


LIBER AMICORUM: Emblems and Studies

First Edition

Edited by
Pedro Germano Leal

SOCIETY
for
EMBLEM
STUDIES

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“The Society for Emblem Studies exists to foster the study of emblem books and related materials in literature and the visual arts, their origins and influence on other cultural forms, in all periods, countries and languages. The current membership includes teachers and students of literature, art-historians, librarians and archivists, collectors of antiquarian books, historians of Renaissance and Baroque cultures, students of comparative literature, and scholars interested in the wider relationship between literature and the visual arts, theories or representation, iconology and iconography.” If you are interested in becoming a member, please visit: emblemstudies.org.

Cover image: Anonymous, *Tabula Cebetis*, 1573. Courtesy of the Rijksmuseum.

*To those who departed
To those who arrived
In the years of pandemic*

FOREWORD

Pedro Germano Leal

Ipse dabo vati chartacea munera vates

Exactly five-hundred years ago, during the winter holidays of 1522, Andrea Alciato wrote a little book of poems that he called *Emblemata*. This collection of epigrams contained many translations from the *Greek Anthology*, and was heavily inspired by the 'arguments' of Horapollon's *Hieroglyphica* and the hieroglyphs of Chaeremon—supposedly used in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Alciato also looked for inspiration from coins, printer's marks and other sources to create his 'mosaics'—built with many hands. The book would be published later, in 1531 (without the author's knowledge), when it received the images that ultimately formed the emblem genre.

To celebrate this date, and on the occasion of its XII International Conference in 2022, The *Society for Emblem Studies* invited its members and friends to create new emblems, or share new lights on old ones. The *Sociedad Española de Emblemática* also embraced this campaign and sent invitation to its members. As a result, we received over fifty compositions, addressing many ancient and contemporary matters—from love to struggle, from politics to the pandemic, but also perseverance, beauty and friendship. The mediums of the *picturae* varied from oil paintings, watercolors, guaches, photographs,

posters, woodcuts and digital art; and the *subscriptiones* were equally rich in their diversity: English, Spanish, Latin, German, French, Italian, Portuguese and Russian.

Accompanying these emblems, we decided to publish here an *Anthologia* of thirteen short essays from our *Emblem of the Month* section, including two hitherto unpublished pieces. The series began seven years ago, and what was conceived as an unpretentious blog, was immediately met with great pieces of scholarship. Given the ephemeral nature of websites, the book is still the safest format for preservation, and these flowers certainly deserved 'to be read by the globe'.

The topics covered by our anthology are also varied: questions of contemporary and early-modern art are engaged with the same curiosity, with a strong emphasis on the transmission of ideas and iconographic motifs between the book and material cultures. The format, without the constraints of longer pieces, allows for the wit that characterizes the emblematic thought—in a combination of objectivity, intense content and freshness. As a result, this book demonstrates the afterlife of emblems in today's culture, as the digital world embraces new articulations of words and images.

We hope that this publication will encourage our members to send their contributions to our *Emblem of the Month* section so we can further explore this format as a vehicle for scholarly output. From now on, we will welcome contributions in any of the languages represented in our society.

Another motivation for the present volume was the impact of the coronavirus pandemics on our ability to obtain materials for the SES Newsletter and on our need to postpone our conference in Coimbra, which initially programmed to take place in 2020.

But above all editorial intents, this is a *Liber Amicorum*, a book of friends, that was put together during the hard times of distancing caused by the coronavirus pandemic. We hope that this book will reconnect colleagues, stir conversations and allow us all to 'fill up the time of lazy men'.

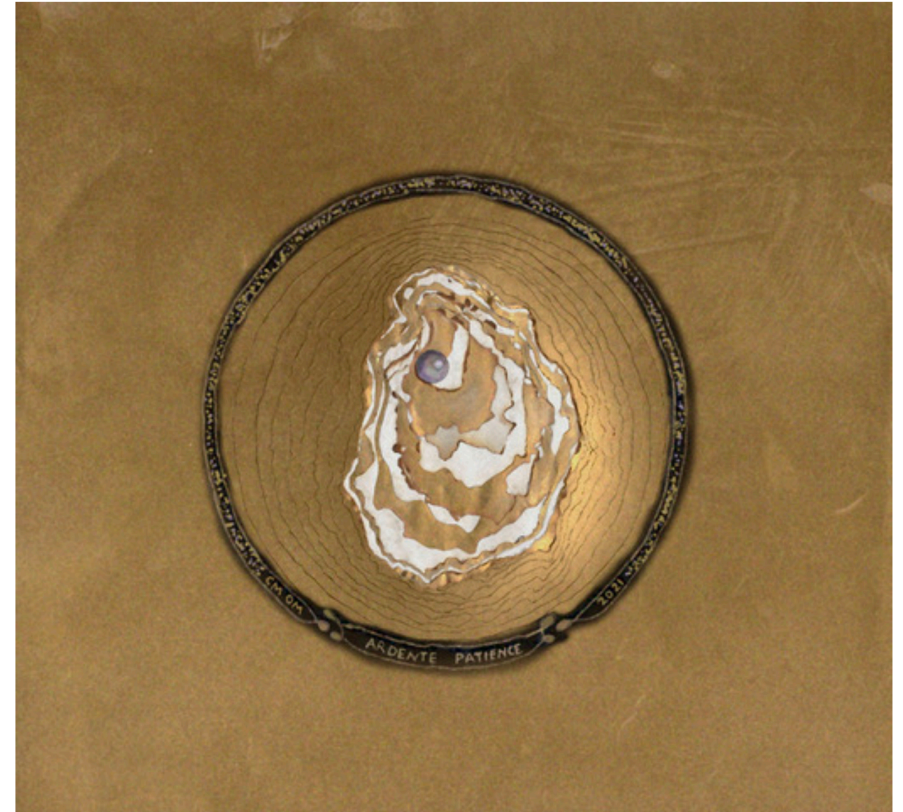
ARDENTE PATIENCE

*'Ardente patience' is the compass rose that guides my interactions with the world. During the pandemic, it became a collective mantra: ardent patience in the face of fear and isolation until we can return to the spaces we used to inhabit. The motto derives from Rimbaud's *Une Saison en enfer* that Neruda echoes in his Nobel Prize lecture, "Towards the Splendid City". Skármeta's novel *Ardiente paciencia* quotes Neruda's speech and inspired Radford's film *Il Postino*. The image juxtaposes the nacre pearl surface against the coarse oyster shell while it conveys tension: ardor and patience are needed as the particle that irritates the mollusk slowly transforms into a pearl. The dual etymology of the term 'baroque' as irregular pearl and obstacle in a syllogism, reflects the ethos of this impresa.*

*Claudia Mesa Higuera
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Original contribution from Claudia Mesa Higuera. Bethlehem, PA, 2021.

Image Credit: Olga Lucía Mesa Higuera, Pearl Compass (2021).



ARDENTE PATIENCE

“Arden te patie nce” es el norte de la rosa que guía mi interacción con el mundo. En tiempos de pandemia se convirtió en un mantra colectivo: ardiente paciencia frente a la desolación, ardiente paciencia hasta regresar a los espacios que solíamos habitar. El lema proviene de un verso de Rimbaud en “Une Saison en enfer” que Neruda cita en su discurso de aceptación del Premio Nobel: “À l’aurore, armés d’une ardente patience, nous entrerons aux splendides Villes”. Skármeta en su novela “Ardiente paciencia” incorpora el discurso de Neruda. La novela sirve como base para la película “Il Postino” de Radford. En la áspera coraza de la ostra y la superficie nacarada de la perla, se yuxtapone lo grotesco con lo bello. La imagen delata tensiones y opuestos: se necesita ardor y paciencia para que la partícula que irrita el molusco se transforme en nácar. La doble etimología del término “barroco” como perla irregular (barrôco) y obstáculo argumentativo (barocco), refleja el ethos de esta empresa.

Claudia Mesa Higuera

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Contribución original de Claudia Mesa Higuera. Bethlehem, PA, 2021.

Crédito de imagen: Olga Lucía Mesa Higuera, “Cartografía de una perla” (2021).

