

*THE GREY ZONE, BETWEEN HUMANS  
AND MACHINES: FROM VISIBILITY AND  
ACCESSIBILITY TO THE BLIND ZONES  
OF THE PLANET, THE ART PATH.*

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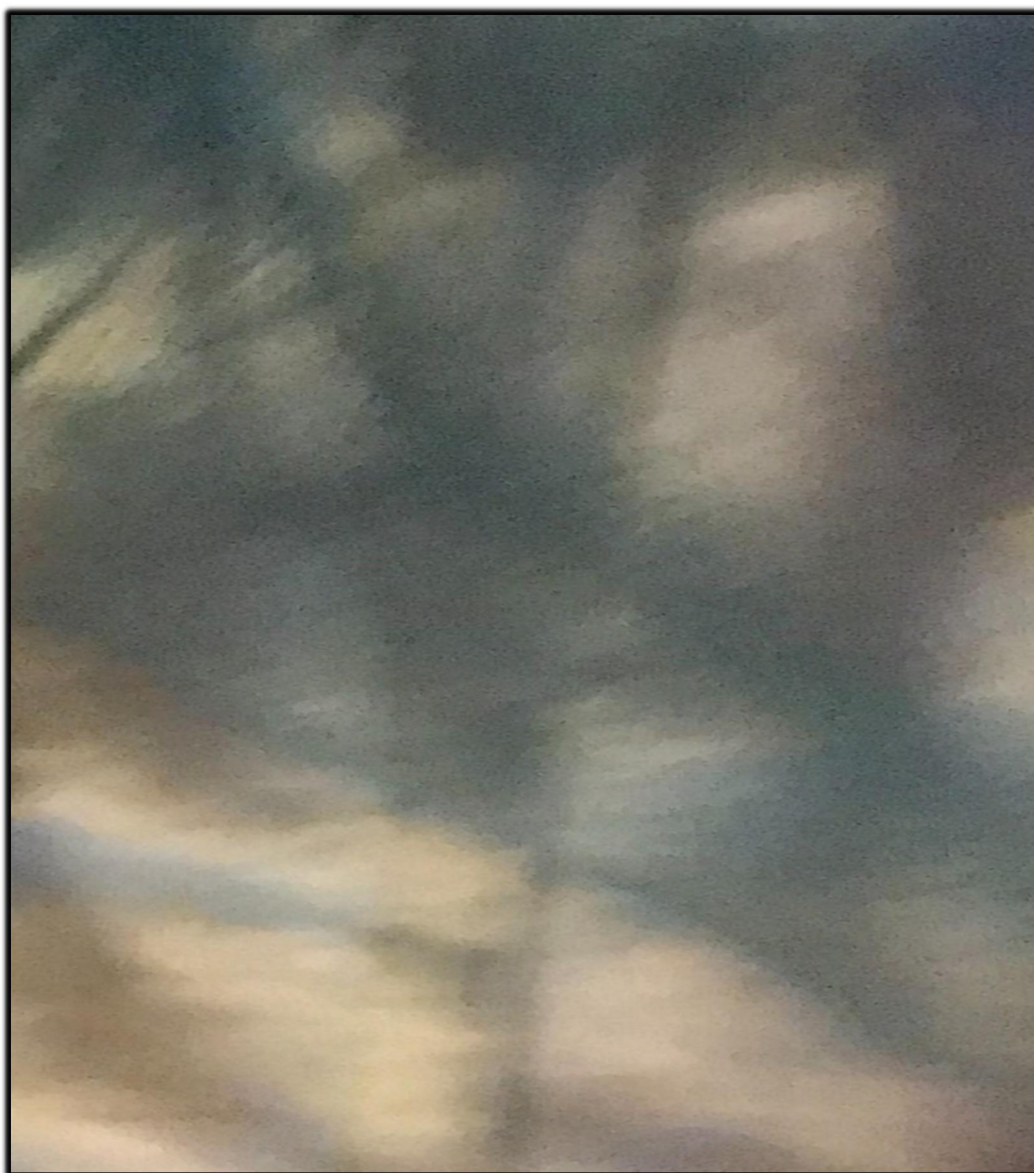


Figure 1: Image Filipe Salles 'Emanações' (Digital Photography) 2017

*"To say one more word about the claim of teaching how the world ought to be, we note that, in any case, philosophy always comes too late. As a thought of the world, it appears only when reality has already accomplished and finished its process of formation. What the concept teaches, history shows with the same necessity: it is in the maturity of being that the ideal appears in face of the real, and after grasping the same world in its substance, reconstructs it in the form of an empire of ideas. When philosophy paints its grey on grey, a shape of life has grown old. It cannot be rejuvenated by grey on grey, but only understood. It is only at the onset of dusk that the owl of Minerva takes flight."*

— Hegel, Preface: [\*Introduction to the Philosophy of Right\*](#),  
[Berlin, June 25, 1820](#)

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*"The truth is, I believe, that in all things, in order to go far, one must first return to principles."*

— Guillaume Apollinaire, *Letters to Tristan Tzara and André Breton*, *Revue des lettres modernes*, 1964, No. 104–107, France.

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## THE PRINCIPLE OF HOPE

*To Ernst Bloch*

*" When I speak to you of freedom, you answer with economy, with brothels, with armored doors, with high walls, with sentinels on their watchtowers, with books to reassure me, with music in endless refrains, with dance to turn endlessly around oneself, with death locked into every face.*

*When I speak to you of freedom, I also speak of brothels, but also of the little half-open door in the basement, of the window with loosened bars, of the air vent in the cellar that a kick can widen, of the attic that opens onto the sky, of walls too ancient to scratch with fingernails, of cats who always find their escape, of poetry that cracks the stone-words, of red balloons rising from the childhood soul into the open air.*

*When I speak to you of freedom, I also speak to you of equality. Of all those who can no longer endure the fences guarded by police dogs, of the friends ready to wear out their hands on rigid walls, of the wardens who would rather be elsewhere and sometimes close their eyes to dream, of the prestigious politician surprised to find himself there without knowing why, of the woman who refuses to stop believing in birth.*

*When I speak to you of freedom and equality, I also speak to you of fraternity. Of outstretched hands giving the last crumb of bread, of a smile when the night is too dark, of the kiss to the one who is dying, of the song without borders, of the imperceptible gesture that sows the earth with wheat, of the needle's eye in all finitude.*

*When I speak to you of what is human, I speak of all this. I open hope like an oyster with a pearl. I understand us in the radical impulse that leaps out of constraint. I embrace you."*

— René Barbier, in a message on his Facebook

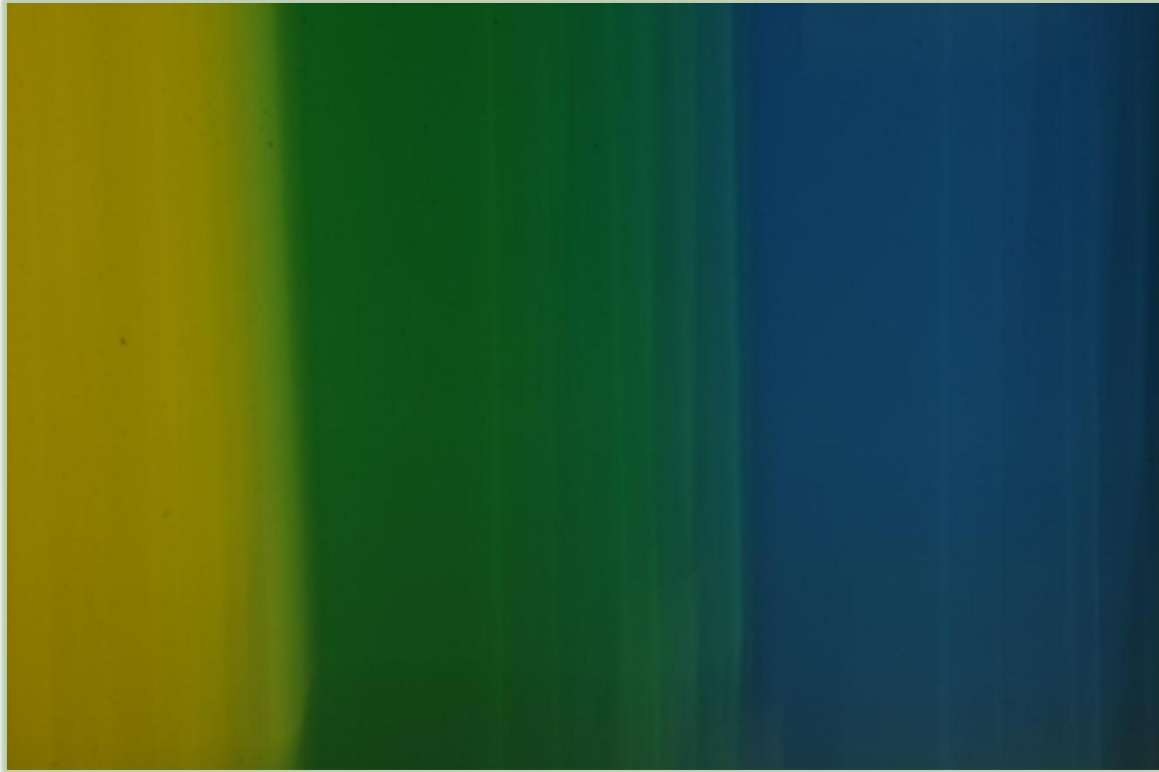


Figure 2 : Image Filipe Salles Sem título (Fotografia Digital) 2022

## INTRODUCTION

Relations between human beings in contemporary organizations (companies, training institutes, commercial agencies, factories, etc.) seem to rely increasingly on the mediation of AI, which, in principle, is a positive contribution both scientifically and technologically. However, although the means of communication are multiplying (telephone, fax, Internet, chat, email, videoconference, audioconference, etc.), understanding, as Edgar Morin pointed out, remains quite difficult and complex within contemporary organizations, insofar as the gap between top management and the operational teams carrying out essential tasks is widening day by day.

This gap reflects a more insidious reality: how distant we are from ourselves. The reality of presence to oneself—one's dreams, unintentional attitudes, contact with the unconscious, which speaks to us in the most unexpected forms—seems ever more sidelined, denied, repressed, because of the discomfort it reveals. Indeed, our relationship with machines places us in a binary framework: commanding and commanded, dominating and dominated, and eliminates all dialogue with what makes us human, the submerged part of the iceberg. Obliterated by the absence of dialogue, the bases of the icebergs collide underground, provoking accidents, conflicts, and traumas with unspeakable causes, invisible, buried beneath the sea of unconscious reasons.

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A GREY ZONE: On the Meaning, Use, and Sustainability of Scientific and Technological Discoveries.

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According to the MCC (Center for Contemporary Criminological Research, Paris) in 2000, the world can be divided into several zones as follows:

1. **Zones of high strategic interest**, in which the countries of the North have a significant economic stake.
2. **Zones of high interest but with serious risk of local and international conflict**, where positive negotiations have been engaged.
3. **Zones of NGO activity**, which must be the object of new, serious, and adequate transdisciplinary development projects, including the activities of the UN, UNESCO, etc.

4. **The Others:** Zones which, in 2000, appeared “forgotten,” arousing no interest, such as areas of poverty or disease, but which can in reality be identified in every country on the globe as presenting either the highest or lowest level of urgency for intervention.

The MCC contrasts high-visibility zones with what could be called *blind zones*, the level of visibility and invisibility depending on the degree of interest from Northern countries. Yet these four zones appear in most countries across the globe. Today, these forgotten zones are increasingly numerous. Every country has its visible zones and its forgotten zones.

The latter exist because of clandestine immigration, child labor, and even slavery, where the weakest and most isolated—those with no protection—are sold like goods and forced to give up their human dignity to survive. Many children and elderly people work in extremely degrading conditions (landfills, sweatshops, mines, etc.). These individuals are deeply scarred in body and spirit, as they are treated as objects, sometimes even cheaper than robots, to carry out manual labor in anonymous, hidden places.

There are also the forgotten of health—mental health, major cognitive disorders — not to mention drug users and all forms of prostitution.

Because of their difficult situation, such people may react violently, using illegal means within the organization where they work, or even sometimes lead, in order to obtain what society denies them: the right to education, to health, and to decent working and living conditions.

In light of these problems, several questions arise:

1. What are the main causes of inhumanity that block the evolution of certain zones of our society and still generate conflicts of all kinds—human, religious, or cultural? Are they endogenous, circumstantial, or intrinsic to humanity itself?
2. How can we develop problem-solving strategies to adequately address these conflicts that affect our societies through *human mediation* (at the local/international level), instead of leaving them in the shadow and invisibility? Instead of relegating our intimate conflicts to the shadow and invisibility? Can we find a place in the university and in civil society—a *grey zone*—to discuss these problems through open, calm, and transdisciplinary dialogue with the art support?





Figure 3 : Manto Tupinambá. Source : [https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manto\\_tupinamb%C3%A1](https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manto_tupinamb%C3%A1)



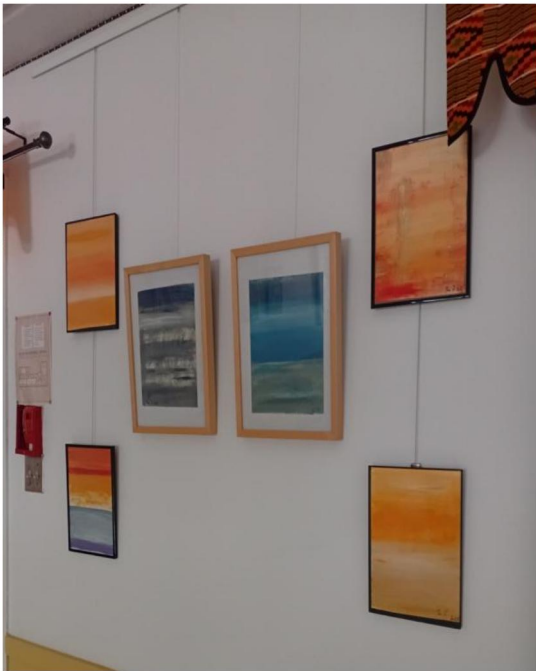
## SOME SUGGESTIONS

In 2025, Indigenous leader Glicéria Tupinambá visited the State University of Campinas (Unicamp) and shared her experience with the Tupinambá people's ancestral practice of making the Sacred Mantle. During the long period of colonization, several examples of the Mantle were stolen from their sacred places and taken to Europe as exotic pieces of anthropological and museum interest. Recently, negotiations for the return of the Mantle to the Tupinambá people began through diplomatic channels, in which Glicéria actively participated. In an interview given on July 6, 2025, Glicéria recounted the difficulty of conveying to authorities, not only European but also Brazilian, the importance and spiritual significance of the Mantle to the Tupinambá people, and how this artifact is viewed as a mere object of superstitious fetishism, without considering the ancestral and ritual aspects surrounding the Mantle. Glicéria even describes several experiences typical of so-called "illuminating dreams" about the making of the Mantle, which, according to Jung (1990, 1991), are the result of deep interactions with models of the collective unconscious. In our Western academic culture, these models tend to be rejected as possibilities and are typically seen as fabrications or creative imagination.

This is a typical example of subtle conflicts between cultures, which fail to consider broader models of knowledge, characterizing a gray area of mediation without effective respect for the ancestral tradition involved in the process. We understand this as the need for an exchange mediated by a broader system capable of achieving a unifying synthesis of processes.

These suggestions emerged after listening to all the participants in our recent CIRET symposia in 2024. They still need to be further developed in our future exchanges. A few meetings will certainly not be enough. At heart, the challenge is to oppose a globalized and unipolar economic system with a multipolar one that fosters the economic development of all countries worldwide through agreements of mutual development support.

1. **Create communities using shared pathways or common languages:**  
encourage learning in forgotten zones, give each person a dignified place in society through the support of human-mediated new technologies, but also through a deeper knowledge of self, of one's relationship to others, and to the world. (AFRIKA WINDOWS)



In a recent expo for the mistreated and traumatized children of the world Mariana tried to paint abstract symbolic windows playing with colours and their symbolism in the collective unconscious of each one of us such as gray, red or blue.

Figure 4 : Windows From Mar Thieriot  
Afrika Center from Montreal, 1644 rue St Hubert, August 2025.

2. **Develop networks and small entities** capable of transmitting, in simple terms, transdisciplinary practices in concrete projects of training or care, in order to help populations everywhere in the world.
3. **Remove institutional blockages** by building interstitial mediation bridges between organizations and scientific research, with the help of AI (translation, support for global communication) in the grey zones of our planet—that is, positive crucibles of peace and exchange. Open up to new levels of consciousness through art by mobilizing emotional, spiritual, or philosophical values (horizontal dialogues, reading, writing, intersubjectivity, artistic and meditative practices, etc.).
4. **Provide financial counterparts** to evolving structures that will operate in grey zones.
5. **With Art help, promote human plasticity and evolution within human organizations:** through dialogue, mutual aid, and cooperation, respecting the human mystery, rather than reinforcing competition and vertical, unipolar authority. Indeed, the submerged part of the iceberg is also what sustains it, and these invisible and ineffable foundational components that constitute a human being need to be seen, perceived, heard, and understood in order to soften the collisions between different bases.

To these suggestions, we must add an unconditional priority: **learning to dialogue together instead of fighting for religious, cultural, or economic power** within the organizations in which we act, in order to find common solutions that encourage the peaceful evolution of humanity within our institutions. To dialogue together requires respecting the physical and moral integrity of all those who seek peaceful solutions for our evolution toward better “learning to

be” societies—capable of mediating problems in accordance with the laws of each country that protect dignity and human rights.

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*Written from the original English text "Artificial Intelligence and our Secret Mind: Human Mediation in Grey Zones" in Atlas-TJES. Also available at: [ResearchGate](#)*

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As we briefly described, we are witnessing what seems to be an irreversible process: the substitution of the most tedious, repetitive, or even dangerous human tasks by machines. In itself, the idea is excellent and laudable, as it saves precious time and health, and this substitution has been accepted by the scientific community without major objection. The rise of automation processes should allow people to be better trained and employed in more interesting and noble tasks, which foster responsibility, autonomy, security, and sometimes even pleasure in work. To this, there is nothing to object.

Will we return to life without transportation, without communication, without television, telephone, cinema, radio, or the Internet? Shall we renounce pharmaceutical research because of biological weapons, or marvelous rockets because of the destruction caused by missiles?

The problem does not lie in the rise of scientific and technological research itself, but in the **meaning given to this rise—or, conversely, in its absurdity**. The most serious issue is the **exclusion of unconscious problematics**, which will resurface forcefully, provoking all sorts of clashes, ranging from small, localized conflicts to environmental catastrophes.

In the short term, with fear in our bellies, absurdity gains ground. Humanity, in search of support, produces increasingly competitive, aggressive, and irrational

behaviors—so much so that this competition is already worth many prejudices and yet continues, despite the harm it causes to everyone. Technological development, in complicity with local authorities, has increased underemployment and clandestine immigration, reducing thousands of workers to functions of installation and manual maintenance of industrial equipment. Paradoxically, it is indeed cheaper to employ undertrained labor, to install automation with the necessary follow-up, than to properly train workers... Always this irrational lure of profit, the instinct that drives domination or submission—the old pathological spiral in which we have been trapped for centuries.

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### A Possible Process of Creation/Healing in a Grey Zone

1. A is A — ACTION (Doing)
2. A is not non-A — INSURRECTION (Undoing, Grey Zone)
3. Non-A is not non-A — NON-ACTION (Not Doing, Grey Zone)
4. A is non-A — SURPASSING (Being Done Together, Grey Zone) <sup>1</sup>

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**Miracle or Mirage?** As Marc G. Klein says, *“every work of art is an opening.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Nāgārjuna, *Treatise on the Middle Way*, Le Seuil, Points Collection, 1995. See also Yamauchi Tokuryû, *Logos et lemme: Western and Eastern Thought*, CNRS Éditions, 2020, trans. Augustin Berque. Cited by Prof. Landier (unpublished).

It is a daily act of beginning and beginning again. To be acted upon and not to be acted upon remain as important as the act of acting. Throughout this process, we are at once made and unmade, constructed and deconstructed in this “*art of opening*.”



Figure 6: Image Filipe Salles ‘Color Clouds’ (Digital Photography) 2017

The art of understanding the unconscious lives and thrives in the act of doing, in the insurrection of undoing, in the patience of not doing, and finally in the miracle or the mirage of being made. In this movement of *perlaboration*, we learn to make room for inspiration and for the porosity of the connection that arises between us and that which surpasses us—modifying, shaping, and, in a sense, unveiling us.



## 1) DECONSTRUCT

Painful situations: he/she is wrong, I am right. It is just or unjust, true or false—the logic of exclusion. The ultimate recourse to fend off attacks: hot or cold war becomes inevitable. How can one escape except by distancing oneself, by lessening external impact, by reducing reactivity, to recover a certain calm, the so-called center... So hard to maintain, like a course in rough seas, when one perceives a lighthouse far away on the horizon. We then enter a grey zone, wrapped in mist, where we have the choice to rebel and to deconstruct, to undo the labels, slogans, jibes, accusations that trap and imprison us. To try to understand what is happening and why. On what are the labels based, where is compassion in all this—can there be a return to oneself, is forgiveness possible? Yes, no, not always. Deconstruction often results in a change of course: the forest can be enchanted and/or hostile. Indeed, the process of elucidation requires the presence of a mediator, or even two transdisciplinary mediators, who will attempt to discern what is at work beneath the waters of the unconscious: what will to power, what devaluation, or what hidden treasure lies submerged in the human personality !

## 2) NON-ACTION: THE ART PATH

There is another possible and complementary tactic in case of conflict: to let things happen, to let life unfold, to allow time to help consciousness find its voice / its way artistically. Withdrawal, silence, reflection, meditation, contemplation. Painting, cooking, gardening, music, yoga, dance, the art that knows itself as poor, like a barefoot saint, stripped down—then one can establish truces between binary trenches. A song, a drawing, a poem, an angel passes. Indeed, it is non-action that allows us to resonate with human energies,

which often put us on the trail of what is left unsaid: an unresolved passion, an unspoken dream, excessive perfectionism, existential fatigue, and so on.

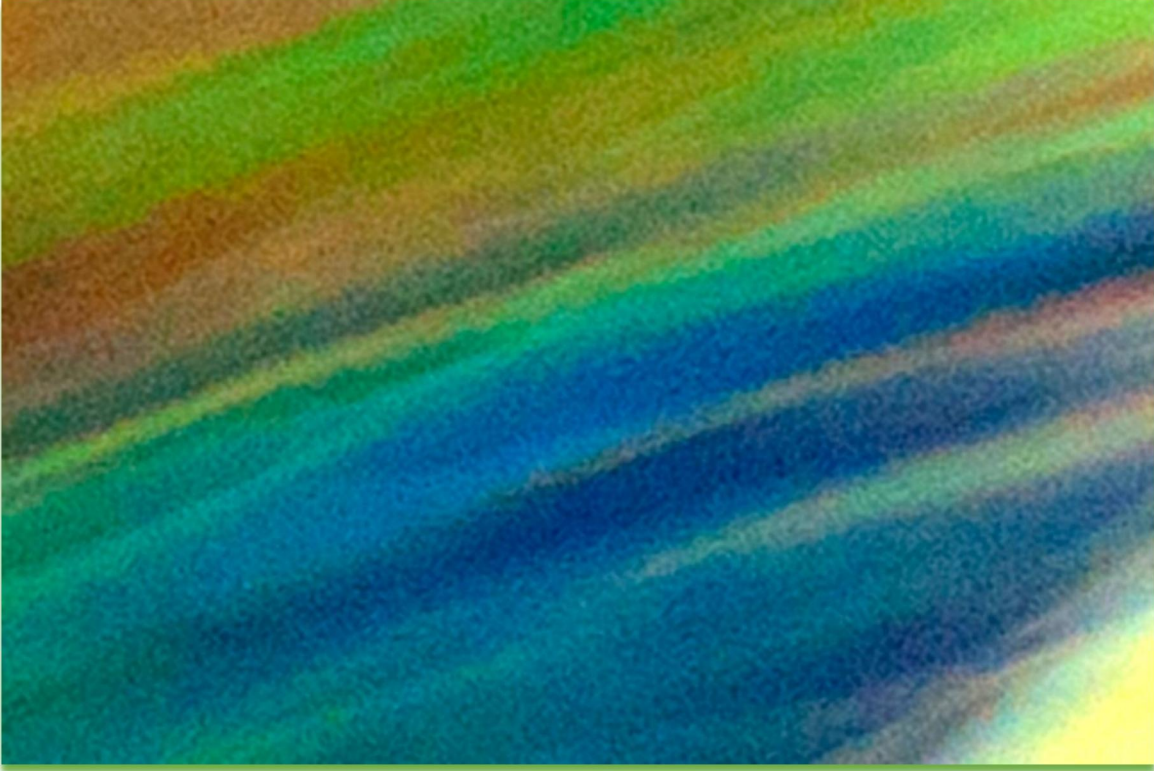


Figure 7 : Image Filipe Salles 'Color Clouds (II)' (Digital Photography) 2017

### 3) WORKING-THROUGH (PERLABORATION)

To allow oneself to be worked upon, to work together, to accept this encounter where we are shaped; where, without censorship, we lay the cards on the table, we change the signs, to bring forth that whole which is greater than the sum of its parts, only possible in absolute, radical honesty. Connivance, complicity, empathy, friendship in discord. Knowing how to disagree and still play the game. Until we reach the best solution and finally pronounce checkmate.

The grey zone is therefore an operative and creative zone that contains its tools, its resources, like a compass to face a future that may be chaotic, entangled in dogmas, and the drama of choosing between one or the other, when it is both that must be saved.

A constructive and promising response will be to enhance human formation and its relationship to the scientific and technological education of the world's population, enabling them to develop at a high level through bilateral agreements of mutual support for on-site scientific and technological research. Such agreements would engage different countries in a logic of cooperation and support for sustainable development and for the autonomy of the invisible—who would then become supported and visible.

It is indeed very complex to defuse the bomb of impulsive behaviors, driven by the thirst to seduce through domination or submission, and by the unintentional behaviors of autopilot. Beyond the unforeseen passions that can disrupt a professional path to the detriment of a team's work. But the resolution of underlying problems depends on the awareness of our unintentional attitudes, which, through a process of working-through, makes it possible to thwart the machinic arrangement of master and slave, of human and his creations. By gradually breaking free from these machinic arrangements through progressive artistic insights, humans can identify their different energetic states, underlying unconscious conflicts, and restore their emotional balance. They will then be able to free themselves from power relations to move toward competence and solidarity among humans, which implies greater proximity to oneself and a certain distance from others.

The heart of the problem of the planet's sustainable development seems to lie in the ethical and dialogical training—the human formation (mediation/negotiation)—of leaders and managers who sign international economic agreements and promote them within their respective countries. The presence or absence of this dialogical training will determine the orientation of scientific discoveries in the field: for or against the human? And, in terms of science fiction: self-destruction or Science fiction? The thought of complexity also has its limits: one cannot want both life and death at the same time. One day it will be necessary to accept, as the poet Aragon desired in orange hues, the modest and reasoned universality of concord—if humanity chooses life in its wholeness and its relationship to the environment.

Indeed, within the framework of scientific training, before even initiating transdisciplinary debates, it seems necessary to introduce a stage within these disciplines: an “intra-disciplinary” or “meta-disciplinary” approach, so that the scientist can establish a link between his or her object of study and conscience. Why choose this profession? What values guide this choice? Are there any at all? The hard lesson that many of the exploited have learned is that, unfortunately, instinct—without patient and dialogical education—prevails. And this holds true even at the highest levels of education.

We even observe an increased danger with the desensitization reinforced by purely rational training, which evacuates the heart, emotions, and therefore the possibility of working them through together, in order to break free from the seductive Machiavellian spiral of dominator and dominated—thanks to a rereading of unconscious problems in situ.

#### 4) A CALL FOR PROFOUND HUMAN TRAINING FOR RESEARCHERS AND USERS OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH.

It is clear that we will have leaders and organizations across the world whom we *can* train. *Can* is indeed the right verb. It must be acknowledged that investments in art, philosophy and psychoanalysis are truly a vanishing skin of sorrow. Yet, both reasonably and affectively, it now appears indispensable that a contemporary organization should invest in the philosophical competence of its executives: in the formation of their conscience—their capacity for dialogue, self-knowledge, critical spirit, sense of justice, sense of friendship, long-term vision, appetite for deepening knowledge, and their human virtues. These virtues are very difficult and slow to acquire, impossible to transmit, far from innate as the dark history of humankind has shown. They must be reclaimed and refined daily through dialogue in situation. One may bequeath a fortune and a computer to one's grandson or granddaughter, but the ancestors cannot bequeath their character, their gentleness, their strength of soul, their love of culture that has made them somewhat more humanized; the accords of Pablo Casals when he plays Bach for the thousandth time; Mozart who outwitted Salieri by having him take down his *Requiem* after a lifetime of jealousy and persecution; the storming of the Bastille taught tirelessly for more than two centuries; and all our assignments corrected in red on the abolition of slavery and the long-awaited right of women to vote. The only thing we can do, as Levinas advised us, is to bear witness and leave the door open to the possibility of a reconciled humanity. The matter that we are has a good memory.

*"They did not know it was impossible, so they did it."*

—Mark Twain

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