Modern Art

In the mirror it says

As cliche as love

Though it is difficult to read.

When I wrote it the canvas was lying flat on the ground, and I wasn't thinking much beyond the impulse to write it out. I had these pieces of kimono fabric from a friend in Tokyo, and I wanted to lay them out on the canvas. They were such obvious beautiful little designs. I picked out 5 or 6 of my favorites from a group of maybe 30?

I just laid them on the canvas and thought, hmm, this is pretty boring and really not doing anything interesting with how to present them. *If art is about making interesting presentations?* I thought it was pretty cliche. And maybe having had a recent break up, and everything that goes with that, I thought "as cliche as love". I thought I would write that on the bottom. It was embarrassing, but no one would really see it. Sides are easy, but on a painting of this size it would be hard to catch, being just a few inches off the ground. Then I thought: Wait, maybe this is good! I could lay a mirror on the ground and it could be read. I had just had another idea for a painting with a mirror. And I have always had an affinity for mirrors. The too-on-the-nose metaphoricalness of them.

It occurred to me when I put the mirror under it, that considering it faces the wrong way (the reflection and all), and my handwriting wasn't particularly legible (it is difficult to write on the bottom of a canvas lying flat on the ground!), that it would be hard to read. But I also thought this would help make it clear that it wasn't that I had an idea to make a painting that says "as cliche as love" and followed it through, but rather, the painting is simply a documentation of a series of decisions.

When I thought about the show and this painting, I thought I would use the press release to address the issue of its unreadableness. In part because I want people to know what it says, but also because it brought to mind a Godard movie I remember seeing about 20 years ago in which a character's name needs to be changed, so someone just says "I am changing your name to this". When I saw this, I remember thinking something that seems difficult in a plot or concept *could* be a real hang up, but you also can just say it and that takes care of the problem. It felt like one of those art lessons that you often hear about like "real artist steal, fake artists borrow."

Somehow it also makes sense that when I went back to watch this movie again, I had remembered the whole thing wrong. I do think misremembering and confusion are two of the artist's most important tools. With both of these, their own subconscious fills in the missing parts and they are given the opportunity to see these, their unmediated thoughts. You trick yourself into objectively experiencing your own pure observations.