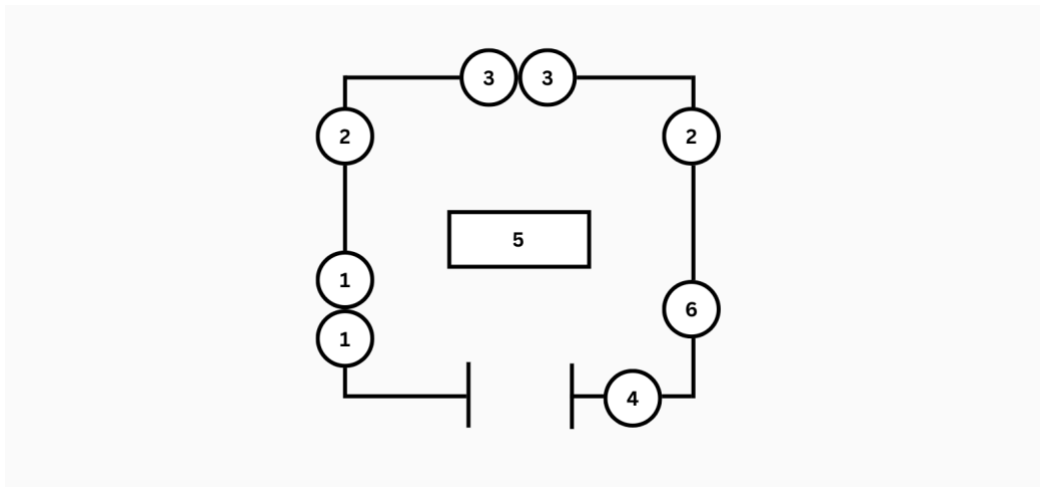




Project Space



Blue Raspberry
Sal Lovink MacKinnell
September 13 – November 9th, 2024



Mouth blue: Lips purse, soft pop. Tongue flickers, a readying kiss.
Now red: Tongue carnation, drawbridge, the patting thud of a door.

Mouth red: x
Now blue: o



In the third dimension, red and blue split. In a blink, at the edge of a movie goggle worn thin. The line between them is a seam: two arms touching. The wind, taken out of a coke can. Blood, rushing to a face.

In blue raspberry, flavours tangy clash. A chemically manufactured contradiction. A blue word coats a red tongue, intact.

In *blue raspberry*, Sal Lovink McKinnell weaves an infinite spin of intact-contact possibility. They pull the weft of *ache* to the warp of *yearn*, the x of x to the y of o, and red and blue become something like characters.¹ Lifting in, out, touching – not turning. Redblue, bluered, blurred – not purple. Their searching and reaching like two dogs' eager greeting, bodies braiding in and out of knots.

Amidst relation turned geometry – red and blue emerging from the clear blank of an early morning (1),² two frail blues, pulling away from themselves, peeking through plaid to their reds' frizzing bellies (2) – 3 and 4 face each other. Anxious, avoidant, returning, each the other's "equal frequency," they look forward and backward in time simultaneously, a string of spit between mouths.³

These living moments crosshatch with the emphases inherent to their making. Sometimes, as in 2's mohair, the right-to-left talks itself into fuzzy density.⁴ In 3, the up-down asserts itself – the left-right held, listening, in place.⁵ Nested in the red-blue of 3's fairy thread, the warp-weft of 4 and 5's boastful thick, are more concentric doubles: me-me, you-you, us-us.

In other words, in a woven relation, even as red and blue meet, forehead to forehead, at widening increments, in the thawed freezie of time, they are still, constantly, meeting themselves. Even as they co-form a surface, the shape of two, even as they text back and forth – *Winter red, cherry blue, berry flush, hatch?, hutch, hush, hush, blush, blushed, hue* – their own threads loop, x, x, pinkie promise.

4's plain weave, in particular, is the structural-visual interlock of red and blue's standing date.⁶ Tucked just right of the doorway, it was made in a C weave, the loom's movement, usually circular, folding back in on itself — creating a natural seam at the centre — so that when it's opened up, it

¹ The weft describes the x-axis/left-right threads in a weaving, and the warp describes the y/up-down.

² This is a weaving technique called overshot, which has what's called a weft-emphasis – the left-right threads are visually emphasized by allowing them to skip longer over their up-down counterparts.

³ The poet Dorothea Lasky likes to imagine "red objects as their equal frequency in a blue shade" – "Could it be that all beings meet their match in a place of colour intensity?" (Lasky, Dorothea. "What is Color in Poetry or is it the Wild Wind in the Space of the Word," in *Animal*. Wave Books, 2019. 42.)

⁴ This is called a weft-faced cloth.

⁵ This is called a warp-faced cloth.

⁶ In a plain weave fabric, the threads of the warp and weft are equally distributed.

doubles in size.⁷ An August harvest: a shape that folds into its double. (5, quiet seam of its room, its own promise for visitors' folding, unfolding.) Pulled to pucker, shy to kiss.

★

In their practice of living and making, Lovink McKinnell, a weaver and gardener, is driven by the pull to proximity. What can be nearer, closer, stroked, brushed. An eyeless thread's ready splitting. A blanket, nuzzling into the scrunch of a fist. A hand, planted deep in the earth.

With the water jug's thud, with the loom's repetitive hunk, Lovink McKinnell insists: this contact is constructive. What we touch, we can make. What we touch, we can grow.

In these thirty days, in this end-of-summer haste, Lovink McKinnell has bunched and culled the briefest bounty. Burnt their hands on it, kneaded it, known. They have worked up to the edge of incompleteness; they have understood *with*.⁸ And under Lovink McKinnell's steady touch, even in their pop and frenzy, red and blue return to the loom's ancient rhythm. The blue-with-red of vesicle. A relation of interrelation. The "grid above," the "grid below," the force that pushes underneath into life.⁹ The crumple of the ribbon, the pulling and pinning. A new moon casting a red shadow, blue season, a tender use to be made, and touched, and remade.

- EJ Kneifel

⁷ This technique is called a C-weave.

⁸ As Paulo Friere puts it, through a political education that understands reality as a process, people can be "aware of their incompleteness" and understand themselves as not merely in the world, but *with* the world (Friere, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed: 50th Anniversary Edition*. trans. Myra Bergman Ramos. Bloomsbury Academic, 2000. 75).

⁹ "There is a grid above and a grid below," I said slowly, trying not to uplift my voice into a question." (Gladman, Renee. *Calamities*. La Vergne: Wave Books, 2020. 35)