Oh hiii, bb

CARINA MAGAZZENI AND ERIN SUTHERLAND

C: When we first started talking about this exhibition, I remember it being so important for us to celebrate pleasure. To redirect the conversation away from violence, abuse and just bad sex in general. In my day-to-day life, my conversations around sex are always placed in this harm-reduction/management lens, you know? Whether it's drafting an anti-sexual harassment policy, implementing a safe space mandate, or warning a friend about a sleazy dude…the core of the conversation is always centred around the possibility of violence.

E: Yes, absolutely. Pleasure was important and so was humour, as you said—to move the conversation away from violence. Not to avoid it, but instead to celebrate bodies and sexual pleasure and health. To speak about sexual health and pleasure (in serious and funny ways) can help us to know what we expect from our bodies, our partners etc., and therefore, what is not OK.

C: These are obviously super important conversations, and I'm thankful to be living in a moment where we are pouring out our stories in an overwhelmingly powerful rallying cry of *enough is enough*. But I'm worn out. I'm tired of the topic of sex—most especially the topic of sex in relationship to the bodies of femmes, queer and trans folks, Indigenous peoples, racialized individuals—as being typecast as exclusively based in violence instead of pleasure.

E: I agree. I think the conversation is so important but it seems that the labour of confronting sexual violence is always in the hands of femme-identifying, queer, non-binary and trans folks, and that is exhausting. I think our dialogue can pose the possibility of celebrating and opening up the conversation about sex, rather than limiting it.

C: That's why I was so energized by our shared idea of looking toward artists who are celebrating intimacy in their practices. I remember our very first Google Doc and amid all of our messy, scattered and excited thoughts, we wrote in bold and underlined font: "love + kinship = resurgent possibilities" and I thought: yesssss. This. We need this. We need to talk about this.

E: I love how intimacy in the exhibition is so present, but never overtly sexual. We have no imagery of bodies in a scene of intimacy, really, and yet our show is intimate, super intimate. And it privileges intimacy. I think it's really interesting that all of the artists are playing with intimacy through different lenses, and different media, and yet collectively produce a common celebration that urges viewers toward intimacy.

C: Totally. So much of the intimate work is behind-the-scenes. I appreciate how we were able to think about sex as an expansive idea—a jumping off point—to talk about gender, queerness, teachings about menstruation, traditional birthing, sexual health, pleasure, puberty, touch and tenderness and hardness, trust and consent. All the things.

E: All the things! I was mostly interested in how communities come together in positive ways around discussions of sex (even though those moments can be uncomfortable or funny, or they never happen). As I said, I don't think our show is really *about* sex, instead, we are using sex to discuss topics that are much more complex and complicated, but ultimately rooted in the experiences of our bodies.