

*A naked woman working at a computer. Which attracts you most?*

Let me tell you about love:

Strolling through the centre of London in 2050 I noticed that few changes appeared to have been wrought by the millennium. Nothing happened. Nada. Rien du tout. So in a sense this story is set very much in the sexual present. If “89plus” mainly investigates our acclimation to the internet and advanced digital technology, then an individual’s adoption of it—and the rate and fluency with which one uses technology—should also be a deciding factor until we eclipse a generation that cannot objectively think past the time hand-held, smartphone technologies were introduced to society—say those born in 2007, the year of the iPhone’s introduction to the consumer market. Can you commit adultery on the Internet? And how do we attract devices? Let me finish, she says, staying at her computer for another ten minutes which seem, to my mind and my tumescence, like ten eternities in the termite pit, lost to dream all the dreams I fear, the dream of her, this image of my lover ensnared forever behind the computer. It would be too easy to say this is a story about sex, or about machines. But it is true that the subject is Angel; a woman who builds computers like they have never been built before outside the human skull. The Girl who has plugged in. Angel, like everyone else, comes from somewhere and goes somewhere else. She lives in that linear and binary universe. However, like everyone else, she lives concurrently in another universe less simple. And when I open my eyes, I see my dream but Angel is not in this dream - Angel is here, in her room. A woman complete with her work. Pay as you go.

I’ve always found the late 20th century problematic enough to live in as far as sex and gender issues were concerned, but the beginning of the 21st century looked even grimmer - How, in 2050, could anyone say: „She’s got a lovely bunch of coconuts,“ and expect to refer to anything but the fruit of the palm? This exact mess is kept afloat by the sheer dynamism of loads and loads of hardworking women. A hive of affective labor under close scrutiny and controlled by capital, woven tightly into its multiple contradictions. All of this makes it relevant to Post-Fordist contemporary reality. A Swiss initiative now teamed up with 89’ers and proposed the concept of a flat rate, replacing minimum wage: „A minimum wage reduces freedom — because it is an additional rule,“ Daniel Straub, one of the people behind the initiative told me in October. „It tries to fix a system that has been outdated for a while. It is time to partly disconnect human labor and income. We are living in a time where machines do a lot of the manual labor — that is great — we should be celebrating.“ But as humans and machines grow ever closer, it is the sexual aspects of the merger that are making the news / we need to be concerned about. ComputerLove is a guy who talks real smooth taking me out to the woods and telling me he just loves my smile. And then taking me home and putting me in leather handcuffs so he can come. And if I moan he thinks I’m coming. And if I cry he thinks it’s love. And so do I.

I am certainly not arguing for a position of innocence here, but how, I wonder, could sex be sex any longer, in a world of such strident revelation, where every hidden and dark portion of the body had become the stuff of a slide show? As we all know, the erotic depends on having something left to reveal. And we British, with our genitals for the best part of the year dry-docked in Damart, are past-masters and mistresses of the skewed commend, the titivating remark. We are used to conjuring eroticism out of the most unpromising of materials, such is the stuff of our national obsession: sexual innuendo. But sex is always either about procreation, or not about procreation. It tantalizes with this binary opposition and in so doing draws our attention inexorably to the future-that-is-in-the-present, and the past that is eaten up in the ecstasy of now. Therefore, in order to travel to the future, some sort of mechanical gizmo that linked orgasm to time seemed to be in order. That’s The Big Space Fuck. And it’s field is a space of wild contradiction and phenomenal exploitation. It’s a place of power mongering, speculation, financial engineering, and massive and crooked manipulation. But it is also a site of commonality, movement, energy, and desire. We could try to understand its space as a political one instead of trying to represent a politics that is always happening elsewhere. A woman and a computer. Which attracts you most?

It’s not on me to answer this question. I’m condemned to remain here in the future, fiddling with my fake phalli. The best I can offer is to try to send you back some more dispatches the same way I sent this one: by fax. Because, after all, the faxes are, at least, a rich source of innuendo: long, white and coming - as they do - almost instantly. I hope that reading them will prove a stimulating, even an enlightening experience, because the sexual future is almost upon you.