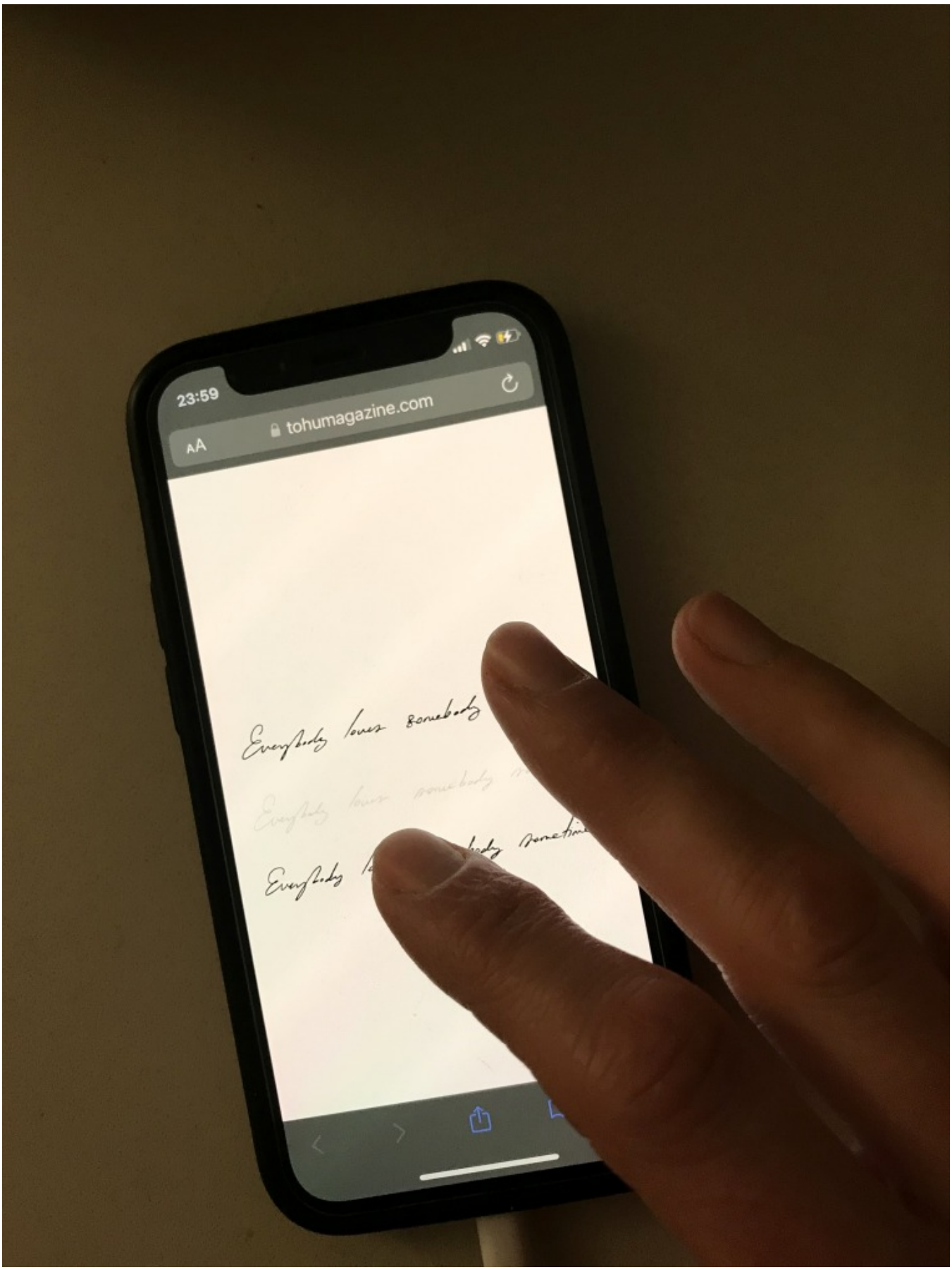
Everybody Loves Somebody Sometime (the touching version)

Noa Giniger has turned her audio installation *Everybody Loves Somebody Sometime* (2008) into an interactive script, where the reader-viewer-listener can flutter from one line to another but never grasp the text completely. Written in her own handwriting and accompanied by the voice of Peggy Lee, the artist offers an intimate encounter with hope and despair, sameness and the personal, through the digital platform.

A single artwork / Noa Giniger December 31, 2022

Sometime_NoaGiniger_Tohu72.jpg



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When I was invited to participate in Tohu's special issue "Politics of Love (Long distance relationship)," my departure point was Etel Adnan, who is one of my favorite writers and artists and her essay "The Cost for Love We Are Not Willing to Pay."

One of the things that has always strike me about Etel's writings - and I'm not referring only to the essay in question - is her expanding on words by acknowledging their limits, and her unconditional love for love. She has an infinite admiration and care for nature, in the broader sense, and for subversive and poetic modes of expressions.

With this in mind, I decided to create a new version of my audio installation *Everybody Loves Somebody Sometime*. I think of it as the touching version.

In 2008, I presented *Everybody Loves Somebody Sometim*e in Amsterdam. The installation took place in an empty space intentionally illuminated by bright white light, and where the song "Everybody Loves Somebody Sometime," performed by Frank Sinatra, was playing. Only the line above was heard, interlaced with silent intervals in respect to its recurrence in the song's lyrics. While the lines were identical, each one sounded and differed slightly from the other. This love song follows a narrative and is intended for someone (you). Its changing intonations are the result of the singer's emotional build up to an inner climax; a spectrum of emotions from indifferent to existential, from cold to warm.

I was reminded of this song, or to put it another way, the origin of this work came to me through a random encounter a few years earlier: As I was walking next to a construction site in Amsterdam, a man carrying a wooden beam on his shoulder emerged. As I was passing him, and without any eye contact, he partly sang, partly spoke to me: 'everybody loves somebody sometime.'

And as I was walking away, I could not help but repeat the phrase in my head:
everybody
loves somebody
sometime.

By isolating the phrase in question, by erasing the subject of this love song, merely this statement is registered. And how cruel, how simple, how great this statement is. How trivial and insignificant, how basic and essential. How much comfort and danger love holds within it. So unpredictable as to when it would appear, who would be its subject and for how long it would last. And yet the structure of this sentence and its inclusiveness of possibly everyone holds hope within it. This somebody is not limited to a being, as we fall in love repeatedly with places, words and hours; with matters that change constantly as we do, and with whom our relationship is in a constant flux.

Through the work's new digital platform, I wanted to offer an intimate encounter with this truism. The sequential audio installation has turned into an interactive script without a beginning or an end, where the reader-viewer-listener can flutter from one line to another but never grasp the text completely. The cursive script appears weakly on the screen at 5% visibility. Once a line is touched, it surfaces at 100%, and is heard out loud. It is the voice of Peggy Lee in the first recording of the song, dated 1947. Her interpretation is milder than Frank's; somehow less dramatic, more confident. The text is written in my own handwriting and while the lines are identical, each one appears and differs slightly from the other.

Voice and handwriting are original; they are like fingerprints, each one is unique and associated with *somebody*. Distinguished from calligraphy, which focuses more on the design and the execution of lettering, handwriting is emotional and personal. One can train and work and practice and mimic and sound alike and look alike but it's never the same. There will always be tiny intricacies that make it/us what/who it is/we are. If practiced, it is for the purpose of communication, not as an art form. Once these tools of expression - voice and handwriting - are manipulated or aim to be identical and duplicated, they become artificial, strange.

My repetition of this line felt like a mantra. My handwriting did not intend to illustrate the text but to

experience how any mode of expression, when repeated, is never identical to its predecessor. It’s the same with a touch. A repetitive stroke never weighs the same, never lasts the same, and yet can turn into a sentence. Feeling and consequently writing as existing is in constant change. Each touch will affect and differ slightly from the one to follow it.

It feels sometimes as if handwriting, this sensual skill, is dying out, being replaced by typing, and soon enough writing with the voice will replace typing, leading to new forms of talking: talking as writing. The cost for sameness we are willing to pay. Or maybe in the future these modes of expression will be reunited, so when I talk/speak, voice recognition software will type in *my* handwriting. How would it interpret despair?

The original title of the song is “Everybody Loves Somebody.” Yet it seems that over the years the word *Sometime* randomly found its way to the front. This sporadic addition is crucial; it removes immovability. Moreover, *sometime* vs *sometimes*, is read as "at one time in the past''. This time indication adds a melancholy touch to the reading; resignation to reality. Then again, if history repeats itself but is never the same, perhaps this reading is not doomed. Hope lies in the personal, in the non-identical, in the impermanent.

I dedicate this work to those who embrace change and fight for hope.

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