

# TO WORDS

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I never really knew how to write;

I would rather say I am in love with words<sup>1</sup>. I put them together hoping it will form a sentence. I am fascinated by their ability to transform and get together in order to create a message, a meaning. I am a french native speaker. I don't know a lot of english words, and the french ones are slower and slower to appear in my mind. Every day is a time for discovery, new and lost words pop up and expand my horizons. I believe the more words I know, the more things I can think about.

***What is not named does not exist*** says Chloé Delaume.

I think about words all the time. When I read and write, as obvious as it sounds. When I walk and think, when I see shapes and colours that remind me of them, when shapes and colours become beings. I think about words at breakfast, lunch and dinner. At home, at school and in bed. From the early morning, through the brightest time of the day, when the sun set and until the darkness of the night. Words are my obsession. Their meaning, their story, their plasticity. Plasticity.

It's a long story.

The only time I don't think about words is when I speak. It is difficult to believe that words are my thing if you listen to me talking. I am too eager to tell, so I stumble and loose control. I do not trust the spoken words. They scare me. They can fly away too quickly and leave you with an open mouth,

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trying to remember what to put words on.

The written words reassure me. I like their silent company. They let me come closer, copy, paste, tame. I cut, twist, model as I like; easy.

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1 shapes and colours

So, I write. After I started to understand it and until recently, if someone asked me to define my writings, I used to answer poetry. But I never really felt like I was writing poetry. I don't feel like a poet; even if when I was reading *Lettres aux jeunes poétesses*<sup>2</sup>, I felt that I was the perfect target. Then, I took the decision not to say I write poems anymore. I work with words. As vague as it sounds, I find it more precise. I sculpt with words. I make collages.

I like words, punctuations, question marks, footnotes, indefinite and definite pronouns. I like them as much as I hate them. I hate them when they are fixed in their role and don't make space for flexibility. In that case, I attack them with my glue and my scissors. Cut, twist, stretch, repeat, until I like them again. Then I sort them in drawers or in the notes of my phone. They can stay there for years.

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For years.

Until I give them back their freedom. I would have liked to keep them for myself. I am scared they will tell my secrets, betray me. I am scared to loose control again. Can we stumble when we write?

To you words, I want to be your friend, your lover, your fan number one. Because *poétesse* I can't be; and writer, I don't believe so. Yet I just want to write.

2 *Letters to Young [female] Poets* by Chloé Delaume, Rébecca Chaillon and 21 other poets and poétesses