

Vague and Precise

Le Croisic—Foreground, clear and precise, a dinghy. You know, a dinghy with a sail, you couldn't call it a sailboat it was so small. It was dressed all in blue, a bright false blue and in places old yellow-pink paint spots showed through. The ruddy sail washed pink, transparent in the light, and so light, a glowing halo.

The landscape is indistinct, foggy. The dinghy separates distinctly from the fine sandy bank alongside it, long, precise, hot and gilded with light. One barely makes out in the distance the pink glimmer of sun appearing through the fog in orchid shapes.

But as clear as the dinghy, sharp and sweet to my awakened senses, is the odor of invisible seaweed.

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Neo-Greek—Foreground, clear and precise, a child. You know, a child, with a shadow on his lip, one could not call him a youth he is so small. Thin and lithe, dressed in bright false blue, translucent so his jutting hip shows through, rosy yellow. So fine, his ruddy hair with pink lights, a glowing halo.

The room is indistinct, full of smoke. The child stands out distinctly, proximate to the equivocal statuette, fine and gilded with light. One barely makes out the curious pink light from a crystal orchid.

But as clear as the child, as sweet to my awakened senses, is the childhood scent of Château-Yquem with a drop of ether.

Claude Cahun, *Views and Visions*, 1919
trans. Norma Cole

Claude Cahun Born Lucie Schwob in Nantes on October 8, 1894, she moved to Paris and from 1917 adopted the name Claude Cahun. Her books include *Aveux non avenues*, with photomontages by Cahun and her lifelong partner Suzanne Malherbe (Moore); and *Les paris sont ouverts*. During WWII Cahun was arrested by the Gestapo for her resistance activities and interned, barely escaping execution. After the war she lived quietly on the Isle of Jersey until her death. "Vague and Precise" is from a series of paired or "twinned" texts.