

first heard about it, I felt as if I had been attacked by an overwhelming concern that made me search the internet desperately for more details. But that first story was all I could find. For several days, I searched the principal oracles of our times, such as CNN, the BBC and Sky News, but it was all in vain. The only thing that is known is that after twenty-five years, this Haifa woman's husband acknowledged that he had been living with someone who was unable to hear any noise, not even the smallest, because the mailman had absentmindedly given him a letter addressed to his wife that was from a hearing-aid manufacturer. The husband's response remains unknown. Could it be that when he opened this curious letter to his wife that he fell to the ground, as if struck by lightning? Would he have fled their house, to be lost forever in the desert, fearing that his wife, at the end of the day, knew all about his hairy secrets that he thought he had concealed from her for the last twenty-five years? Or did he take his scimitar from the trunk where he had kept it for so many years, to polish it particularly carefully, while waiting for his wife with a peculiar quietness to his gestures and his eyes as blue as the Haifa sky, as if he had always imagined such a situation? Nobody knows. I have begun to believe that one of the most complex problems facing humankind today is the entropy of communication.

The author is forced to acknowledge his own frustration because, after all this, he knows nothing about this case of the woman who concealed her deafness from her own husband for twenty-five years. I do not even know why this story captured my attention in the first place. Possibly because it occurred in Haifa, a remote and foreign city, where I have never been, as I mentioned earlier, and for which reason I am running the risk of being forcefully withdrawn from the select (or, better said, selected) pantheon of national authors. To save my own skin, I only have one solution: to telephone the woman in Haifa.

—*And what do you, a simple Angolan writer, have to do with my life?* replies a voice from the other side of the world.

—*Translated from the Portuguese by
Luísa Venturini and revised by Lara Pawson*

In "O dia em que o Pato Donald comeu pela primeira vez a Margarida" (The day Donald Duck tasted Daisy for the first time). Lisbon: Caminho, 2006.

João Melo, born in 1955 in Luanda, Angola, adds to his activities as an author those of a journalist, publicist and professor. After attending Coimbra and Luanda Law schools, he was graduated in Journalism by the Fluminense Federal University and received his masters degree in Communication and Culture from the Rio de Janeiro Federal University, both in Brazil, where he lived from 1984 to 1992 as a press correspondent. He is a founder of the Angolan Writers Association, where he served as Secretary-General, Chairman of the Board and Chairman of the Fiscal Council. His works include poetry, short stories, chronicles and essays. His books (thirteen of poetry, six story collections and one of essays) have been published in Angola, Portugal, Brazil, Italy and Cuba. In Angola and abroad, he has been included in various anthologies, and has been also published in magazines in Portuguese, English, German, French, Arabic and Chinese. He was awarded the 2009 Angola Arts and Culture National Prize in the literature category by the Ministry of Culture of Angola. He lives currently between Luanda and Houston (USA).

Luisa Venturini is a Portuguese author, translator and poetry interpreter. She has translated into Portuguese works by many authors, such as Gabriel Garcia Márquez, Javier Tomeo, Joseph Stiglitz, Daniel Mendelsohn, Alberto Manguel, John Powells, Farhad Daftary, Heinz Halm, Reza Shah-Kazemi, and, into English, works by João Melo, Manuel Carmo, Maria Teresa Mimoso, etc., as well as regular translations of magazine articles, catalogues and brochures for institutions and museums, such as the Lisbon Water Museum or the Aga Khan Foundation.

Lara Pawson is a writer and journalist, based in London. She became interested in the Portuguese language, and Angola in particular, while working as the BBC correspondent in Angola 1998 to 2000. Her first book, a work of literary non-fiction about Angola *In the Name of the People: Angola's forgotten massacre*, will be published by IB Tauris in May 2014.

RALPH JOACHIM

Intrusion of Night into Day, 2012
acrylic on canvas, 72 x 48 in



courtesy: R.Blitzer gallery