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We dream of an age that is equal to our passions

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A TOUCH OF THE POET

Eugene O'Neill

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We dream of an age that is equal to our passions

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University.

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Abstract:

We dream of an age that is equal to our passions is a series of soliloquies and ideas that look at the false narratives I tell myself in order to get out bed in the morning, at the depression that came after failed revolutions, at the unrealistic hopes of my politics, and of my desire to become a whole human being.
Table of Contents:

We Dream of an age that is equal to our passions ...................... 4
Bibliography .............................................................................. 21
To whom it may concern,

I used to say that I used the structure of painting and the imagery of basic architectural elements to create site-specific objects, or interventions, within the institutional space. At the time I was trying to use my work to point to what I saw as a problem, that is to expose the dream like state that I thought we lived in. But that was a few years ago, and what was outrageous no longer outrages, and my objections aren’t what they used to be.

In a world that has really been turned upside down, the true is a moment of the false

In fact what I meant was a theatre in which action (and poetry) would be expressly and deliberately
brought close to everyday live. When I tried to explain the meaning of the word 'epic', I used the example of the traffic accident, with witnesses discussing what happened and giving biased accounts of it, each implying a judgment (taking a stand, taking sides) and an attempt to make the listener share that judgment.

Much of my work and its titles are taken from previous eras of civil unrest. What I produce can be seen in relation to this.

Those of us raised in city and suburb (and many in the countryside as well) feel that we have lost contact with the world of earth, sky, and sea. We do not seem to be able to regain consciousness or even healing except by imitation or summoning up primal images that recall our lost connections.

Dear Lumberjack,

Weeks like these were made for us to find a new chapter in my life's story. He's smart enough to know when he's wanted. Life is short so are we. This house is still under repair. I woke up this morning. I'm on the bye. His loving touch is what and we will share another new years desert. I'm beginning to like it here. You know who you are. Perhaps those extra. You roll own tobacco, be still my heart. You've sent me a few marks, but I'm not a paying member.
all of this could change
I would like to get to
this is beautiful
is someone I can resist
you have know idea
there's something else
He told ya'll and told on ya'll
and there's a place for us
three weeks and its good bye
be flattered even if
Don't fret, you will see the world
I promise,

I love you

I recently asked him "What are you working on exactly? I have no idea"
"Reification," he answered.
"It's an important job," I added.
"Yes, it is," he said.
"I see," I observed with admiration. Then said. "Serious work, at a huge desk cluttered with thick books and papers."
"No," he said. "I walk. Mainly I walk"

By giving myself another name (or more accurately an alteration of my name) I am able to open a space of de-subjectification, one where I am able to express a plurality of views (many of which are not my own) in the form of an invisible community. This is not an attempt at
hiding my real identity, but an attempt to find an identity outside of myself, and my constraints.

right well this girls do sometimes told I'm VERY and lets convearsate a picture of your last vacation I'm not look-in for someone to

They take up the aesthetics that often look all too familiar from the onset.

We've heard enough about the city and the country and particularly about the supposed ancient opposition of the two. From up close or from afar, what surrounds us looks nothing like that: it is one single urban cloth, without form or order, a bleak zone, endless and undefined, a global continuum of museum like hypercenters and natural parks of enormous suburban housing developments and massive agricultural projects, industrial zones and subdivisions, country inns and trendy bars: the metropolis.

This was the place it no longer is the place but it was once the place

This is one opinion among many on the state of my life A possible manifesto for something that is yet to come

It's been a few weeks and I can't eat, sleep or live without thinking all of the time. I know I messed up big time. I don’t have the answers

I kill you with my thoughts daily And I struggle to care about you as a person for that I am sorry.

I drive a jeep I was there around five thirty
I pretended to be busy
I was on a business call
I just moved here
I drive a dodge avenger
I got an invite to the neighborhood party
I was wearing a black jacket
I’m sometimes very insecure

It’s the last week
I have no patience for these
The keenness to recognize it
it’s a shame you turned off
There are a hundred places where I fear
discreet and would love
the abyss which separates
Guess you where not who I wanted you to be
your games out of fear
making it on the other side

or something else
Of four things I am reasonably certain
I’m too attached for such endeavors
We shared pics
montage became our life
and We struggled way too hard to get here
I just love texture
I love the trees in my yard
Leave as fast you came
And promise me that

No one saw me, and no one listened, and I’m not sure I wanted
them to. I came out here because I had no idea what to do or how
to deal with it all.
Maybe I’ll bring a table, and we can have coffee and talk about the weather. I have been thinking about this possible option for nearly two years now.

To whom it may concern,

I am a member of a community with which I have no relationship with, nor romantic

affiliation. It is strictly platonic, and we are strictly a community. I have never had feelings

for anyone in this community. So this community

will never happen between us.

you wear you well
right well this girls do
sometimes told I’m VERY

and lets conversate
A PICTURE of your last vacation
she pointed to the horizon
Hello, precious
I’m not look-in for someone to
I have letters on my wrist
and am a home body
be very well grounded
but from I can see
Something with asset
maybe bod & face
So Casual is defined as
and see what happened
maybe do something that
who can relate to be lonely
and as what you owed me
What I would give for a Take 2
waiting on the curb for someone
or was it just my gold tooth catching the sunlight?
Just walk up to me and say
and be rider ready
I believe scandals
had frozen up
some ask if I am psychic
don’t flame
it was my kind of beautiful
a smile like sunrise
I’ll never get back to you
Other than that we are cool
but why
Because we must
On the regular
and that is what we need

My view is that we ought to
I hope you find what your looking for
I’m not sure if you’ll see this
but hit me up with "radical"
it’s going to take a different path
somewhere in the haze southbound
It’s a choice
That is the day I live for
black begins
for a fire sign
Can you help us?

I don’t think you do though
What do we change into?
I don’t know
Will you do this?
It’s about us
Love is for a quiet place
and other means, but I made the final
There are a lot of points
I want more too
in case you are unsure of what that is
Here's what I'm offering...
those baby blues make it easy
the only people I know around here are my customers
but you’ll never meet him
go through it piece by piece
this is the metropolis
I mainly walk
In a world that is upside down
And what I meant by theatre
Is that I’ll do whatever it takes
In the not so distant past I believed that I used abstraction to explore the interstice of the physical and mental space of the studio, in order to reveal discrepancies between perception and reality. It was those discrepancies, and that ambiguous space that interested me the most, and served as the entry point for my studio practice at the time. Found forms, fragments of experiences, and the detritus of production became the building blocks for works that existed simultaneously in the realms of painting and sculpture, and investigated that space through their double existence. I mined the language of abstraction and pulled from all aspects of my interactions, to create palimpsestic images and objects that elicited characteristics of the interval, and began to exist in that negative space.

It’s her birthday
And you say to a brick
He owns nothing that he possesses
You were standing on the corner
A place made for connections
We regularly share views
So I know it’s you
I’m looking for a sign
A meaningful interaction
It’s never too late
It’s hard to tell the truth
In a theatre that is deadly
Citation, especially citation
Riding by daily
Destroys the very essence
Should be the expression of personal emotion
He’s only waiting on time
You were the cuter of the two brothers
We live in a world of relationships
At the core of a revolution
Can and is already
people are starting to awaken
there on the grass
but it was a beautiful morning
we smiled at each other
waiting at the stop light
unoriginal lines
drifting through the streets
against the transparency
to name the
sun in our eyes
You aimlessly wonder to try and free yourself
Unbelievable, unbelievable, unbelievable
This place is never going to be the same
Make it fucked up
On the same plane
I tried
When I think of you, I don’t
AA BBC SWM MWM SBW
Make it old
DWM LTR CPL BBW
Is it just me?
Older Models welcome
Now hosting
NSA CWB
How you spend your days
Let’s get fucked up
Single and looking
Lonely and tired
Made in America
AAAAA I NEED TO KNOW WHO YOU ARE
but what the heck, maybe you’re curious?
I love the trees in my yard
if your down with that. :)
word to the wise love
playing passive and ignoring passing by glances
into my eyes
at a party
nine years this July
He puts a timid arm around her awkwardly
great condition
no one will see this
stages an imaginary voyage through
it deals with human experience
in loving Beatrice,
The keenness to recognize it was suffused with the spirit.
They then descend.
He sees is always
You may play well or you may play badly;
Some have them curly
Such as omitting the entrance.
The leading man is wormy.
You were there with your family.
The distance from center
It will first be a mystery.
Life in the suburbs
Peers around the half-open door.
He pours out a drink
Never work.
You are a beach in his eyes.
You are a traffic accident.
I’ll never stop loving you.
She stammers.
Maybe you were just imaginary.
quickly quietly wholeheartedly sheepishly quietly
with sympathy she shivers.

as they walk off into the dark turns around
with an elaborate simulation of being disturbed in
the midst of profound meditation coming toward her
but not too far—carelessly. Hesitating timidly on
the edge of the shadow coming toward her—
scornfully indignantly. On the verge of humiliated
tears. She half turns back towards the path.
An upset stomach.
Heart of the dark.
Abolish class.
And improper guise.
Is greater than real.
I’ve never died trying.

Imagine there is a box in front of you that says U (the letter U) r (the letter R)
Apathetic and lazy spelled L A Z.
This box insults you not the letter u, as you not the letter u you are its reader and thus its target.

U (the letter U) should not be offended for it knows no better.
It only wants you n the letter u to sympathize with it.
It is there to use your emotions to make it love you.
It is like an accident, with various parties trying to convince you, enforcing judgments and opinions.
How about dessert.
But soon.
The people Are coming together but you need more.
Hello, again. We have been hearing a lot in the last two days, umm, about the impact of
the umm, May of 68’ convention on the 96’ convention and much of what has been said in
this case much of what has been said about those days is being said by people that...
weren't there. You ahh, remember my T-shirt yesterday, umm I have another T-shirt, unfortunately I didn't bring it in today but, ahh, but that T-shirt sums up what I just said.

But in our lifetime, I've only had the chance to see the effects of the religion, this purism and extreme moralism that doesn't help to change anything at all. We needed to make fun of such a paradoxical position.

But today, maybe it's like shooting the ambulance.

My own literary interest is more about excavating the past, or sensing the past inside the present. This requires all kinds of exclusions and sleights of hand. There's an admittedly antiquarian flavor to it, even though there's enough of the present included to lull the reader.

She leans from one side to the other
Showing one breast then the other
And surprise without evil
According to this breast that one identity
And this produces from
One foot to the other,
They themselves
On the feet
Breasts
A kind of dance
Frightening sketch
And when immobile without moving

A nothing place.

Within a historical perspective but for us only right away
It exists so we won't think ourselves to be lonely
Together in our mind's eye, we picture that first night
A special silence in which there is much fascination
A FORCE, with no barriers to the outside world, a space where ideals and influences can freely pass
Born to five them
A Mobius strip, A body molded by others, a person without History
We can in full consciousness put back on our everyday mask
As long as my friends aren’t dying I won’t speak of death.
You don’t know me, and you sure as fuck aren’t my mother
The noise called me like a siren’s signal, woke me from a slumber
No light from heaven could save me, no infomercial could tell me what I already know.
This is my existence, I can’t go on, until I find another,
As it goes, The life mask has a tight grip
The other elements are distractions:
I’ve learned how to talk without ever talking.
The names need not be said.
Its too much excess
We are all the same,
I will fill in the blank.
Fuck, IF I KNOW, Nothing is new, anymore!!
Its no longer us/me versus them.
We are now one flesh And we cannot exist outside of it, it will find us in our sleep.
I can no longer embody the idea, imbibing in its solutions, I cannot inhabit its invisible worlds.
I have conned them all, with these paradoxes, please poke holes in the weakest points, for they do not matter.
There is too much fodder, and too many problems to solve,
The poor will always be with us, and war will always comfort us.
Its good to be good, better to be better, but damn if I’ll ever be perfect.
Its always chasing the wind, nothing stays, as it is for long enough.
getting riled up like they did something against my lack of religion.
My will to change is simply not strong enough.
Nor is that weakness innate.
What is outrageous no longer outrages, and my objections aren’t what they used to be.
Today only causes a short rage, not the lengthy one I want,
Length and depth are needed, prolonged pain and trauma, only necessitate it.
Everything that happens is related to my capitulation.
The pearl of great price.
The leavening of a life.
we only have to change the name of the jackals.
They are men who are only active in destruction,
Converted to causes of high moral claims, can their Nihilism still be discarded?
Some say, I’m bound to get tired.
But, I’m not sure if I can live another year dishonestly.
Let it be like a plague.
Gratuitous, and without profit,
Movements, and emotions without necessity.
Do they give you what you want?
Surviving like an old monument
A quaint custom.
As for us, we have doubts that we will ever do better, for example as soon as possible, I think we should ask about the relation between what could be done and what was actually done.

Conditions of possibility, repetition and stoppages

Being stronger than the fact in front of you
The elite are also inept
They started talking and acting as equals
The impact is still felt today, the legacy of the thing
They dare call it their greatest accomplishment.
Now only recalled in hindsight, and never for its shortcomings
Maybe dead permanently formed molded into the terrible rigidity of a corpse
Today, faced with the imperatives imposed upon us
We imprecisely use our freedom, We’ve drained our supply of delusions and we’ve hit rock bottom
The environment is nothing more than the relationship to the world that is proper to the metropolis and projects itself onto everything that would escape it.
our new solutions resemble our old problems.
We are members of an organization that doesn’t even exist
Resistance is still possible

My practice is based around a series of soliloquies I wrote called *In Solidarity*.

These works use lifted text that is publicly produced, and ideologically oriented to create poems, videos and performances, that investigate neutrality, and excavate the past inside of the present. The language I use is sourced from texts pertaining to freedom and resistance and tends to be political tone or content.

This language is used to construct written works that introduce criticality in my discourse, and take up the unrest of previous eras as a way to find meaning in the present. The videos and performances use this language and signifiers of meaningless labor as entry points into the realm of ideology, and into a larger critical conversation about the use of language. Through tools like green screening and restaging, the videos and performances highlight their constructed nature, and the falseness of their existence, to bring into question the presentation and manipulation of information in our everyday experience.
The rejection of authority that was so palpable on the streets then is a spirit that lurks behind the work.

Everything starts from subjectivity, but nothing stays there
the present conditions of our lives will one day be nothing more than a memory.
Longevity has its place, but I'm not concerned about that anymore.
They're for not for us, and they do not represent us, if your not prepared for
that than this is not for you.
They go to do their country good, but they have no country
It is a lifetime job, and there is no reward
Providing answers that do not answer, and conclusions that do not conclude
I shall not relinquish my share of the violence
All we have in common is the illusion of being together
Becoming as insensitive as a brick
Unfortunately, I am from a younger generation and I'm not as patient, nor as compassionate as He.
In you too the emptiness continues to grow.
And most do not die because they are already dead. It is now or never
I do not fool myself that I am not implicated in these networks of oppressive practices
I'm not here to make a difference, I just came to do some work
So far, the ‘last fight’ has only had false starts
Until now Tyranny has only changed hands
What room is left for experience?
Ungrateful and uncouth, the younger generation cares nothing for a glorious past
There remains nothing in culture or in nature, which has not been transformed
Unanswerable lies; an eternal present
A world without memory
Images merge, like reflections on water
Ineptitude compels universal respect and all argument becomes useless.
Once there were scandals but not anymore.
There is nothing new under the sun.

Art should perform an interruption of the usual perception. The problem is determining how an aesthetic interruption can transform our lives, how this gap can or cannot provide us with weapons to fight our problems. Our work is a refusal to perpetuate a behavior that seems to be natural but actually creates a toxic dynamic. Of course it has to do with attacking authority but sometimes authority is also rooted in ourselves. So our work is a way to change ourselves, and through that to change all of the relationships people have with themselves. Relationships have the
ability to transform the world, since they always involve power.

It consists in thinking that everything you do every day can secretly help to prepare the event you expect. It is actually an active expectation, much better than a depressive one. If you wish, you can compare the work to this attitude, even though I wouldn't summarize it in this way. We have different types of work that engage with different questions and problems.

Everywhere equal particles shimmer in the equitably distributed light of power. So much for equality and justice. An exchange of nullities, of restrictions and prohibitions.

Nothing happens; dead time passes. It cannot be rediscovered, only reinvented as a worthy adversary.

A torrent of goods that no one is likely to mistake for manna from heaven.

The opaque zone that separates humanity from itself: I don't know what a man is only that every man has his price.

All gradually shed their content and become pure quantity.

At any instant boredom can breed an unanswerable rejection of uniformity.

Moment by moment, time deepens its pit; everything is lost, nothing is created.

The reconstructing of life and the rebuilding of the world: the self same quest.

Normal functioning serves to hide out truly catastrophic dispossession.

What surrounds us is no longer a landscape, a panorama, or a theatre, but something to inhabit.

**We dream of an age that is equal to our passions.**

God, or the good, or the place, that does not take place, but it is the taking place of the entity of its innermost exteriority.

The pure transcendent is the taking place of every thing.

Common and proper are the only two slopes dropping down from the watershed of whatever.

I am beginning to doubt that I shall ever properly grasp myself.

I live out of step with what I am, in harmony with dead time.

And oppression rules because humans are divided not only among themselves, but also within themselves.

Yet the resemblance stops there: at the level of appearances.

One day, freedom showed its two faces:

We’re building a civilized space here.

The life we invest in these figures is same life that is taken from us.

The feeling that we’ve been tricked is like a wound that’s becoming increasingly infected.

We are a civilization that has survived all the prophecies of its collapse with only a singular stratagem.
We are indeed the red lantern

Sixty-eight is an idea, a deformed fantasy about inconsequent freedom, about rebellion without retaliations: a very unrealistic constellation of projections.

All the problems coming from an unachieved revolution and all the identities forged by hopes that just disappeared are never mentioned. It’s interesting to see how people dealt with the eclipse of that infantile idea of liberation after ’68. If you prefer, feminism, refusal of work, refusal of the identity imposed by the state and the family are all themes that inform the work and come from the Italy of ’77 and the Italy of that decade in general. We consider what happened in the ’70s more important, more radical, more precise. But of course these events wouldn’t have been possible without ’68.

Habit has mutilated us that we mistake self-mutilation for obedience to a law of nature

Perhaps the suppression of memory of self-loss is what clamps us most tightly into a pillory of submission
Survival is the raw material of its economic interest
To be radical is to grasp the root of the matter. But for us, the root is ourselves
It assembles us in order to isolate us, making a crowd into a multiplicity of solitudes
We don’t have to know one another to think the same things
This is why we’re envied for what we have, but never for who we are
Facts can be conjured away, but decision is political
There can be no question of revealing a mystery
Fetishizing action because others are doing our thinking for us
Sacrifice has an endless succession of tricks up its sleeve

Inside, outside . . . these are things I don’t understand. Who says that? There is no such thing as a defined outside of capitalism anymore, and the inside is so full of holes that billions leak out of banks just because of some unauthorized trading by an anonymous broker. Maybe in our latitudes the idea of the outside was a childish illusion to begin with, fed by the two blocs that used to face each other during the Cold War. But there is a real impossibility of working outside a capitalist system. The idea of working against capitalism was born from the utopia that a different type of economy could exist, run by different laws, where the power wouldn’t produce oppression and repression. History has shown that socialist countries cannot make it without a world revolution. However, when those countries are convinced of this, they have already become dictatorships and/or ultracapitalistic countries.

Our present situation is highly complex; many pockets of the third world exist inside “rich” countries, and these same rich countries happily practice the new form of colonialism that some people like to call globalization. Social classes have multiplied but everyone inside them is a lot more isolated and structurally competitive.
I produce poems, videos, and objects that look at the remnants of a revolutionary past, and the contemporary malaise that is its aftermath. I employ low budget effects like green screen to look at the constructed nature of my ideologies. I use found text and objects to assemble narratives that mimic the falsity of their surrounds. I use meaningless labor, and my body to ponder my own shortcomings. I write poems in order to consider that we may be the cause of our problems. I make objects that superimpose these ideas, and often reference my past, as a means of implicating myself in the various networks of oppressive practices. I make images that search for freedom, for a wholeness, and resistance from themselves, and their surroundings. I produce in order to create the conversations I want to have, and those I did not know that I wanted to have. In all that I do I come to the viewer with no answers, or preconceived notions, I simply offer the opportunity to come along in a line of questioning, and to see where it goes. I feel the need to use my work to say that confusion can be poetic, a learning state, or a space where multiple truths can be valid. Much of what I do is often contradictory, and inconvenient, and I like it that way.
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