THE SHAPE OF THINGS     Neil LaBute

(The exhibition gallery)
(A small studio space painted blood red. Several tables scattered about with various "supporting data" on them.) (EVE/EVAN) standing all alone, punch in one hand, cookie in the other. After a moment, takes a nibble. Crosses to a box of photos and browses. ADAM/AMY) enters and stares)

ADAM/AMY): ...not a big "modern art" crowd, I guess, huh?
EVELYN/EVAN): Hey. (Beat) Glad you stopped by...
ADAM/AMY): Yeah, well, I didn't really have anything to do...plus, I can't show my face in the streets, so it seemed logical.
EVELYN: Look...
ADAM/AMY): Please don't "Look,me now, okay, or I might not make it through this.... (Beat) Just refer to me as "it" or "untitled," it'll help me keep some perspective here.... wanders over and pours some punch. Stuffs a few cookies in pocket. Shoves three in mouth and chews them down.) ...that's gonna shoot some piece of data all to shit, isn't it?
EVELYN/EVAN): Doesn't matter now, do what you want...you're finished.
ADAM/AMY): "You're finished." Wow. (Considers)
Most people just say, "Hey, sorry, can't marry you." And they say it in private....
EVELYN/EVAN): ...yeah, that might've been a bit too far.
ADAM/AMY): Oh shit, you are so beyond "far" that you're in danger of hitting Uranus. And I mean the planet....
EVELYN/EVAN): (Smiling) See, you're still funny....
ADAM/AMY): Just stop, alright? I was never funny, or good-looking or clever. I was nothing until you started fucking around with me. I admit it. No-thing. But you know what? I was absolutely fine with that....
EVELYN/EVAN): I know this is a lot for you to take in and everything....
ADAM/AMY): Uh-huh...I got a little Gregor Samsa thing going right now, so....
EVELYN/EVAN): I don't get that....
ADAM/AMY): Doesn't matter. I do...I get it. (A moment of dead silence.)
EVELYN/EVAN): ...listen, I know my work relied on not telling you what was going on, but I....
ADAM/AMY): Here in a "small town" we just call it lying....
EVELYN/EVAN): I did lie to you, yes....
ADAM/AMY): Yeah, just a little. (Beat) "I'm a very straightforward person..."
EVELYN/EVAN): I had to say that. Sorry.
ADAM/AMY): You're sorry? Well, that's good...I figured I was gonna have to really work to get that one out of You.
EVELYN/EVAN): I'm not sorry. I mean, not for what I've done. I just feel bad that you're so upset....
ADAM/AMY): Oh, I see....

EVELYN/EVAN): I even thought maybe you could handle it. I did, really...otherwise I wouldn’t have invited you tonight.

ADAM/AMY): Yeah, just me and two hundred of my closest friends.

EVELYN/EVAN): You don't have any friends. (Beat) You gave up the only ones I've known you to have. Gave 'em up pretty easily...

(ADAM/AMY) shivers at this one.

ADAM/AMY): Geez...don't hold back at all, please. Call it exactly how you see it.

EVELYN/EVAN): I just want to keep it as truthful as possible.

ADAM/AMY): (Laughing) That'll be different....

EVELYN/EVAN): ...you're so angry....

ADAM/AMY): Well, you know, what do you want me to say?! You messed with my life and you put it under fucking glass...that might make anyone a touch cross.

EVELYN/EVAN): What'd I do wrong? (Beat) Seriously, tell me...

ADAM/AMY): Screw you...

EVELYN/EVAN): You have screwed me. A lot. You wanna watch it? There's a cassette over there somewhere.

ADAM/AMY): You are seriously fucked up. I mean it....

EVELYN/EVAN): Yeah...what was so bad? I wanna know, tell me...from your perspective.

ADAM/AMY): I'm not gonna give you a last little thrill. Fuck that.

EVELYN/EVAN): Listen to your mouth, ..you never used to talk like that.

ADAM/AMY): You're gonna take credit for that, too, huh?

EVELYN/EVAN): Nope, you picked that up all on your own. Cute people always have potty mouths.

ADAM/AMY): Yeah, well, tell me how "cute" this one is, then...fuck you, you're heartless.

EVELYN/EVAN): So, tell me then. Go ahead, you feel that way about me, you can tell me what I did wrong. If I did something wrong....

ADAM/AMY): You don't see this as wrong?!

EVELYN/EVAN): I said, you tell me. I wanna know what you think I did....

( stops for a moment, taking a deep breath. Not really wanting to engage)

ADAM/AMY): You honestly have no concept here....

EVELYN/EVAN): Just say it....

ADAM/AMY): Awww, shit. Look...I don't have time, okay? I'm not gonna stand here....

EVELYN/EVAN): The exercising? Or was it the new clothes that really bugged you?
ADAM/AMY): That is not the....

EVELYN/EVAN): Everything I did made you a more desirable person. People began to notice you...take interest in you. I watched them....

ADAM/AMY): Well, lucky me. I got to be part of your installation "thingie."

EVELYN/EVAN): You are my installation thingie.... (Beat) Look, if you hadn't been here tonight, hadn't heard all this stuff...wouldn't you still be happy? Waiting at home for me, hoping this went well, wanting to make love....

ADAM/AMY): That's not the point....

EVELYN/EVAN): Yes, it is! It's the total point. All that stuff we did was real for you, therefore it was real. It wasn't for me, therefore it wasn't. It's all subjective, Everything.


EVELYN/EVAN): Of course they are....

ADAM/AMY): (Reaching) I'll tell you something "real," I should sue you.

EVELYN/EVAN): You could...I did take that risk.

ADAM/AMY): That's right, you did, and you're crazy if you think I'm gonna let you put all this shit on display. Our time together. (Wanders about) Oh, but you'd love that, wouldn't you? If I got a lawyer. Then we could fight this out in public, all the way to the Supreme Court.

EVELYN/EVAN): Or higher...Jerry Springer. (Beat) You should be proud of this...most of it.

ADAM/AMY): Just save it, 'kay? (Looking about, spots the old blazer sticking out of a box. Surprised, pulls it free and stares at it.) What's this doing here?

EVELYN/EVAN): It was only four bucks at the Goodwill....

ADAM/AMY): ...why would you buy that?

EVELYN/EVAN): Just so I'd have it.

ADAM/AMY): What?

EVELYN/EVAN): ...all of you.

Scans the room, then throws hands up. Suddenly, pulls off new coat and tosses it onto the floor.)

ADAM/AMY): ...fine.

EVELYN/EVAN): What?

ADAM/AMY): It's fine, forget it....

EVELYN/EVAN): What is?

ADAM/AMY): What the hell...it can't get any worse. You get off on showing people my scuzzy sheets, go for it....

EVELYN/EVAN): I don't "get off" on it....

ADAM/AMY): My underwear mean that much to you, have a field day....
EVELYN/EVAN): ...This is my work. (Beat) I'll give back whatever you want, soon as I get my grade.

ADAM/AMY): Whatever...

EVELYN/EVAN): I will.

ADAM/AMY): The ring'd be nice. It was my grandma's.

EVELYN/EVAN): I'll take care of it.

ADAM/AMY): Thanks. Good...

EVELYN/EVAN): ...hard feelings?

ADAM/AMY): Me? Nah...we had some fun, right?

EVELYN/EVAN): Yeah.

ADAM/AMY): But, hey, that's subjective.

EVELYN/EVAN): Exactly.

ADAM/AMY): Then I had some fun, fell in love and all that... and you got yourself a grade and a column inch or two in the school paper. Congrats. Seriously...but do me a favor, don't fool yourself and think that this is "art." "kay? It's a sick fucking joke, but it is not "art."

EVELYN/EVAN): Is that right?

ADAM/AMY): Pretty much, yeah. (Beat) You know, when Picasso took a shit, he didn't call it a "sculpture." He knew the difference. That's what made him Picasso. You oughta at least realize there's a price to it all...you know? Somebody pays for your two minutes on C N N. Someone always pays for people like you. And if you don't get that, if you can't see at least that much...then you're about two inches away from using babies to make lamp shades and calling it "furniture." (Beat) I guess I'm done....

EVELYN/EVAN): Wow. Okay...so, you're saying I should be a "better person." Is that it?

ADAM/AMY): That's the nutshell, yeah.

EVELYN/EVAN): Better like...you?

ADAM/AMY): No. Just better...

EVELYN/EVAN): Well, we'll just have to agree to disagree, then, won't we?

ADAM/AMY): Yes, we will. We will definitely do that. (Beat) Don't forget what Oscar Wilde said....

EVELYN/EVAN): He always had something to say, didn't he?

ADAM/AMY): Yeah..."All art is quite useless." He said that.

EVELYN/EVAN): Huh. I thought you were gonna go with "Insincerity and treachery somehow seem inseparable from the artistic temperament." That's a good one, too....

ADAM/AMY): It is, yeah. Damn, wish I'd said that.

EVELYN/EVAN): Don't worry about it...look how he ended up.
ADAM/AMY): Yep...alone, penniless and in prison. Everything I wish for you.... Tell me, though. One thing.
EVELYN: Yes?
ADAM/AMY): Was any of it true?
EVELYN/EVAN): What do you mean?
ADAM/AMY): Not the things we did, or the kind words or whatever...but any of it?
EVELYN/EVAN): ...no. Not really.
ADAM/AMY): I mean about you. The nose-job or Lake Forest or your mother's maiden name. One thing you ever said to me?
EVELYN/EVAN): My mom's name is Anderson....
ADAM/AMY): Got it. I got it...Gemini at least?
ADAM/AMY): Don't be. Hey, it's...Art.
EVELYN/EVAN): ...I should probably get going. I think the Dean wants "a word" with me. (Ricky Ricardo voice) "I got some 'splaining to do."
ADAM/AMY): What's that from?
ADAM/AMY): Ahh, T V. That other great art form....
EVELYN/EVAN): Uh-huh. You coming?
ADAM/AMY): Nah, not yet... (Holds up hands) Don't worry, I'm not gonna do anything to your stuff. No spray paint. I just....
ADAM/AMY): Thanks...
EVELYN/EVAN): The door locks if you just close it.
ADAM/AMY): Great.