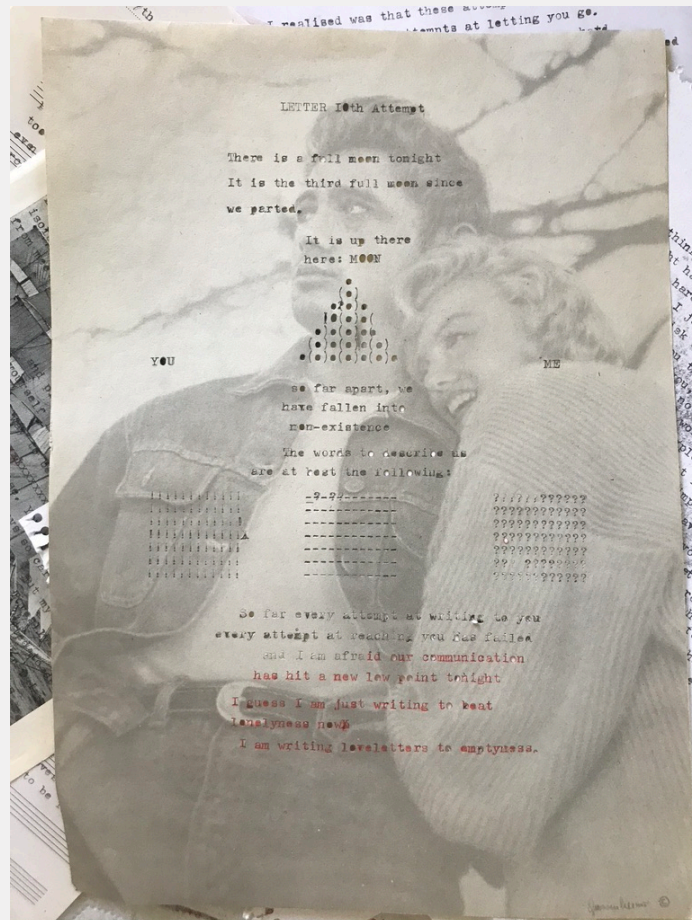


SEVERAL ATTEMPTS AT ASKING THREE QUESTIONS AND SOME SINCERE ATTEMPTS AT ANSWERING THEM.



Letter 10th attempt from Charlotte Ostritsch's work Attempts at Postal Communication first exhibited as an internetbased piece in the Online Group Exhibition Cabin Fever 29 of May – 11 of June 2020

JP: Jonatan Pihlgren (Q)

&

CO: Charlotte Ostritsch (A)

JP: These attempts are letters that were written but not sent right? And that is why they are called attempts? To clarify: this is not my actual question. I just thought, maybe you want to tell a little bit about the piece? If that is allowed??

CO: Yes, these are letters written but not sent, several attempts at writing the one letter. Ask me three questions!

JP: Haha OK!

Question 1: From where have you drawn the form, the symbols and the disposition of the paper? I understand the two on the sides, the square with the !:s, and the ?:s, but what about the pyramid and the dots in the middle? I am thinking of a kind of nutrition pyramid or a symbol for hierarchy. I wonder what your thoughts are. Has the pyramid something to do with the moon? And who are the people we see in the image.

These are many questions, but only the ones marked `question´ are the actual three questions.

CO: The pyramid is a direction but also spaces. Every side of the pyramid is space divided by a corner. Part of the same but separated. I guess the people in the picture are `you´ and `me´ or `yin´ and `yang´, two energies to make one whole. Ever heard about dual theory? I wrote this poem:

Dual theory
The division of soul
The part we lost holds phantom pains

JP: Question 2: When you write” I am writing love letters to emptiness “, I have the sense that you know that this letter won’t be sent, or that you under no circumstances will get an answer? I find it interesting to whom you are writing if you have no intention of sending it. It is like you are talking to yourself. But still you are displaying it (as an artwork). What happens if you talk to someone who is not themselves participating in the conversation? Is the relationship still going on independently in that case? Is it possible to be close to someone who does not know about it? And then the relationship becomes art and is shown in the exhibition and is out in the world. I get a feeling that there is no actual person behind this though, that the attempts are aimed at. It is more like an energy that you are directing outwardly. Maybe this has nothing to do with another person but just about the act to direct ones´ energy, and in that case does that tell something about love? Or about loneliness? What are your thoughts?

CO: That line: “I am writing love letters to emptiness”. The statement is true and false at the same time, emptiness to me is a filled space with everything superfluous; it is not that nothing exists there, but rather that shallow empty things do exist, and I try to make meaning of it, meaning of meaninglessness. If you study Jacques Lacan you will encounter the thought that a letter always arrives at its destination, that the destination is always the receiver and not the addressee per se. So, no matter if the letter arrives at the address on the envelope, it will arrive. This is because it was sent, and it is the sending of the written that is the destiny of the letter, which means that the sender is actually the same as the receiver. But of course, these attempts at writing a letter were never sent until I posted them on the internet (which is a different mode of sending out drift bottles) and so they arrived at their destination, and me the sender is faced with the consequences of my writings.

To me, writing to a fictional person or an abstract `you´, is no different than writing to an actual person in the sense that we all relate to our own expectations and impressions of the other person. We live in narratives, we hear stories of others, when we get to know each other we tell our stories, we select them, the stories that seem most relevant in that particular relationship, to be able to create shared narratives and stories, tying us closer together, we choose where a story begins and ends, in very specific and predictable structures.

To direct ones´ energy... that is very interesting! I have not thought about it like that. Maybe I am researching the parallelism in the relationship between love and communication as direction? Letters are always directed, that text genre always presumes a sort of relationship between two counterparts place; time; here; there; now; later (or before); sender; receiver etc. A letter is the relationship, it exists as genre between. It is transitional, whereas writing the same things in a diary is merely to admit thoughts to

oneself in secrecy, but also putting those private thoughts in a field of tension where there is a potential of having them exposed by someone, letting the hidden interior manifest independently in the outside world. There is something deeply irrational in keeping a diary.
And the third question?

JP: I am on it!

It is interesting to think that there is so much emptiness in it. It is like that is what it is all about; emptiness and a nothing. To write with no one about nothing. When you write that the relationship is ---, I feel that the third question is similar to the second.

Question 3: What is the relationship between love and emptiness? I feel like you are taking care of the emptiness even entertaining yourself with it. Or are you just expressing restlessness, maybe a feeling of meaninglessness? Though it doesn't seem meaningless because you are making something of it. Does this mean that love is an illusion? Or is this the love for emptiness? Or maybe just an attempt at loving a feeling of emptiness? There is this idiom: "Blind with love", but I don't think that is how you are writing it, you seem more conscious. I am thinking of a prison or a deserted island. And drift bottles; throwing out a letter kind of. Like a search for an existential meaning. I don't think it is too hopeful, but still optimistic because it does not matter anyway! I wonder if you have an explanation and what your thoughts are.

Excuse me if I have a hard time forming questions. That was Question 3. I am noticing that I am reading in a whole lot of a sort now. And I wonder if I am way off here, and in that case, I would like to know what you yourself think, kind of.

CO: Is love an illusion, you ask? I guess this piece is about the relationship between language as a threshold between reality and illusion. Depending on how we phrase it love can be more or less of an illusion. If I use common language clichés about the concept love, while trying to put my felt emotions of a love for something, in a lyrical frame, it is like baking a cake with a fixed recipe. The ingredients I put in the batter is how the cake will it will turn out. There are of course some other important factors as well like the oven I use or the temperature and humidity in the air on that specific day etc. but lets' not get lost in trying to analyse context. In my experience love is not to be found in the words but in the pause between them, the way that silence feels when the lovers are together. To rest in silence without the need to explain or phrase things. That is the real deal.