounts of subjects at her disposal, Bergman is able to build an inventory of images, an inventory which is built on the notion of difference as much as it is on similarity. For if each horizon, each ocean, each house is related to the other images in its category, it is also unique, one way of picturing an event or an object that is neither stationary nor demanding a single point of view. Bergman's categories are the opposite of restrictive: they are evolved in order to accommodate our shifting sense of perception.

From frost to thaw was a long time coming in Minnesota, not quite as long as the period from exile to redemption, but a good four months. Ira rather enjoyed the harsh winter days in which the snow swept horizontally out of the Arctic in ready-made drifts. He was fascinated by the local radio warning of a “white out” one day when it stormed so convulsively that the horizon between earth and sky was obliterated.

—“Postscript to a Dead Language”, Melvin Jules Bukiet, in *While the Messiah Tarries*, 1997

What makes this quote from a novelist so particularly striking is the way in which he describes a natural event as one imbued with its own inner narrative, one constructed on the notion of movement. From frost to thaw, from exile to redemption, from snow to drifts. Bukiet’s description of time is one that is structured upon change, on our ability to describe the passage from one state to another. In this context, the appearance of a “white-out” is truly horrifying, since its obliteration of the horizon also eliminates our ability to see. Just as it is for Anna-Eva Bergman, the horizon, so simple, so complex, is the palette on which we measure our ability to describe the world.

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