

## Embracing the Margins: An Interview with Josefina Báez

with Sobeira Latorre

Josefina Báez's artistic production, in a career that spans over thirty years, cannot be easily categorized. Her work, whether on the stage or on the page, moves beyond genres and languages, creating an alternate space in that neither/nor or *Ni é* location that she so well foregrounds in her storytelling. Báez was born in La Romana, Dominican Republic and lives in the United States. Her writing and performing transcend the boundaries of English and Spanish and move seamlessly from local specificity to universal truths that speak to a wide and diverse readership/audience. Báez's writing/performing defies simplistic and necessarily limited definitions of identity. Without pretense and with a profound respect for language, for sound, for form, Báez makes the complexities of language, of composing, of crafting, seem easy. Her characters sound like our friends and family members. She captures with humor, longing, and pain, human interactions that are deeply embedded in cultural norms in a language that is both familiar and precise.

The following interview, conducted in English, Spanish, and a mixture of both languages, addresses Báez's grassroots approach to writing, publishing and performing, as well as her creative use of language (s).

**Latorre:** Humor is central in your writing. Are you aware, as you write, of how funny you are? How do you view the role of humor in your work? Is it culture-specific?

**Báez:** Yes, absolutely. I am aware. I/We-are made of it. I/We continue in our days because of it. Humor for me has a very specific rhythm-stories-history-anecdotes-references-closeness-distance-empowering and diffusing power. I work the text and go at it and edit. If the humor (word/scene/image) is still present, it is part of its intrinsic nature (of the text). It stays. Humor for me is vital. I laugh a lot about myself, I survive because of it, so then my work, el más solemne, needs humor. Solemnity, in my definition, has humor. My work has humor as its base element, yes. El humor rompe creencias. Abre los sentidos. It is this joy of living. Eso está en el alma de todos los pueblos, para poder seguir, regardless.

**Latorre:** I have had to stop at times while reading your work because I am laughing so hard...

**Báez:** ¡Qué maravilla! I salute your laugh. We need more of it, en medio de este tiempo, en este mundo. I have seen people reading *La Levente* en el tren. Yo estoy en frente mirando la reacción. They keep laughing and laughing and I start laughing too. Contagia.

**Latorre:** I know that you conduct workshops for different types of audiences. What do you see as your role as a teacher? How does the experience of teaching inform your writing, if at all?

**Báez:** Teaching is learning y su vice-versa. When I teach I listen with devotion. When I teach, I do have a proposed theme/path/possibilities that always get extended for better by participating students (Co-creators). It's not teaching but co-creating in deed. Indeed. I don't teach what I was taught, I teach/invite a close dialogue that includes silence. Mainly what I teach is what I have co-created in the last forty years, *Performance Autology*. I'm very much into well-being. El bienestar

del ser humano -creador, potencializador, catalista de un mundo mejor. My main concern, is the unit-the self, the individual (in its physical, mental and conscience aspects) and its collective dance, the tribe. *Autologia* is for a creative life or life creating. And yes, teaching as every 'ing', informs my writing. But teaching (co-creating) is about the grand collective.

**Latorre:** Because it is not about you.

**Báez:** Certainly. It is not about me. Teaching is this high dialogue that can provoke amazing possibilities. I need to listen. A dialogue is created, my proposal and my experience; their interests and experience. Transforming us all as heartfelt dialogues do.

**Latorre:** Along those lines, I often think of teaching as a type of performance. What do you view as the relationship between teaching and performing? How aware are you, if at all, of your audience as you perform? Of your reader as you write? And of your students as you teach?

**Báez:** Qué hermosa secuencia. The way you framed it is beautiful. My audience (readers/live audience) es soberana. Como yo. Their choices are built in my process (their yes, no, maybe...My yes, no, maybe...As any other aspect of life. No less). Performance has a high sensorial alert in its nature. While performing, already aware, the presence of the audience is vital for that specific time/space. Life living lives. Divine. While aware, dialogues happen in many realms. This is very concrete; felt; assessed; and might add windows or doors to your miradas. Lo importante: Our choices. Nuestra soberanía, cargadita de dulce responsabilidad. Yes, we are performing while teaching. Since we are performing while living/dying and everything in between. The performance of being. The doing of being. And awareness, consciousness, respect are main ingredients.

**Latorre:** As a writer, you put your work out there, but ultimately, you don't have much control over how people might read you or interpret your work.

**Báez:** I will never. Gladly. Control-controlling-controls are not in my menu. As a reader, nobody does that with me either. I will be disengaged, insulted. I will not participate. I am not a prophet ni oro para gustarle a todos. My audience IS honest. And looks for what is genuine. That does not mean that they like what I do. Members of my audience (in NYC) have told me "I don't like your work, but you know why I come and see it? Because every time I come, I know that I will see something genuine and that it is your work. I won't see it in another place, but in that body." That is a great compliment for me. And I say "thank you", every time.

**Latorre:** Why don't they like your work? Do you know?

**Báez:** Yes, because they come from another experience in the market at large -a more "commercial" take on the arts, huge productions, celebrities, choices... But the honesty is great and it is a dialogue... That's my audience! ¡Chulería! The first performance is the silent performance that the reader has. That is a very pristine space and time performance and it is undervalued. I treasure that honor. We think of performance when you are dancing or doing something, but that first performance of reading, your body is so present and then you are seeing so many things or not seeing or going in your own avenue. Reading is a verb. As a reader, I like that performance, the silent performance, your first silent performance. And your body will do

things, if you video yourself it's amazing what you might find. In that silent reading, you write your own take in your head... I think I'm missing one part of the original question.

**Latorre:** Well, your students...

**Báez:** Well my teaching is... it's a great honor. I am asked to be a teacher, a co-creator. We usually meet once a year for ten days, in our retreat formats or in individual residencies to work specific tasks/projects. They work their own theme, research. We work from the base of my physical training, meditation, silent moments, knowing the body, taking care of the body, getting rid of pain; and remind them of their joy. We co-create community. We responsibly work our sanity, health and well-being and serve our communities.

**Latorre:** You are an independent artist. I'm sure that comes with a great deal of freedom. Is there also a cost? As an independent artist, how easy or difficult has it been for you to disseminate and promote your work, particularly your writing? What choices have you had to make in terms of the diffusion or dissemination of your work?

**Báez:** I had no other choice. I didn't know any other choice. I don't want, neither pretend, nothing else but what it is. I know that I'm doing the best under my circumstances. Maybe I could have done and shared more creative work. But no complaints. My path owes me nothing. Yes, there's a "price," there's no "security" and then you learn soooooo much about taking care of yourself. The "price" is turned into fuel by me and all independent artists. But there's a price in every path taken. Artists, independent, sponsored, commercial, regardless, we complement each other. And the audience is granted with more choices. Yes, it is limited the distribution I can do. Although nowadays there are many platforms that make it easier and possible.

**Latorre:** Given the scope and relevance of your work, I would imagine that many well-known literary presses/publishing houses have approached you or expressed an interest in your work.

**Báez:** No, no. They do not even know I exist. And if they do, they couldn't be bothered. Todo tiene que tener un significado, pertenecer a una agenda grande. Y yo en un laiiiito escribiendo vainitas chiquitas. Esos trabajan con agentes. No he visto nunca uno de esos. Solo jugué eso.

**Interviwer:** Me sorprende porque hay una demanda para este tipo de trabajo.

**Báez:** Hay una demanda en la academia que va mas allá del canon y su gran mercado; en el público en general, en espacios comunales. Ahí estamos.

**Latorre:** Could you share more about how you are able to do it on your own? How do you promote your work without support?

**Báez:** I always carry a mochila. I sell my books. I sell on Amazon, en librerías de nuestras comunidades, donde me han dicho que sí. I tour as a performer and as a teacher in universities in Europe and Asia, Latin America and the United States and that's where the market is for me. That's the market that I have created. Bodega style. Yes.

**Latorre:** Everything you have published has been through I Ombe Press, correct?

**Báez:** Yes. Me, myself and I!

**Latorre:** To be honest, I had a difficult time finding your work. I eventually found some of your books at a University Library, but it wasn't until I reached out to you directly that I had access to *all* of your publications.

**Báez:** It is hard to find, but now it is becoming easier. There are different ways to disseminate the work; many platforms...

**Latorre:** Yes, I know that you have an active presence in social media. As a writer and performer, in what ways have relatively new communication platforms impacted your work and its dissemination?

**Báez:** The whole social media gives me even more discipline. Aunque se pierde entre comillas tiempo, you write. Así sea un "yes" o un "no" o un disparate (to be edited), lo que sea, you are writing, you are reading, you are communicating with your peers and friends. It could be one-liners, but you are writing something, and that's good. It has been important to disseminate my work. Some dialogues are created; y mucha chercha is lived. I like it but it's time consuming. No le puedo coger a tra'. La edaaaaaad Sobeira. La edaaaaaad.. La edaaaaaad.

**Latorre:** There's a passage in *Levente no. Yolayorkdominicanyork* that refers to the term Afro-dominicano or Afro-Dominican as an academic term. I have the passage marked but since there is no pagination in the book, which I hope we will discuss soon, it will take a minute for me to find it... Well... you know the passage. I found it very interesting. What are *your* thoughts on this issue? Josefina's thoughts on these types of labels?

**Báez:** Labels. I mean, words are labels. I won't fight no labels. That's not my fight, labels but levels. I will not call myself that. I have not heard anybody home or in the neighborhood call themselves like that. I just have heard those words in academic settings. We live in a world of a word game, that if done by the named is empowering and self reflects histories.

**Latorre:** Your hometown of La Romana is a very famous place in the Dominican Republic. I'm sure it means different things to different people. For me, it is a tourist destination I visited with my family when I was a little girl. What is your La Romana like? What is Josefina's Romana?

**Báez:** My Romana is not in a picture. There are three main Romanas. There's one in Los Bateyes. There's the other La Romana que es en el pueblo (la Romana con el artículo "La") and then the other one que es Romana (sin el artículo. Para esa hay que pasar el puente. Esa es de los turistas y de la gente que tiene moneda. A esa no puedo entrar. Las Romanas dos de los extremos, they're good on pictures (la playa y las instalaciones turísticas y los bateyes. Los prietos en los bateyes somos grandes atracciones para los fotógrafos.

**Latorre:** ¿No puedes entrar?

**Báez:** No, no, no puedo entrar. Son playas privadas. Y a los lugares que podría entrar, decido no gastarle mi moneda para que me traten mal. Me quedo en el pueblo. Me gusta. De ahí soy. Ahí soy “la más chiquita de Los Prietos Báez.” Esos extremos...Romana-La Romana-Batey(es) son regentados por poderes.

**Latorre:** ¿Son estos extremos parte del atractivo turístico también?

**Báez:** Hay un turismo que quiere eso, por supuesto, los extremos will give amazing photos, lots of likes and viral life possibility. Y nosotros ‘lo tenemos toooooo’, como todo el mundo, en el mundo. La Romana mía es el pueblo, que hace mandaos, va al parque a sentarme a hacer na’ a hablar con los desempleaos igual que yo; camina en un entierro de alguien que conocimos. La Romana mía es muy inmediata, barrios, cancha, amigos, frituras, mercado, galería... I like my La Romana.

**Latorre:** Y, ¿hay contacto entre las tres Romanas?

**Báez:** La Romana-pueblo- suple y es puente a los extremos mencionados; supplies service workers and translators...Every person has their own take and definition of the places one calls home. My República Dominicana-My La Romana-My USA-My New York “es particular, si llueve se moja como los demás.”

**Latorre:** Some of the voices in your texts, your characters, pueden ser mal hablados. Are there things your characters want to say that you, Josefina Báez, don’t want to write/say/perform?

**Báez:** Oh, *La Levente*. I don’t want to perform *La Levente*. I don’t want those women in my body. I would do maybe video performances for that or I would direct it but I don’t want them here (pointing to body).

**Latorre:** Why not?

**Báez:** I’m in my late fifties and I don’t think I have the level of energy that I would need to have to get these women pumped. That text is something that I, obvio, yo lo trabajé, but they’re gone...gone to meet other disciplines.

**Latorre:** So, are you saying that writing is different than performing these voices? What is it about inhabiting these characters that’s different for you?

**Báez:** Yes, it is your body. You have to put it in every cell. In performance these voices take hold of your body for less time but the intensity is brutal. Researching/writing/reading dialogue with you. To write *La Levente* it took me 9 years and seven months. I had to research openly and without any expectation or idea where I was going. I went to muchísimos barrios latinos en NY. Oía conversaciones. Seguía a la gente, cambiaba mi rumbo. Tren-calles-aceras-establecimientos públicos-estaciones de guaguas y trenes... Tomaba fotos de todo y de todos. Oía las conversaciones de celulares. It was terrible. It was so much information that my project bank was overflowing at all times. Iba a la casa y escribía. Salía de nuevo a buscar quien va a ser la madre de tal o cual personaje...caminaba, escuchaba...y ahí encontraba a la mai de esa. Y la gente me

miraba, como diciendo, esa mujer está loca...It was intense...Intense good. And I left hundreds of pages that I didn't put in the book. Yo venía de escribir *Bliss y Dominicanish*. They were very precise but this one, uuuuffffff, lo que ellas quieran.

**Latorre:** Was there something freeing about that process?

**Báez:** Oh, definitely.

**Latorre:** Your writing process is intentional..thoughtful. Was there a little bit more freedom that you allowed yourself for this particular book?

**Báez:** No, al contrario. Tenía que trabajar más since its base is a multi-genre text. I had to break it at all times. Collage; de un registro a otro -cada uno negándose a sí mismo o en diálogo; personajes en solo pinceladas, otros más definidos... Irte a epístolas o a diálogo, irte a una historia, anécdota; poner lo que escuchas en boca de una mujer ponerlo en un hombre y vice-versa. Una loquera buenísima. Es una novela en zuihitsu (género literario japonés). Zuihitsu a La Báez, obvio. Ese es el género en el que me parece he escrito toda mi vida, más de tres décadas y todavía provee gran libertad, frescura, infinitas posibilidades y ni la remota idea de definirlo/master it/embotellarlo. Es necesario que el texto se vea/sienta como que está muy inmediato y que sea automatic aunque no lo es.

**Latorre:** It feels immediate. It feels automatic. It feels like I am having a conversation with the characters.

**Báez:** You have seen them. You know them. Una mujer fue a mi casa a hacerme una entrevista y me pregunta: ¿y en que apartamento vive...? No, no en este edificio nada de eso pasa. They wish. *La Levente* es un trabajo hecho.

**Latorre:** The text gives readers the impression that it *is* "real." How do you accomplish this level of realness in your work?

**Báez:** It is real. We have seen, heard and can relate, somehow, to the multiverse that is El Ni E'.

**Latorre:** There is no pagination in *Levente no. Yolayorkdominicanyork*. As a reader, it forced me to confront my own reading patterns. I couldn't figure out how many pages I had read or how many pages I had left. It was uncomfortable for me because of the unpredictability of the reading process. At some point I even started counting the pages and adding my own numbers. I am not proud of this. As you write, are you at all thinking about length or pagination? About how your readers might process the information? When do you know that the work is done, if ever? How do you let it go?

**Báez:** It has a reason (the lack of pagination). A very important reason. There's research that resonated loud with me. It stated that people who do not have the habit of reading feel intimidated with page numbers. To create a reading habit is good to have books with no page numbers. Done deal. I want to experiment. And invite people to read. To confront the patterns. You mentioned "the unpredictability of the reading process." If cracked, could open limits and crash patterns

bestowing a very unique experience while doing a known act. Freshness would be granted. Laughter guaranteed. El texto está escrito para muchos lectores...El número en las páginas trabaja, algunas veces, como una cámara de seguridad. El lector dice yo voy a leer de aquí a aquí. Tú lees hasta ahí y no lees más pero si no tienes páginas lees más. No estás leyendo por página. Estás leyendo por el engagement level. That is freeing!

**Latorre:** It can be a liberating experience, I suppose. It was good for me. At some point I stopped counting pages and surrendered.

**Báez:** This is lovely. You complete the text and you go back to it and it is a whole different thing.

**Latorre:** I would try to go back to a passage that interested me and, in the process, find something else and get a different reading. The book feels so “unstructured.” I find it interesting that what you describe as a very rigid process for you can be so freeing for a reader. At least for me, eventually, it was.

**Báez:** To me too. As a reader me sorprende. As a writer, el no saber como resolver/integrar/crear un ritmo no explorado por mi antes (invitar a leer, to select the stories from a huge story bank) me mantuvo alerta. I'm very satisfied with the results después de coger la pela. Pusimos el libro en circulación en Nueva York (En Rio Gallery en Harlem). The timeline followed had 1) people coming to the place 2) buying the book, 3) we all sat. People thought I was going to read. Yeah right! Then I said: “let's read” and they are waiting for me. And then I say ‘read,’ let's all read. And there was this silence and it was hermoso. Exquisite. So we are reading together in silence and then after fifteen minutes I said “if you see something that you wanna read, stand up and read. Read if you want.” Everybody started standing up. I didn't read because everyone was so into it, they took the text and it was theirs. There was one man who raised his hand and he read pausado, como un niño en cuarto grado de primaria. Yo y todos con el corazón apretado. El se sintió apoyado de la compañía. Éramos todos uno. El Sr. levantó la mano tres veces y leyó tres veces. El sí se sintió at home y en comunidad. Y me dijo que ese libro lo llevó su hija a casa and this was the first time he read a book, completely. Obvio, el ego mío se volvió loco yo comencé a llorar. El camino de ese señor le ganó al ego. Hermoso. Siempre cuento esta anécdota. Siento que es lo más tierno y poderoso que he presenciado con un texto mío. My late brother Hector was in attendance. At the end of the reading, he comes and tells me “You know who shined, right? Ese hombre nuestro.”

**Latorre:** A very powerful experience.

**Báez:** A mí me marcó. Como lectora y como escritora. Esto es lo que yo solo me imaginaba posible. I experienced it. Muy hermoso, muy muy muy hermoso.

**Latorre:** To what extent do you see your work as activism, if at all?

**Báez:** I know that I am doing it from the heart and activism base is that. I'm the marginal from the margin...and activism is that. Everything you do with conscience in the margin is activism. I am devoted to the wellbeing of my community; its joy.

**Latorre:** Which actually comes through in your writing.

**Báez:** I'm glad since that is sooooo intrinsic to our dance.

**Latorre:** Tell me about *El Ni é* in *Levente no. Yolayorkdominicanyork*. What does it mean? Why is it such an important location/place in your work?

**Báez:** *El Ni é* ...Lo transplanto a una migración que se jacta de ser esto pero no lo es, se jacta de ser de donde vive, pero tampoco lo es. El "N'ie" es "neither" ni esto ni lo otro. La palabra no podría ser más específica. Ownership of our nothingness. El espacio geográfico es this neither que da esta migración. Igual, hay personas que nunca han salido de sus respectivos países y viven en un *Ni e'*. La clase social enmarca ese *ni e'*. El espacio físico también es una metáfora de ese lugar que no es ni una cosa ni es la otra. Ese espacio me ha dado a mí mucha libertad. Pues no hay pretensión de nada. Es lo que es. Las dos cosas que me han dado más libertad en mi vida han sido la exclusión y la invisibilidad. Todo el mundo se pelea por ser visible o se pelea porque lo incluyan. No, yo tengo que dar gracias a que yo no pertenezco a nada del canon de literatura ni de allá ni de acá ni en 'cullá (quizas si en el Batey Koujac o Cuyá).

**Latorre:** ¿Tú ves ese espacio que tú creas como un puente también?

**Báez:** Es un puente interminable. Un puente de muchas posibilidades, relaciones, conexiones y de gran responsabilidad personal. El Ni E' es un espacio atemporal. Rooted en el Siempre. Multiples Ni E'. O un gran Ni e'. IS. Even literature has its own Ni e'. He oido "la mujer dominicana no escribe así (refiriéndose a mis textos). Pliiiiiiiiis!

**Latorre:** You say, mujer. There are certain expectations of women writers. What can you tell me about what these expectations have meant to you?

**Báez:** The expectations are limited y son del que las tiene...we are in process...we are processing. Prowess de las Mujeres! Y ahí se incluye todo lo posible, creado por todas.

**Latorre:** What I like about what you do is that you push your readers to set their expectations aside...I cannot fit your work anywhere. It might create some discomfort...I think it is a necessary discomfort. I also have some discomfort with categorizations like Dominican literature or Dominican American.

**Báez:** That discomfort always leads us to the vital shifts. No e' fácil. Ni tampoco imposible. Categorizations y marcas y el branding...cada quien con lo que necesite en su viaje. My choice: Menos maletas. Una mochila will do-did too. A word that I like is *Dominicanyork*.

**Latorre:** Well, that term has negative connotations, but in your work it acquires different meaning. Why do you like this term?

**Báez:** I do use this word, with a sense of pride and knowledge of its origin and history. I love its poetic beauty and precision. *Dominicanyork* was coined by a basketball announcer que se llama Frank Krawinkel in the Dominican Republic (mid 70s) ... One of my brothers was a basketball player and he was one of the original "Domincanyorks." My brother and his athlete friends would live and play in United States and go to Santo Domingo to play with the local teams. The announcer

would say “Desde el aeropuerto, directamente para el Palacio de los Deportes. Llegaron los Dominicanyork...” In the late 1980’s and 90’s it became equated with ‘los que matábamos policías, los cadenuses, los ñames con dólares, pa’ remesa na’ ma’, los malos, los que no tenemos cultura...” Cada quien en el significado de que apertura o límite le otorgue.

**Latorre:** What about Dominicanish? How do you define it?

**Báez:** Ohhhhhh, Dominicanish is my own language. Language heard in many. A private Pig Latin. It is a language de amor, de chercha, de mistranslations, mispronunciations, de caminar, de bailar, de no hacer na’, de la forma de decir...

**Latorre:** How many languages do you speak?

**Báez:** Not many.

**Latorre:** How many languages are your works translated into?

**Báez:** Bengali, Hindi, Russian, Swedish, Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, and English.

**Latorre:** How involved are you in the translation process of your works? I mean, I cannot even imagine what a huge task it must be to translate your work given the complexity of its language(s).

**Báez:** I started translating into Spanish *Bliss* and I couldn’t. I started creating another text.

**Latorre:** How do you know if the translations are accurate or faithful to your writing/thoughts?

**Báez:** Los traductores han sido amigas. Y de ellas sé su sensibilidad. Tienen la libertad de interpretar eso que sienten. Y eso es lo importante a ser comunicado.

**Latorre:** You published a children’s book, *Why is my name Marysol?* What was that experience like? The illustrator shares your last name, any connection? What was the relationship like between you and the illustrator? Will you be publishing more children’s books? How was the process different in this genre?

**Báez:** The illustrator is my niece. Hija de mi hermano mayor. Ese texto yo lo escribí en 1993. Y publiqué en el 2013. The precision needed in children stories is a great exercise for me as a writer. Marysol is a three book series. Siempre tengo un cuento para niñas y niños. No siempre se publica. Es una constante en mi proceso creativo. Este cuento, mi sobrina y yo lo presentamos en Children’s Museum de Brooklyn, yo hacía la lectura, ella dibujaba y al final los niños escriben su propia historia. Obvio, yo estoy invitando los niños a que escriban. En la última página le pregunta a la mamá/papá/tutor/a por qué le pusieron el nombre que le pusieron y ahí escriben la historia juntos.

**Latorre:** More about genres, Josefina. When you begin to write a new piece, how do you decide this is going to be a poem or this is going to be whatever?

**Báez:** That is interesting because I don't decide the genre. The text will decide itself. I have to dive in it. Con *La Levente* el primer año the main character was a man. While I was reading con público, me dí cuenta que no estaba trabajando. El ritmo no entraba en el personaje. In my case, the rhythm guides the story to a genre.

**Latorre:** Entonces no prefieres un género específico. It depends...

**Báez:** No comienzo decidiendo el género. Algunas veces una idea, una imagen, un texto antiguo, o una canción popular, me lleva a escribir y a crear un material que luego se perfila en una forma de decir específica. Y ésta se acerca a algun género literario. Creo que siempre escribo en Zuihitsu.

**Latorre:** In terms of performance, we haven't talked much about performance. You don't have a space where you perform, right?

**Báez:** I train where I live. I stage the work there too. I perform where I am invited.

**Latorre:** You performed *Dominicanish* for ten years. Why only ten years?

**Báez:** Just that...

**Latorre:** I know, as if that were not long enough...

**Báez:** 10 years. Good enough. I grew with it. It grew with me. Complete!

**Latorre:** That was my next question, really. When do you know that you are done? When you are writing a piece, how do you know that you are finished? Para mí, nothing is ever done.

**Báez:** Nunca se termina. I'm not able to say...*Dominicanish* I can go back. To tell you the truth, every time that is published, I reorganize it, to create different meanings. I would do ten of those...With *Levente no.Yolayorkdominicanyork*, am working with visual artists and performers (Levente Visual) and the text is dancing to a new rhythm.

**Latorre:** When do you say I have to let it go?

**Báez:** There is a place/time that I have to let it go. I know there is a level of effectiveness in it... Organicidad. Frescura. Lo que el texto en su propuesta ha delineado y macerado. Lo dejo ir. Eso no quiere decir que no se pueda trabajar en mil maneras más.

**Latorre:** Cuando tú hablas de la propuesta del texto, that has to do more with you than with your reader, right? Your reader, from you what I understand of your reading of your reader, is that your reader will make meaning no matter what.

**Báez:** No matter what I say, el lector tiene una historia personal que yo no puedo obviar y es desde ahí que entrará al texto. Cuando yo hablo de propuesta, sí tiene que ver conmigo, con lo que el proceso ha creado. Craft crafts crafting.

**Latorre:** Once you are at that point, it is out there. Whatever happens...

**Báez:** Then, there... dialogues are extended. Dialogues are possible. I (and every artist for that matter) offer my take on a given subject and I dance it in my specific trajectory. Propongo/ofrezco en mi trabajo esa trayectoria/juego/mirada particular.

**Latorre:** Gracias por tu tiempo y por tu honestidad, Josefina.

**Báez:** Gracias por la posibilidad.

### **Selected Works by Josefina Báez**

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