

# THE LOVED OBJECT THAT DOES NOT SPEAK

Natasha Conland (2007)

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In the preamble pages of Jennifer Tee's Sao Paulo Biennale catalogue, where *Covert Entwined Heart* was first exhibited, there are notes sitting in amongst the illustrations which read: 'making a sculpture out of a moment. Moment: outburst of passion in de tussenstaat. Tussenstaat: a soul in the state of limbo.' Like a running list for thoughts and activities, it is also an order of priorities with the moment clearly isolated as the primary activity. Tee's moment is pre-activity, and pre-art-making. It's a fragmented state which sends the soul into limbo—the in-between land. The sculpture, then, might be described as a form and series of actions to call back the soul and this moment of passion. It does not represent the moment, but is tempered with the structure and facilities to know it.

In 1977, Roland Barthes wrote, 'the love story (the 'episode', the 'adventure') is the tribute the lover must pay to the world in order to be reconciled with it'. He was referring to the narrative of love, the story which forms the experience. By way of comparison, Tee's *Covert Entwined Heart* is the ritual form which guides us to and from limbo. Its aesthetic form takes shape according to a host of existing matter from 'our' world. I say ours deliberately because rather than from any particular land, this entwined heart borrows from universal totems for dance, passion and mystery—things used across cultures to signal a shift in mental and physical being. Small and enticing things like chandeliers, seed-pods, tattoos, gardens and rhythm.