

One reason to come brings many to stay

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Debbie Alagen.

intrusive thoughts's burial

*My reason is not for someone to know, it's the momentum created by the balance between my projections and expectations. It's not that deep.
What's the meaning of this smirk?
Should I come for them, would they know I come for them?
Last time, I felt this way and this way? Is it just me or was it the way?
What if my reason to leave hurts more than my reason to come?*

One reason has the power to seamlessly push our minds, senses, and bodies to this very place, and behold, here we are—both you and I. Yet, how many individual selves become a collective 'we'? What framework acts as the catalyst for this communal identity? And when the 'we' emerges, what comes out of it? Moreover, when the 'we' dissolves, what remains of it?

To unravel these inquiries, Debbie Alagen articulates the hypothesis in their eponymous first solo exhibition: *One reason to come brings many to stay*.

Through an empirical and operational approach, they envision an artificial space conducive to a state change where the universal constant of self intuition governs this passage - taking into account that space is somewhat in the eye of the beholder. Brain chemistry is not altered but thoroughly examined - it will eventually be stimulated, but more importantly, listened to, authorized, and amplified.

Pursuing unity, Alagen readies the groundwork for their experiment. It would first involve breaking free from the labyrinth of our misunderstandings, carving a path through our insecurities, confronting the eerie universality of our intrusive thoughts because, in the end, "it's not that deep." In their work, Alagen offers to return to the essence of our multiplied paradigms against the social aberrations of confining our consciousness in boxes – They disrupt paralyzing "what if?" and dizzying "whys." They capture these threads of thought in midair and, in a bittersweet mix, celebrate them with compassionate irony : decipher or simply let it go—you have the choice.

Approaching the neural center of the exhibition, a liminal space of thoughts (in opposition to the manifest space of acts) behaves like a mental border with a progressive contour. It is a transition space between reality and abstraction, where identity feels hazy and evanescent. Various paintings floating around stand as receptacles resembling oysters, in which one can sometimes observe their reflection in the mother-of-pearl. We can dissociate enough to understand each other in a synesthesia associating colors, textures, and materials, sounds, emotions, and words. By hanging intrusive thoughts on the wall, subjectivities that slow down are silenced, in favor of objectivities that accelerate for the sake of the experience: from the specific to the general, from self-discovery to collective exploration.

In a grand simulation to bring out the best in togetherness, Alagen induces the mutation of the subjective self into the objective 'we' to observe the creative momentum, through a dinner - universal togetherness, mellowly familiar to everyone, where hospitality opposes rejection, exclusion, and discrimination. This manifest space of acts (in opposition to the liminal space of thoughts) is where you feel humanity around you, you feel comfortable, important, established because each individual self feels acknowledged, as deep as they need.

This creative momentum has been activated by the unity of a group linked with each other psychologically and physically in a seamless fashion, by the heady vibrations of the diegetic ambient music of *Être peintre* followed by a dinner staged by Linn Nora Henz – a tasting-improvisation in 4 acts: entry-exhibition, main course-climax, dessert-resolution. We vibrate at the same frequency and ingest the same food to truly discover the other in oneself and oneself in the other - a chiasmus of dialogue essential for the emergence of a unique 'we', a troupe, a 'cosmo-monolithic' body.

At the center of the exhibition, the culmination of essential subjectivity. The dining table, a load-bearing structure, whose remnants are evidence of an evaporating memory and witnesses of a creative surge.

Alagen welcomes us and perhaps hastens us, with gentleness and lightness, towards this mirrored world of resolutely soft, dissolved, and fluid relationships. Their construction of a politics of the intimate and hospitality within these transitory spaces gives free rein to the vicissitudes of creative potential: art in its most organic, dynamic, disorganized, and expressive form.

The materialization of creative potential is seen on the walls, observed on the table, and becomes many reasons that have the power to seamlessly hold our minds, senses, and bodies to this very place. As if the more we stay, the more the invisible traces of these 'I' and 'we' floating in the atmosphere – the echo of the hubbub, the aftertaste of a dessert – seem tangible.

Throughout this exhibition, Alagen invites you to navigate through details.
In a drop of wine, as through a thread of thought.
In the blink of an eye, as through an emotional knot.

Particles of love that burst, escape, hide, or run away.

It was then that on the edge of drought
Suddenly one will melt at the corner of your mouth,

It will be enough for you to stay,

because one reason to love brings many to stare.

– Yasmeen El-Hamdani