

LIKE, LIKE, LIKE. IS, IS, IS.

Wouldn't it be excellent if there weren't a perfecting ending?

Elsbeth Probyn says that "Shame is the most intimate of feelings; it makes our selves intimate to our selves"[1]. I heard somewhere that shame is toward oneself and guilt is toward others? I am happy to hear this, since I always feeling guilty. Maybe this is why I don't know myself.

It surprises me when Malin said that she makes works to feel comfortable, to be close. For a long time, I didn't like to hug people hello because someone told me that I looked like a person that doesn't like to be touched. Now, I kiss the air on the third hello. That space that changes.

Intimacy is not romantic
Intimacy is shrivelling up
Intimacy is power
Intimacy is energy passed back and forth between entities
Intimacy is lopsided
Intimacy is territory
Intimacy is spitting into the wind
Intimacy is resistance

Scrolling through the different nature sounds, I don't want to hear flowing water as it feels like its sloshing in my head. Wet, soggy, and diluted. It streams between my ears, and I feel very strongly that I am becoming batshit crazy (what used to be a special occasion feeling). I feel nauseous from the constant motion inside my head. As I scroll past the stream and into the wind through the trees and the twittering birds, I realise that I have all of this in front of me. I look up and check the rushing stream, the seemingly cued butterflies flitting past, and the birds' crescendo as the trees murmur their low harmonies. This dusk song. The breeze softens and slips across my skin.

Clean water in a clear glass drenched by sunlight is one of the most loveliest things I have ever seen. Sweaty and mesmerized, I am grateful to spend time with its clarity.

I dreamt the other night I was being bathed by a curator I only know professionally. Herhandmyskin felt like wet rubber, slippery and unreal. A suddy protective layer. When I wake, I think about swimming in the ocean. I love it when the water reflects the sky.

I don't want to be diluted; I want to be pure concentrate. I want to clean my insides, so they are shining as if water, glass and sunlight. I want to stretch my body, limber and deliberate like a grapevine tendril. Tight and intentional as if a budding leaf beginning to unfurl. It does not come with ease. Intensity, time, pressure like the slow regeneration of bone. Like, like, like. Is, is, is. Sensitive to touch. My jaw aches from grinding my teeth. There is a black hole in my back molar. I feel the rigid and slopes, both smooth and rough. As I tongue the cavity, lightening threads pain through my jaw.

I try many things to calm myself: write, suck my thumb, walk, meditate, listen to the hum of a fan, rain, birdsong, and sometimes this app that take my pulse and creates a soundscape to slow my heartbeat and to relax me. Hearing it is distracting, it actually causes me discomfort... like slow dancing with a stranger. Hyper-aware. Upon hearing the vitality of another, some people become overwhelmed and have to empty themselves. Sick. Maybe they need to join their vulnerability? The stranger is, at times, myself, ourselves exposed.

Do you think that shame is the only way that we can genuinely intimately know ourselves? The parts that we don't know were here lurking. I want intimacy to be beyond the self. I have been shaping intimacy through the conscious act of making myself, yourself, ourselves, mutual selves vulnerable through the declaration of not knowing. Through a declaration we give ourselves over to the unknown to be shown/taught/enveloped/ignored/rejected by both strangers and the ones that we hold dear. By claiming to no longer be the all-knowing, all-seeing entity, we take a step back and take our cue from beings and entities, present, absent, visible, invisible. Through our vulnerability, we become intimate and attentive. This is what I feel I am learning through Malin.

Sometimes I think art becomes a soapy film between me and the real world. And yet it can push me into contact with something/one I don't know. I must be gentle and hold it and try not to giggle and diffuse the power that we share. We hold each other but also lightly hold a moment of time, a breath, a tautness, a care. Malin's work puts us into the uncomfortable place of revealing to ourselves that we are disconnected and sometimes, or all the time, looking for a way to embrace.

MOMENT V: OUR TIME
TOGETHER IS UNCERTAIN
WITH
Malin Arnell and More
OPENING
Friday 7 September 2018

STRATEGIC FLOCKING, collective action in public space, Saturday 8 September, 2018

STRATEGIC FLOCKING, instant film photographs, 2018

SLOW DANCING WITH TWO FANS, industrial fans, action, 2014/2018

SOMETIMES, SOMETIMES, SOMETIMES, text, 2013

SOMETIMES, SOMETIMES, SOMETIMES, denim jacket, I-pod shuffle, sound installation, audio in collaboration with Johanna Rosenqvist/KOEFF, 18:19 min, Reader Jess Arndt, 2013

ABOUT MALIN ARNELL

Interdisciplinary artist, researcher, and educator Malin Arnell, PhD, is a frequent collaborator with other artists, activists, and writers. Through these collaborative practices, Malin works with key issues for participating in (social) domains by emphasising the porous intimacy between environments and actions. In doing so, Malin focuses on the experiences around/in/through/of the body (my body, their body, our body) by incorporating the affectivity between relationalities, territories, and power.

Malin's collaboration and works have been shared in for example in Stockholm (Moderna Museet, Index The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation, Färgfabriken, Studio44, Weld, CCAP, Kulturhuset); London (ICA, Institute of Contemporary Art); Berlin (September Gallery, The neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst (nGbK), Akademie der Künste); New York (Swiss Institute Contemporary Art, EFA Project Space, White Columns, The Kitchen, Danspace Project | St. Mark's Church, Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at Brooklyn Museum, CCS Bard Galleries / Hessel Museum of Art); Los Angeles (Hammer Museum, Human Resources). Malin lives and works in Stockholm and Berlin.

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