

Amanda Moström

'itsanosofadog

**It's an arse of a dog'*

4 May – 10 Jun 2023

Rose Easton

What You Won't Do for Love
Bobby Caldwell

I guess you wonder where I've been
I searched to find a love within
I came back to let you know
Got a thing for you and I can't let go

My friends wonder what is wrong with me
Well I'm in a daze from your love, you see
I came back to let you know
Got a thing for you and I can't let go

Some people go around the world for love
But they may never find what they dream of

What you won't do, to do for love
You tried everything but you don't give up
In my world only you
Make me do for love what I would not do

My friends wonder what is wrong with me
But I'm in a daze from your love, you see
I came back to let you know
Got a thing for you and I can't let go

But then I only want the best, it's true
I can't believe the things I do for you

What you won't do, do for love
You've tried everything but you won't give up
In my world, only you make me do for love what I would not do
Make me do for love what I would not do
Make me do for love what I would not do
Make me do for love what I would not do

*Extracts taken from a conversation between
Richard Francis and Amanda Moström*

RF: So what about the keyholes? Yeah, where did they come from?

AM: I've shown you those books, haven't I? The old Japanese magazines, well, I suppose it is pornography.



*Spread from World naked or beauty pictorial,
special feature, stealing a naked woman, 100 best photos*

AM: It comes back to the place of the erotic simply being a way of figuring out where your urgencies are at, and where you feel motivated to the degree of wanting to do something wholly and with passion and lust, and it being like, such a source and such an energy, I think that's my forever hunt to try to get my head around.

I think that that's what I have witnessed with my nan. Seeing someone create and make for their own sake,

the way that nan was making work, and her engagement with it, it's very similar to masturbation, it's for no one else's sake and no one's ever gonna see and no one's ever gonna capitalise on and no one's ever gonna ask for, no one's ever gonna know of.

Like, it's, it's a completely sort of sacred moment just for her. And I think for me, that is always something that I'm so, so hungry to be sniffing at and keep active with.

My obsession with it is because I'm quite a melancholic person, I have reoccurring depression and often struggle with my own urgencies day to day. So anything that could be a mine of a sort, to excavate the gold of individuals urgencies and kinks if you like. Everyday kinks, yours, my mums, the neighbours, it's intriguing to me and I'm in awe to see and witness these.

AM: I want to talk about the keyholes in the show, I started working with Alpaca fleece when I was living at the farm, and it was a material that I had an abundance of, and quite quickly I developed a relationship with the tactile handling of a raw material.

As the alpacas are my sisters I know when they'll get sheered, I have seen the seasons and weathers the fur has been in, I know the bodies and beings of the fur personally which makes handling the raw material an intimate experience.

When I first started working with the Alpaca fleece I was trying to recreate skins, but doing so on canvas, using the sheered fleece and gluing it onto canvas. Then I was spending lots of time brushing and grooming the fleece, treating it like precious and attentive barber time I would spend hours and hours and hours brushing and trimming the fleece, so that became a quite an endearing process.



Pennie, Kakan and Conchita at the farm

RF: Quite an erotic relationship. Brushing and grooming, it's very stimulating that kind of process.

AM: And a very loving act to spend so much time brushing and cutting and shaping. And with the keyholes I knew I wanted to use alpaca and I knew I wanted it to be furry but I wasn't sure if it was gonna be groomed or if it was gonna be wild. And I think my decision has been to leave them un-groomed. I see a bush. I see pubic hair, I see protection for genitalia, for orgasm. It's a real protective frame for what is to be seen in the keyhole.



Bush in bikini

RF: It's the signifier for the erotic, or the idea of the *joie de vivre*, or what is, like, your mojo, when you want to actually get up in the morning and you've got something that actually kind of just arouses you into existence.

AM: Exactly, the most precious thing, right?

RF: So the image inside the keyhole, rather than being traditionally a sexualised image of a body, female or male, because it could be either couldn't it. Is one of a...



Spread from *Sensual Flowers: The works of Nobuyoshi Araki* 17

AM: It's a bitch.

RF: Well its an arse of a dog, I couldn't lift its tail in the photograph so.



Stills from *How an experienced dog mother teaches her 8 weeks old puppies to be calm*, @sentfromheaven2751, YouTube

AM: It starts off that she's in another room, and there's a gate in the doorway and the puppies are in the room, the breeder opens the gate, and she comes into the room, and they're all falling over her, overly excited.

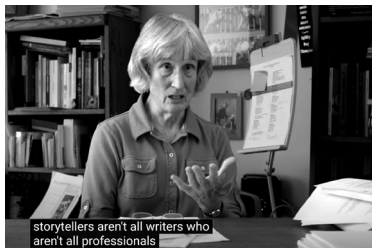
And I was thinking about that the other day, actually, I was texting with a friend, and we were talking about something really exciting, a moment later she wrote, 'shit, I'm really anxious now.' And it made me think about how close excitement and anxiety sit as a registered feeling. And it really made me think of the puppies, and how to the naked eye, you look at those puppies and go, 'they are so excited.'

But I think the likely experience that the bitch Labrador mum was getting was this high intensity, it's either real excitement or real anxiety, and you don't have so much control over what path you end up going down. And I think that's the bulk of what that whole video is communicating to me. She's entering the space, and all the puppies are really excited. And she then sets the tone and tells them all off. She keeps on disciplining them to this calm, yawning, lying down energy instead.

And yeah, it's a really short video, you know, like we watched it together but it's, like you said, you can tell from her stance, even just a little glimpse of seeing her arse. It's very clear education. You can read it very easily.

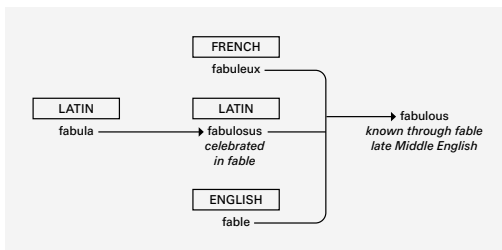
So I remember, when I first saw the video, it was my best friend who sent it to me, and at the time, I was having a moment, I was quite anxious. We had been sending each other meditation videos, breathing exercises, all this sort of stuff to aid me and to aid us in this little life.

And then she came across this video and it showed all these things were talking about trying to discipline and manage your emotions and like your being in the world kind of thing. I must have watched it hundreds of times, and I still think it's the most, inspiring, I don't know, like the most, just something very generous and important about that moment.



Still from *Donna Haraway: Story Telling for Earthly Survival*

At the time I was reading about folk music, the idea of verbal communication outside of formal language, that isn't words necessarily, or are words that don't belong to one language, that isn't based upon a formal education nor related to your social status, and it was around that time, when I saw this video it was speaking to me on that level, storytelling, educating, or sharing of knowledge to some degree.



Etymology of the word fabulous

That would have been passed on through generations and edited and changed and moved without any

kind of borders, without any real hold in language, necessarily without a singular author, like more wholly? Outside of individualism and strict form or control. An authorship that is a shared one, a shared experience, a shared existence.

RF: Do you think there are good dog mothers and bad dog mothers, or do you think, as a species that there is some instinctual, kind of protective measures that is to temper excitement, to actually not let them get carried away. It's about training, isn't it?

It's like you can have a level of excitement, but you have to also have respect, and you have to understand your position. And then because all those things go for making a good dog family society, you can't have six bosses in a pack, there's hierarchies that go down. So it's sort of behavioural training. Isn't it? Just like if you kick up a fuss, you're gonna have to fight.

AM: Yeah. Well which is what I think was my general take from it, when I saw the video, I am trying to behaviourally train myself to function better in my life, in myself, with everyone else around me. Seeing that kind of training so directly in such a short little clip.

RF: So that's what you mean, it is not coming direct from her. It's a known kind of code of conduct. That she's instilling them in order that they can survive.



Boj mei ett långt uppskall 8 Juli 89.
av fotaradlet Gjömst kammern i Umeå.
Hodde jag det varifol på den
den upptäckte deligt lmeis det var
boia som den kamma tite
fimmhåi nger

uppskall 11/6 - 6/7 - 89

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AM: And yeah, I think this is absolutely the same as with human mothers, that you have all types of mothers that wouldn't have the presence of that bitch in the video, and that will trickle down to their offspring, right? To me, feels like a real universal moment.

RF: Beyond the dog.

AM: Beyond the dog. Yeah, it's a metaphor, maybe not even a metaphor, just humans caring for anything that takes them outside of their own human body. It's easier to emphasise and practise TLC with others, same with dogs, especially dogs.



Above: still from *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai*
Below: spread from *Golden Fish*, Keiichi Matsui

RF: And the two holes that you look through, they're a bit like cock holes.

AM: Glory holes, I mean, I like all the holes.

RF: Do you mean that the holes are good?

AM: All sorts of things happen in holes, similarly to the anxious or excited state, it's an active place, a hole.



Marcel Duchamp, *Étant donnés*, 1946–1966

RF: A hole?

AM: Also whole. I remember hearing a poet talking about the English words hole and whole, you have the grammar and the two words of hole and whole, and that they mean the complete opposites. They sound exactly the same, and there's one letter that changes its meaning, obviously they were talking about it being spoken, when they read poetry how ironic, absurd and disturbing that the two words sound the same but also wildly separate.

RF: Yeah, that's the beauty of the English language, a lot of words depend on their context, how they're understood, because they sound exactly the same.

AM: But again, teasing on this anxious or excited place.

RF: You could have everything or nothing.

AM: It's funny you've mentioned cows a few times, you know how I'm planning this audio work for the show? I met a friend yesterday, to talk about an audio work we're gonna make together. And I'd sent them some recordings that I want to be part of it.

And one is of me walking at the farm, we got two big fields and enclosures when you come out from the farm, and there are cows on both sides of the road, in autumn they separate the cows and the calves, and you'll have the mothers on one side, and you have the calves on the other side.

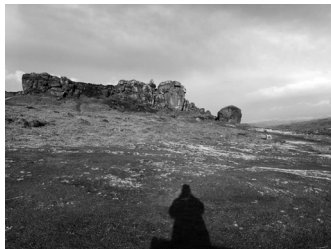
And for days, all you hear is them just calling for each other. You can tell that it's like a calling for your baby, slash, calling for your mum, kinda call. But I have this recording of me walking, and I had either Bim or Ruben, my sister's babies, strapped to me, and they must have been like six months, maybe.

And you can hear Bim or Ruben copying the sound, you can hear the cow mama *mmmmoooh*, and then you hear Bim or Ruben's lil *mmoooh* copying the

sound of it and it was so near to the time that I then left them. Had done my stint of being full on zaddy with them and care for them with my sister and then I left for London, didn't I?

So, it was such a strange series of events of having that separation between the cows and the calves, and then me and Ruben or Bim, role playing the same thing that was happening to us, weeks later, or whatever.

FR: That kind of separation and mourning of it.

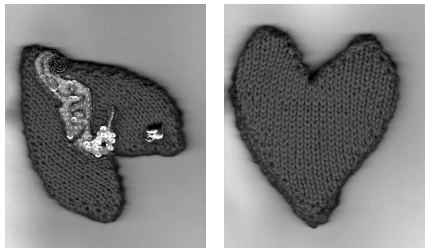


Cow and Calf, Ilkley Moor

AM: it's like the continual living and grieving. No? The little deaths that you live through all the time.

RF: There's something I read and I won't remember who wrote it, they were talking about this, when you have children, which I haven't, so I won't know if this is true, but you're never quite whole again, because there's a part of something, like you say,

that was inside of you, which is now outside of you, but thinking about that again, it actually works the other way round, because I was once part of my mom so in a way, mothers and daughters, are we ever home/whole?



Knitted love heart and sequenced seahorse by Julie

AM: It's weird how many little weird connections there are with Duchamp.

I was reading about his feminine alter ego, Rose with two R's and I was thinking of the timing of when they were making the work, it was this brutal post-war era and how they reclaim Eros, the powers of the erotic, sex life and climax are so much to do with this kind of free world building, in connection to the surrealist movement, right?

That it's like you're kind of reclaiming, like, an inner world that is not determined or limited by the physical post war environment, cultural and physical factors you're given the time that you're born. Right?

And I feel like it's so on the tongue with my thinking and the thinking of the Lorde text that I was talking about, the uses of the erotic and this reclaiming of this inner world.

RF: Which is interesting, because you know we've been talking before about the photographs that your nan took, and how you describe them as an attempt of her claiming space.



Nans drawers and shelves

Further Reading

Excerpt from Audre Lorde, *Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power* (1978)

This internal requirement toward excellence which we learn from the erotic must not be misconstrued as demanding the impossible from ourselves nor from others. Such a demand incapacitates everyone in the process. For the erotic is not a question only of what we do; it is a question of how acutely and fully we can feel in the doing. Once we know the extent to which we are capable of feeling that sense of satisfaction and completion, we can then observe which of our various life endeavors bring us closest to that fullness.

The aim of each thing which we do is to make our lives and the lives of our children richer and more possible. Within the celebration of the erotic in all our endeavors, my work becomes a conscious decision – a longed – for bed which I enter gratefully and from which I rise up empowered.

Excerpt from Lauren Fournier, *Sick Women, Sad Girls, and Selfie Theory: Autotheory as Contemporary Feminist Practice* (2018)

In autotheory as a conceptual and performative feminist practice, artists, writers, and critics use the

first person, or related practices of self-imaging, to process, perform, enact, iterate, and wrestle with the hegemonic discourses of “theory” and philosophy, extending the feminist practice of theorizing from one’s subject positioning as a way of engendering insights into questions related to aesthetics, politics, ethics, and social and cultural theory. In autotheory, one’s embodied experiences become the material through which one theorizes and, in a similar way, theory becomes the discourse through which one’s lived experience is refracted.

Excerpt from Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince* (1995)

To me, you are just a just a little boy like any other, like a hundred thousand other little boys. I have no need of you and you have no need of me. To you I am a fox like any other, like a hundred thousand other foxes. But if you tame me, you and I, we will have created a relationship, and so we will need one another.

Excerpt from Terre Thaemlitz, *Nuisance: Writings on Identity Jamming and Digital Audio Production* (2016)

Every love song is a work of anthropology. It is an analysis of the physical and mental characteristics, distribution, customs, etc. of people. And, like most

anthropological investigations, writing a love song typically begins where it hopes to end – with a conclusion, the parameters of difference, the difference between men and women, etc. As listeners we embrace those songs which affirm our own social patterns through their documentation and validation of our prejudices toward others... tracing the external roots of that bliss or torture in our hearts.

I encourage a more overtly interventionist approach toward writing songs for lovers. Cast both “universality” and “individuality” to the wayside (never fear, your subjectivity will remain intact). Go into the field. Observe and document the lovers. Observe and document yourself in that field. (Remember, even the best naturalists occasionally set “feeding stages” and other lures when documenting the sounds and images of the Wild.) Then return to the editing lab and begin sifting through your findings to construct your narrative of the heart. It is here, in the editing room, where you will likely realize there is no love song that extends beyond insulting reductionisms.

Each one is a redundant construction of pacifying hysteria, a mandatory insult to appease our senses. Indeed, a love song’s persuasive image of universality is its greatest act of mentally invasive violence.

List of works, clockwise from entrance

Prosit, 2023

Pennie's fleece,
wood, UV printed
aluminium, velvet
95 × 72 × 11 cm

Bless You, 2023

Kakan's fleece, wood, UV
printed aluminium, velvet
95 × 72 × 11 cm

Encore; Again, Once More, 2023

Grandmother's
photographs, fish tank
PVC sheet, artist frame
85 × 60 × 3 cm

Teeny (1), 2023

Silver-plated bronze
3 × 6.5 × 3 cm

Teeny (2), 2023

Silver-plated bronze
5.5 × 3.5 × 3.5 cm

Teeny (3), 2023

Silver-plated bronze
3.5 × 3 × 4 cm

Teeny (4), 2023

Silver-plated bronze
4 × 7 × 4 cm

Encore, 13-89 7., 2023

Grandmother's
photograph, fish tank
PVC sheet, artist frame
30 × 30 × 3 cm

Encore, 4-9-91 4., 2023

Grandmother's
photograph, fish tank
PVC sheet, artist frame
30 × 30 × 3 cm

Encore, 01-09-02, 2023

Grandmother's
photograph, fish tank
PVC sheet, artist frame
30 × 30 × 3 cm

No Joy Without Mourning (Warm but not Flushed), 2023

Audio made with
Joseph June Bond,
perforated rose grill,
40 minutes



Portrait of the artist and her grandmother Greta Bodelsson

Amanda Moström (b.1991, Umeå, Sweden) lives and works in London. She received her BA from City and Guilds, London in 2016. Selected solo exhibitions include: *Participating in a chair*, Castor Projects, London (2019) and *Matriarch beach*, Galerie Chloe Salgado, Paris (2019). Group exhibitions include: *SEX*, Rose Easton, London (2022); *Under the volcano*, Studio Block m74, Mexico City (2020); *Room 237*, Bubenberg and Contemporaines, Paris (2019); *Hopp och Lek Pt.2*, a collaborative project with Lucas Dupuy at Block House, Tokyo (2019); *Architecture of Change*, Void Gallery, Derry, Northern Ireland (2018) and *Bloomberg New Contemporaries*, Block 336, London (2017). In 2022, Moström had a solo booth presentation, *Don Joy*, with Rose Easton at NADA Miami. *itsanosofadog *It's an arse of a dog* is her first solo exhibition with the gallery.

Private View, Wednesday 3 May, 6 – 8pm

Open, Wednesday – Saturday, 12 – 6pm

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