

Praise for *Lovely Mess*

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Lovely Mess beautifully explores the complexity of sexuality through juxtaposed language and images.

Afro-clad with a penetrating gaze, songstress, Amorous Ebony, challenges us as listener and voyeur to rethink and re-witness sex through seemingly opposing words and colors.

She lures us with the opening lines, “*caught up in your lovely mess. excuse me while I go undressed.*” Straddling the contradiction, Amorous Ebony takes the idea of a mess, which is usually thought undesirable and unsexy and characterizes it as lovely. This mess, this welcome disorder, comes to define her present sexual situation. Since the mess is lovely she doesn’t clean up, she dresses down. Down into lace lingerie suitable for getting tangled in all the titillation of romance.

Similarly, the music video alternates between red and blue landscapes. Here too, does Amorous Ebony tweak our understanding of these contrasting colors and their effects on sexual behavior. While red is commonly associated with displays of passion, activity and seduction, in *Lovely Mess* it is given a quiet, meditative quality. The color blue takes on these warm traits by encouraging self stimulation.

In the red frames Amorous Ebony evokes root chakra energy. Seated alone, surrounded by plants and steam, she grounds in reflection and contemplation about her sexual rendezvous. We participate in flashbacks of moments with her male lover. Shots of clamped nipples, tied arms and bare chests fill the screen as the verse, “caught up, wrapped up, tangled” entice our sex consciousness.

The depth of embodied memory or the body's remembering of pleasure is shown in blue tones. Against this cool backdrop Amorous Ebony is shown standing and teasing herself with both her bare hands and her lover's rope. The transition from sitting to standing demonstrates her body's longing for active engagement with an absent lover. She reenacts the remembered pleasure by mimicking her lover's tying of her hands and his caressing of her body.

Lovely Mess sonically and visually affirms the potential of a sex practice that is solely shaped by its participants. Amorous Ebony compels us to be fully present in the act of sex to narrate and perform a sexuality that embraces the beauty of untidiness.