

Hutson, Laura, "I, Glenn Beck, Heart You, Sarah Palin: Performance Artist Liz Magic Laser Today at Watkins," Nashville Scene, December 5, 2012.

I, Glenn Beck, Heart You, Sarah Palin: Performance Artist Liz Magic Laser Today at Watkins

In her performance piece "I Feel Your Pain," Liz Magic Laser (yes, that is the name she was given at birth) takes dialogue from Glenn Beck's first interview with Sarah Palin, reimagines it as a first-date scene in a Hollywood romance, and casts professional actors to reenact the conversation verbatim. "Sarah," it begins, "I want to read to you what I wrote in my journal, because it's about you." Obviously, the work is hilarious. But it's also deeply moving — the piece adapts several other interviews between politicians and journalists, all with the timbre of an adolescent love affair.

That the interviews are transformed so seamlessly into entertainment and theater is just the point — Laser is at once questioning the sincerity of politicians and the objectivity of journalism. In "The Digital Face," she worked with dancers to replicate each hand gesture presidents have used in various State of the Union speeches. In other works, she directs actors to re-enact plays by Sartre and Bertolt Brecht in newsrooms and ATM vestibules.

Laser has studied at Wesleyan, Columbia and the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program, and she's the first of this year's Visiting Artists Series at Watkins. In her words, "We are living in strange days where performance itself has become the dominant instrument of power." Come hear what else this sharp, articulate artist has to say 6 p.m. today at the Watkins College of Art, Design & Film, where she gives a free presentation as part of the school's Visiting Artists Series.

To preview video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=31Vr6F47fGc&feature=player_embedded