

This universal silence

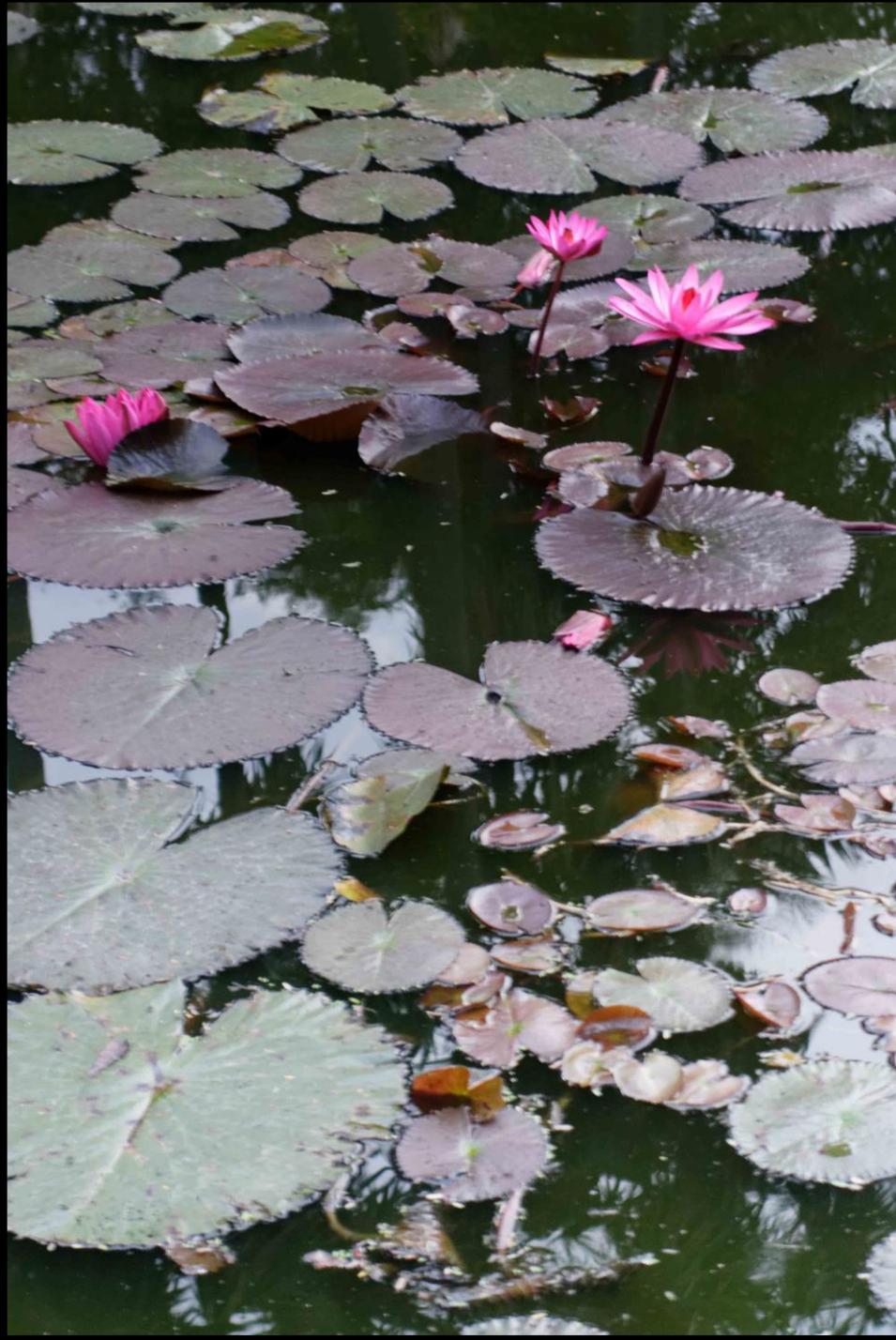
There's an unfamiliar silence in our world,
one that floats over lakes, dams and ponds.
Forests or walks - where we used to wander -
are still. Their silence broken only by hums of
tender shoots; as they pop through glossy, moistened soil.
We've never heard what that sounds like.

It's as if our own mind-thickets have started to echo.
Filled with leaf-rustles or whispers of grass sways -
that waft in on this tentative new hush.
We are now able to listen for things we'd forgotten,
like love, kindness and recognition. It glides around those
kitchen chairs, stoeps* or discarded tyres we've begun using again.

Perhaps we should give these noises names.
We gave one to this Virus, yet its inescapable passage
has stripped away our clamour, to release these
hums, swishes and whispers. It's as if these sounds
chant into a sky that is nowadays empty.
Life is becoming a passage through silence.

**verandas*

Craig O'Flaherty 2020



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