

# HOW TO BE MANY ON EARTH?

An emotional affair or... building worlds through difference.

...love, sex and friendship have become my companions. They remain with my body despite the taxing years of study, work, and above all, bureaucracy in the Global North. When trembling at the thought of appearing overly sentimental, rendered as a predictable cliché of Latinx 'affective excess', I listen to their words... 'it's not so much that your Latinx affect is excessive, but that the affective performance of normative whiteness is minimalist to the point of emotional impoverishment'. Fears are gone. We are already many. An existence-in-difference among the living, the non-human and inorganic. Within ourselves. Through our friendship and sexual encounters, through the exchange of bodily fluids and the emotive, we become fluent in other political and erotic modalities, in other ways of caring for each other on this planet...

## By Mario Barrantes Espinoza

Mario Barrantes Espinoza is a Costa Rican-Nicaraguan artist based in Brussels. Their work articulates performance, the (re)writing of texts, and the use of voice, with materials sourced from pop culture and mainstream media. They will perform *FLESH CAN'T CAN' T NOT'T 'TIS FLESH H...* on 27 and 28 April at De Kriekelaar.



but who knows how  
to care for them?  
the first time I met him

love is a boat

we would sleep together  
with two ears in  
the sea

I hated myself so much, but I hated you more...

one ear grasped in my  
hand

how could you lie to me?

the other is  
moved by chance

we would send each other music

how useless I felt

who hasn't written  
a poem

dedicating the songs to  
each other

to escape loneliness?

but I remember the end...

declaring our love

just enjoy the time we have

loves get old

he was my last love before departing

Mom

before starting  
to love

because love is  
a child that one must  
teach to walk

I remember kisses that swallowed me laying on the couch in the living room  
just enjoy the time we have it feels like  
before departing the radio is turned on

love is like land

but one night...

that one has to plough  
and sow it's very hot and there is a lot of light  
Mom is polishing

so there was the, ya sabés, mierda i dont remember  
what its called.... but yeah la fruta, like the growing

of the... theres another word but, anyway it was like,  
forzado, like impuesto, like... you had de la... hay otra palabra pero, no importa, fue como,  
know? they impose' de fruit to grow, forced, como imposéd, como que...vos tenias que to you my legs aren't working que

no not ya sabés? **babes,** a la fruta pero de people que cultivó la no sea,  
fruta it's normal. **you're just** fue forzada a hacerlo right? not de fruit but the people who grew the  
growing them **them** frut were force'd forced to do it right?  
my legs aren't working

**Babes its normal you've just grown them. they're brand new.. fresh**

fresh legs

**It's ok.**

slowly

**Go slow.**

its time to go?

**... not too slow we can't rest here..dont sleep anymore its already been too**

**long**

**Remember? we have to move others are moving too. you hear them?**

**listen.. y fue así por bastante**

[voices heard through the walls]

and it was like dis fora long  
**tiempo dunno cuanto tiempo pero como, pretty long**

time i dunno how long but like, pretty long  
**time y usaron unos quimicos sabes que vos lo**

let  
me check  
your legs. ok it  
worked, yeah it  
worked enough.  
just take a few  
more breaths

and they used quimical stuff you know laik  
**espreyás y mata bichos y todo, whats it  
called? yeah yeah that the pest,**  
you spray it and it kills bugs and stuff cómo era  
qué se llamaba? yeah eso la plaga,

ripe?  
ripe now?

no..  
not enough HEAT. you had to wake  
up.. the process isn't finished babes

[heavy breathing]

Let me check your legs  
ok it worked. it worked enough just a  
few more breaths your legs will get  
firmer soon more solid

it hurts

pain because the process stopped too  
early..  
we have to hurry

can't feel my legs

[voices drifting by]

we cant stay? **thing, so dey sprayed this shit**  
entonces rociaron esa shit  
**y like, the monkeys went yellow! no fo real fo real like**

y, los monos went all amarillos! no for ya ya en serio  
**the animals and shit change'd color, like all of a**

los animales y la mierda cambiaron de color laik  
**sudden, i mean, maybe not like it probably took a long**

así de repente, o sea, tal vez no así de seguro  
**entonces de animals se pusieron de colores y**  
tardó un montón pero don't need to leave tho. bueno,  
**time but whatever.... entonces de people are animals se**  
so the animals wer' all foking staying wurd  
**pusieron de colores y**

colors and  
we don't need to leave though  
we could stay..people are staying  
this is our place

we agreed..remember?  
I'll go alone if I have to we agreed to go  
together but if you wont you wont..

some stay some go this is our plot

You don't know me babes but i made  
this trip before i know how to get  
there crossing is something else but  
this time we can make it theres not  
enough here no HEAT no ripening no  
place for us

[...] **una mierda toda rara y**  
una shit and it was  
**a nadie le importó! i know! but like yeah i**  
like noone cared! ya sé! but imagino que

where did the HEAT go?

they have in in the A.T. the world changes but we can find it

are you sure—

no more questions  
work your legs

[whispered voices]

guess some people noticed but basically  
alguna gente sedio cuenta but literal a nadie le importo  
noone geive a shit 'til it riched the cities, like no not  
una mierda hasta que finalmente llego a las ciudades, o sea no asi,  
like that, like it didnt come knocking on the door haha  
not laik si hubiera llegado a tocar la puerta jajaja  
of the city pero the alguna manera llego al sistema  
de... ya sabés, las alcantarillas, bueno básicamente el  
the la citi but like it reached somehow de system  
of... you know, the sewers, we'll basically the  
agua o sea el agua la hicieron mierda con o...  
guáter like the guáter got foked with or...

Here touch here

there

feel it flow? sí envenenada o

yeah poisoned or contaminated

contaminada

or  
yeah  
that's the  
good word,  
right?

Mmmm  
its coming

drink some

we carry the rest for the trip

here,  
touch here,  
there, feel it  
flow? drink  
some, we carry  
the rest for  
the trip

ok...  
lets go babe

I remember a strong body  
I remember soft skin

I would get lost in the humidity of his  
mouth

the floor of the whole house is red stone

and needs to be cared for

watch over it  
at nightfall

the polishing machine is very loud

Mom smiles

the floor is not white marble

Her strong body

do not let them  
walk upon it

it needs a different care

it covers the whole house

I remember when we would cum

Mom knows

Mom knows of Sundays

I remember that explosive orgasm, like a thousand milky fireworks...

**who hasn't escaped loneliness?**

...his hand rubbing my dick after coming,

and the rough skin of the stone rubbing it

it's not easy, taking care of the house, taking care of each other

polishing

forcing me to more pleasure,

taking care of each other

his fingers determined to melt me.

I would get lost

**one ear grasped in thy hand**

Her hands...

her nourishing her soft skin

Her strong body the red skin of the stone needs to be polished

I remember soft skin

sucking milk from her breasts

I became hypnotised by such an image

**because love is a child**

her shirt open to the middle it felt awful... It was pure but...

**who hasn't let her body**

get lost in the humidity of his mouth

overflowing pleasure.

Mom knows Mom is polishing

it wasn't pure

**be embraced**

overflowing pleasure.

the stone

our bodies

our bodies were one

I didn't understand anything  
at that moment,  
uncomfortable and unbearable  
pleasure but...

I couldn't go on the floor

before departing

please, never stop  
for the love of God.

but the moment has arrived

I'm leaving

**that one must  
teach to walk**

I'll be back  
Mom knows

How useless I felt

please, never stop...  
we both know that's never going  
to happen

It was in that darkest moment  
of my infatuation

**love is like land**

the stone is south

and needs to be cared for

I understood that it was not  
an illusion

**do not let them walk  
upon it**

my body thought  
it had already felt everything

Mom knows

Mom knows  
an unbearable polishing but...

the stone cracks open

it wasn't pure  
Mom knows

overflowing pleasure.  
just enjoy the time we have  
please never stop  
Mom knows

the moment has arrived

for the love  
Mom knows

I'll be back  
Mom knows