

Art and love, as love, for love.

Love. It lifts us up where we belong. It transports us out of the pitfalls of every day life, creates interest, joy and wonder, urges us to seek out deeper connections, and makes us feel like we are not alone in this world...even for just one second. Those of us who have experienced romantic love know that it is not all roses; with love comes loss, broken hearts, disappointment, and at times a sadness that feels like it will completely engulf our being for the rest of our days. It can be all consuming and at its peak nothing else exists. Art, for me, is a love like no other.

Since the commencement of my making process (not really ALL that long ago), the dynamics of relationships and their potential have become (and continue to become) clearer; polyamorous relationships suddenly make sense. Actually, relationships in general have become something I might desire to engage in and could perhaps even excel at, a far cry from previous beliefs. These relationships are varied and range quite broadly in their substance, capacity and scope.

Some of the most exhilarating relationships have stemmed quite directly from love at first sight. Donⁱ, Dickⁱⁱ and Danⁱⁱⁱ swept me off my feet as none have done before or since and as a result they have and will continue to receive a commitment that I had previously not believed I was capable of; like it or not, they have me for life. Martin^{iv} and Stefan^v sit somewhere in the realm of long term boyfriend status. For the most part I admire all that they do, they fill me with joy and surprise, and at times leave feelings of disappointment and even betrayal, but don't anyone speak poorly of them, I will defend them until the very end. Then there are the names and faces that come and go, some that are on-again-off-again and some that I am still in the process of courting. These guys have the potential to engage my interest in the long-term, but are still sitting in the zone where just one wrong move..., but let's think positive.

While these relationships are thrilling and at times incredibly fulfilling, it is those that are developed through pure admiration and awe that provide long-lasting feelings of contentment, one of the unadulterated joys of romantic involvements. They also have a tendency to cause sporadic moments of 'single white female' behaviour, completely rock my world and almost prompt me to give up making art and take up chess – for who could ever compete with their 'masterly' combination of insight and delivery? These chicks are SO on the

money. Eva^{vi} and Lynda^{vii} are at the very top of that list; no matter where or how deep I look, there just doesn't seem to be a foot put wrong, I cannot fault them. Mona^{viii}, Karla^{ix}, Mikala^x and I are still getting to know each other but are bonding more and more each day. It's an exciting time.

Materials, objects and various 'things' or 'stuff' also capture my imagination in ways that can be difficult to explain to those who don't share my enthusiasm. A trip to (insert any amazing store that sells light industrial materials/equipment or stationary) is like a date with someone I am keen on, only better. Whilst browsing the rows and shelves searching for that 'special something', magic happens. There are only blue skies above; there is no doubt, only promise and intermittent tastes of euphoria.

For me, art making, like love, is a battlefield – complete with all of the highs, the lows, and everything in between. It is exhilarating, like being in the most amazing relationship imaginable. There is potential, chemistry, flirtation, seduction, sex appeal, fascination, unity, freedom to be one's self, an unconditional understanding of commitment, and 'moments' (ranging from a simple 'a-ha', to a 'you complete me'), as well as doubt, fear, confusion, uneasiness, anxiety, suffocation, wariness, sadness, loneliness – and every other feeling that one associates with the love of one's life. Looking at art, thinking about art, and attempting to produce something that will or will not be classified as art is a rollercoaster of every emotion imaginable. It is THE relationship of a lifetime. That's the way love goes.

-- Courtney Coombs

ⁱ Judd

ⁱⁱ Serra

ⁱⁱⁱ Flavin

^{iv} Creed

^v Brüggenmann

^{vi} Hesse

^{vii} Benglis

^{viii} Hatoum

^{ix} Black

^x Dwyer