

Love, Longing, Language, Lust: An Erotic Daydream Post-September 11th

Laura Winton

The mood of the piece is an erotic dream, the documentation of a new love or fascination, interrupted by everyday and unwanted thoughts and memories. In the Patrick's Cabaret performance, there was an audio tape of the script being read out of sequence that was played during the live performance.

In blackout:

Touching him is all I think about.

Putting my hands on him anywhere. Leaning my head against his chest.

Lights up:

Video in the background, including found images collected from September 11th news broadcasts, etc.

I can't think when he's around and so I write him long letters after the fact telling him all the things I should have said. I want him to know I'm listening, even when all I can do is look at how beautiful his skin looks, how brown his eyes even though

all I can think about is touching him. Feel his breath on my neck. Never have words become so unimportant as I listen only for clues.

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Every other word is music ambient his voice as it fills the room and space I occupy.

I am awkward and stupid with men. This is why I gave them up willingly.

The lilac trees always take me by surprise. One day they're just there and they smell like perfume for only a day it seems.

At any given time I have one image from that day in my head like a computer wallpaper in background. For a few weeks the chubby, curly haired man in shorts running down the sidewalk along Sixth Avenue. "Holy Shit. The building's falling."

I am never dressed right for the weather.

Today I am hot and cold in the sun as the wind whips and whistles through the hoops on my ears.

Last night the chattering of my teeth my cold extremities as I struggled to hear his words pull myself out of his eyes and stop the panic that arises from the question, how soon will he stand up and walk away from me.

Sooner than I would like, the answer.

The attraction of water. So strong that even from the bridge, shaking under the weight of trucks, even several stories up the water calls. Jump in . . . the waves urge you to follow . . . your legs buckle beneath you . . . the attraction of water—so strong . . .

Walk away.

I don't want it to be my turn, but it is. I don't want to be afraid to enter the marketplace, to step on the subway . . . I don't want it to be my turn. I just want to be in love. Touching him is all I want to think about.

Laura Winton

Click the viewmaster. Another image pops into view. A new wall-paper has been selected.

The United Artists movie theater between SoHo and Union Square. A computer printed sign: "We are closed. If you need shelter come in here."

I am walking downtown. It takes forever. I have to stop every few steps to write you down.

A day like this. Sunny and warm. I stopped every few blocks to look up at the sky. It was a day like this, when I couldn't look anyone in the face.

The water falls only a few feet then backs up, but I know it's enough to disappear into. I know the shallow pull could hold me under just long enough then push me further toward the gulf, the port of another city I would not otherwise visit.

Walk on.

Click the next slide.

People walking north covered in soot and towels. Human statues in dry plaster cast. Stoic.

I am writing something beautiful about you. I don't know what form it will take yet. That seems right.

I want to show it to you. But I am afraid the ending will come too soon. And then no one will ever buy the premise.

If only I could speak the language of numbers I could write us a new alphabet.

The poet philosopher revolutionary says I need to have my heart broken again.

I tell him I'm working on it.

I laugh and wish you were standing in front of me now the way all shadows are you until in the light they are not you.

Click the next slide.

Junior. The beautiful Lebanese Dominican community college student who talked to me when I was evacuated from my apartment. He invited me in. It was warm on the sidewalk and my teeth weren't chattering and I could focus on his words.

Oedipus had to scratch his eyes out. He couldn't look anymore.

But that froze the image in front of him. You can't close your eyes now, Oedipus. And you can't wake yourself from the dream.

If I could burn you into my retinas one last time I could live in that moment, but Oedipus, you know that we don't get to choose our (final)(eternal) visions.

I write now in possibilities rather than sentences.

I wonder where those people are now? What are they doing? How often do they cry?

When will I ever be unguarded?

And now the need for something like you on my tongue, a wafer of flesh. (Who makes)/(Who is) the sacrifice?

This section done in video only

Bind me

Laura Winton

bundle me
b(l)ind me
b(eh)ind me
(com)bin(e)d
come, bind me
combined

End Video

I will make a journal of you.
I will make a journey of you.

These words are clichés:
(These words I cannot use)

The words are not spoken, but are laid out in giant “tiles” along the floor and arranged. Large Magnetic Poetry would work well too.

Desire, Joy, Love, Longing

Out loud:

These words are powerful:
(These words I should not use).

The words are not spoken, as above:

Dream, Shadow, Ghost, Waiting, Wanting. I want . . .

Out loud: Show a blank page or tile

These words are dirty.

Whisper
(I cannot say them.)

Out loud, energy level should build/increase to the scream:

These words are powerful. I cannot use them.
These words are clichés. I cannot use them.
These words are dirty. I cannot use them.
These words should be powerful but are not. I cannot use them.
These words use me I cannot be powerful.
These words use me I am dirty.
These words should be powerful but I am not.
I am not powerful. I cannot use words.
I should not use words to be powerful.
My words cannot be powerful.
I should (not) be powerful.
Words (should) not be powerful

Scream

If I cannot touch your words I will never learn how to read you.

Pause, then restart video. Voiceover and live simultaneously: Dream

In my dream, he is sting on his knees next to me, naked and passive, almost mannequin-like. I tentatively start to touch him and he does not react. I touch him more and more with more furiousness, as if I am upset at his lack of response. It becomes surreal, his flesh becomes clay, elongating in my hand. Eventually he turns to his side and lies down by me, cradling me. I ask him if it was ok to touch him. I awake before he can answer.

End Voiceover

High alert. In captivity people make threats. I think of my friends the artists. I think of Junior the Dominican Lebanese boy with dark eyes and curly dark hair and a soft androgynous voice. My tarot reader says 6-6 6:00.

Please don't hurt my beautiful city again.

Laura Winton

Poet artist sculptor says a blast that kills only 50 people isn't news anymore. Our standards have changed.

I thought I heard you speak of my self. Whisper my secrets into the pauses.

Birds can sit on telephone wires unafraid because they know they can always fly away if it breaks. If the earth opens up beneath me I have no where to go.

I ask you how you would describe me to my next lover.

Soft and voracious.

Will you hand me over. Judas? With a kiss.

People have Judas all wrong. All of salvation depended on Judas. He was a hero. Without Judas, there is no resurrection.

She wanted to be a Daddy's girl. But her mother needed her more. He gave her up. Handed her over. Joint custody under one roof.

You want to know how I can desire another.

Who do you love more? Me or daddy?

Aren't I enough?

I know the answer. I always knew the "right" answer.

You.

I close my eyes and dream of a world with no questions.

Every few years a note and a babysitter.

Kiss me on the cheek and hand me over. You know I will come back to you. It's all part of the plan.

It was never a contest.

You say if people only knew about me. My dance card would be full.

Every night.

I love you both. Come home. Don't leave me here with a stranger.

Brave in my fantasies
I want to understand you in the arms of your lover
write you erotic.

Voiceover: Dream

We are lying on the couch watching television. The excitement, the inevitability when we hear our lover's zipper and we know what will come next.

End voiceover

I want to understand you in the arms of your lover

Write you Erotic

I imagine people watching me as I stare out the window, wondering "who is she looking for?"

Twilight brings reflections and refractions. Through the window I cannot see if you are missing or not. Wandering the streets of a city in bitter cold hoping to bump into a stranger is incredibly lonely. But do we dare leave our infatuations up to chance? Reflections merge the people outside with the ones inside. How can I go on with my life knowing that you are out there that I don't know where you are? I am shouting into the void and waiting for the echo to come back.

Laura Winton