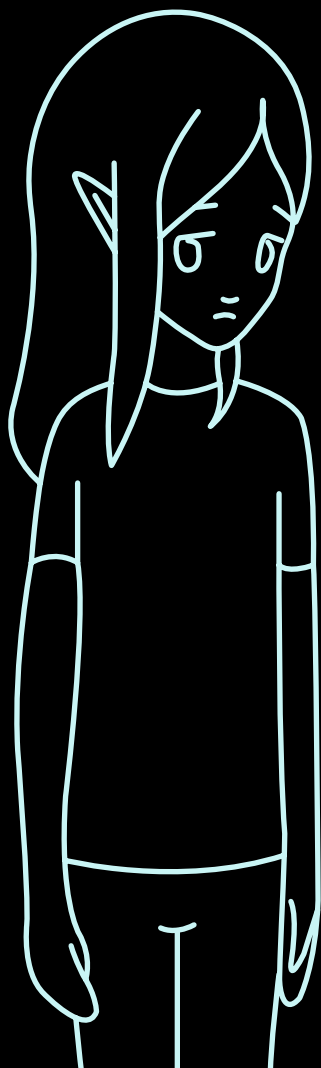


THE  
HEART IS A LONELY  
HUNTER



**YARAT**  
CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE

24.09.2015 — 09.01.2016



THE  
HEART IS A LONELY  
HUNTER

The artworks in *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* can mostly be thought of as portraits—representations of people, although sometimes with fictional subjects.

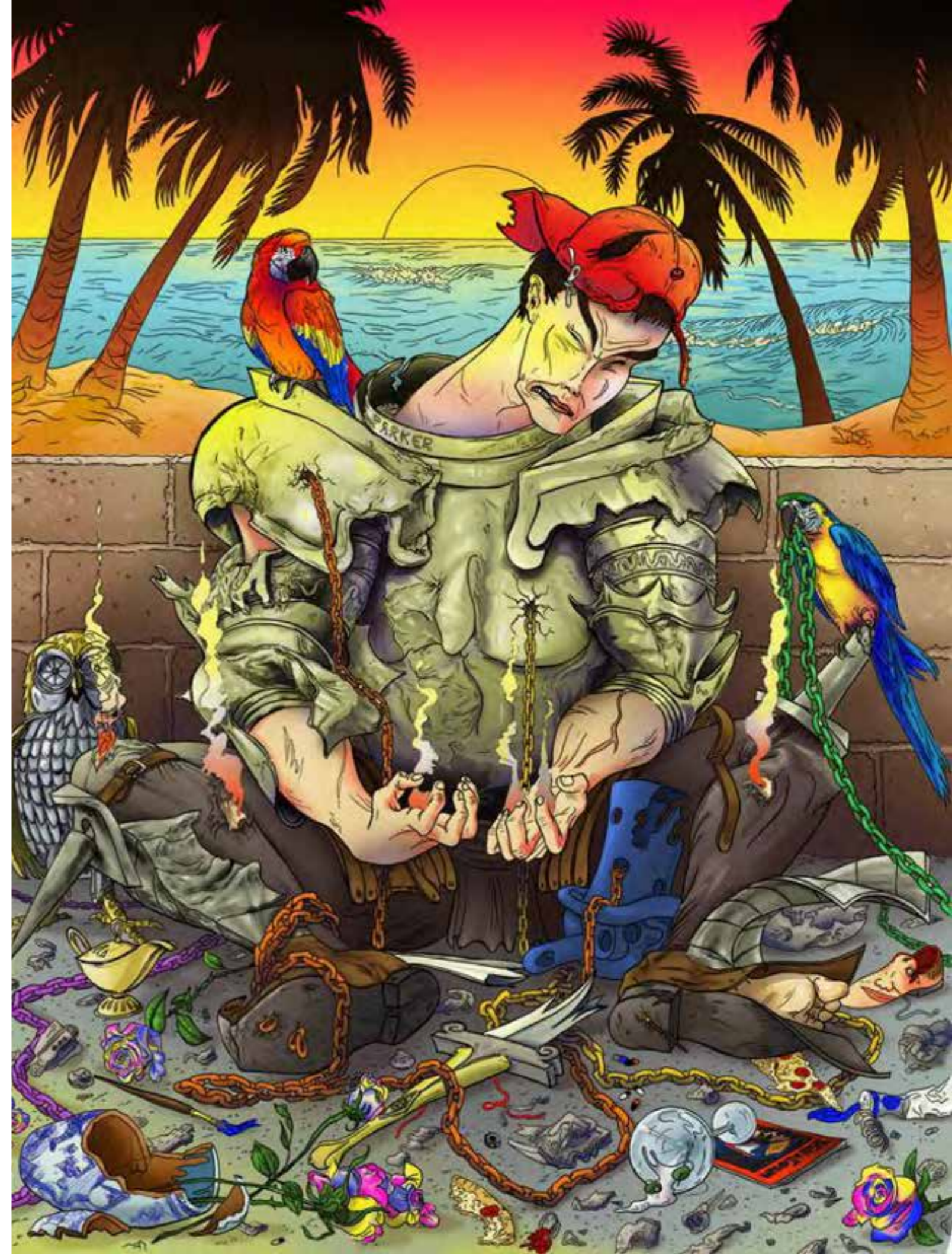
These are particular kinds of portraits: although they're mostly not self-portraits, the artists have embedded psychic and sexual energies in them, as have their viewers. By considering these portraits as sites of shared libidinal investment, these works open up porous, distributed concepts of the self.

In particular, they focus on the culture of adolescence and youth, a time defined by self-invention and transformation, run through with aspiration and desire and trauma.

## DISTRIBUTED SELVES

Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* told the story of a handsome young man who is given a painted portrait that captures his youthful beauty. From that day on, the young man never seems to age. As years pass, the mystery deepens, until finally it is revealed that his portrait has aged in his place, growing more grotesque as he remains eternally youthful.

One way to read this story is that the portrait has the power to reveal the true, hidden self. But this reading assumes that the aging image of Dorian Gray is more authentic than his youthful, embodied counterpart. Maybe a better reading is that we can embed parts of ourselves in images—in this case, the exhaustions and stresses of time's passage.





## NO GHOST JUST A SHELL

Although most of the artworks in “The Heart is a Lonely Hunter” are quite recent, the exhibition also includes two older videos by Pierre Huyghe, which were produced for the series *No Ghost Just a Shell* (initiated by Huyghe and Philippe Parreno in 1999). For that series, the artists purchased the rights to an animated character, Annlee, from the Japanese commercial animation studio Kworks, and then invited other artists to reuse her image in their own projects.

In Huyghe’s *Two Minutes out of Time*, showing in this exhibition, a 3D graphics version of Annlee steps out of a white mist as a female voice-over introduces the character:

She is a passerby, an extra, designed just like that...A fictional character with a copyright, proposed for sale... That’s it. While waiting to be dropped into a story, a theoretical life, she has been diverted from a fictional existence, and has become what she is now: a deviant sign.

The narrator is asking the viewer to feel empathy for this image because it was used as a commodity, even though it continues to be trafficked through contemporary art circuits. But before this contradiction is resolved, the voice-over changes. A young girl (a student at an American school in Paris) begins describing a transcendental experience in an art museum:

I saw one – this one painting really caught my eye. It was called *Water Lilies*. I looked at it and I gazed at it – and then I looked at the painting next to it. It really was astonishing. And I forgot everything else that I had ever known....all I saw was the girl in the boat. I looked at her. I wondered what she was thinking.

Here, the focus is still on an encounter with an image of a young girl, although it’s a different girl, and this narrator is far more subjective, using the encounter with a character as an opportunity to share something about herself.

In *Two Minutes Out of Time*, Huyghe acknowledges the relationships that can develop with fictive characters, which implicitly raises the question of his own relationship with this young girl from Japan (and ours as viewers, too). But if Huyghe alludes to this question, he stops short of exploring it directly. This differentiates the work from the others in this exhibition, which bring such questions to the fore.

In English, the expression “put yourself in someone else’s shoes” is used to describe this kind of experience of feeling empathy for another, seeing the world from their point of view. It doesn’t specify what aspects of your self you should put there, or whether you get them back.



## FOUND FICTIONS

Fan art – work that’s made by fans of a film or video game or other work of fiction, often featuring characters in situations that may or may not appear in the original work – was one source of inspiration for this exhibition, and for many of the artists in it.

Typically, the fan is thought of as a figure of relatively low status, someone who makes free use of popular imagery as a way of exploring their own subjectivity. The work in “The Heart is a Lonely Hunter” is made by prominent contemporary artists, not ordinary fans, and this is an important distinction. But while the power dynamic differs, an important underlying assumption still holds: affective involvement with popular images is no less real just because the images are fictive.

Yarat’s Curatorial Director Suad Garayeva and I even imagined the curation of exhibition as a kind of fan art for Carson McCullers’ novel of the same name, which once affected me profoundly. As a college freshman almost twenty years ago, I took a creative writing class with a professor who wrote North Carolina swamp fiction. I fell in unrequited, puppy dog love with a girl in the class, an impossibly sophisticated country singer who’d recently moved from Nashville, while the professor talked at length about Carson McCullers’ novel *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*.

I remember that there was something about the world that book created that was utterly bleak, but also comforting. Its characters suffered because

of their isolation, but their suffering was at times alleviated by music, friendship, or the presence of others, and all of this was granted a kind of elegiac dignity through the book’s narrative. Something about the book made me wonder if painful aspects of my own life could be experienced in a similarly aestheticized way. To live, as if in a fiction.

The book recently appeared as an entry in a Top Ten list made by Bunny Rogers for *Artforum* magazine. In it, Rogers describes her interest in the character of Biff Brannon: “He is riddled with mental lapses, which the author implies are driven by pedophilic desires.” I had no memory of his fascination for the adolescent character in the book until reading this, and this mental lapse worried me.





NICE

TRY

Sobear

I had been deeply attached to the book– but when I began to reread it in preparation for this exhibition, I felt afraid that the memory of the feeling it gave me might slip away, and I stopped after a few pages.

“The Heart is a Lonely Hunter” includes work by Rogers that uses sculpture, prints, and video to create a narrative world based on Columbine Library, the site of a horrific school shooting in the US in 1999. Within the installation, two video projections show characters from animated television series (Joan of Arc of *Clone High* and Gazlene Membrane of *Invader Zim*) reciting Rogers’ poetry in settings that evoke the aftermath of the violence. A related series of prints, all titled *Self-portrait as a clone of Jeanne d’Arc*, cast Rogers in the role of the Joan character in a variety of guises, from a ballerina to Jodi Foster in *Silence of the Lambs*. Sculptural chairs modeled on state-issued institutional furniture are adorned with backpacks and duffels like those of victims and gun-wielding attackers. A bookshelf carries rows of plush dolls based on the singer-songwriter Elliott Smith, whose 2003 death was ruled a suicide.



A common response to trauma is to seal oneself off from it by turning to fiction—but trauma always finds its way back in, ignored for as long as possible until it triggers a new crisis. Rogers excavates the traumatic undercurrent that fictional characters can never quite contain, trauma that is both collectively shared and deeply personal.



Still frame from Bunny Rogers, *Poetry reading in Columbine Cafeteria with Gazlene Membrane*, 2014  
Animated Film / 20'.  
Courtesy of the artist and Société

Like Annlee or Gazlene Membrane, many of the characters and subjects in “The Heart is a Lonely Hunter” were someone else’s fictional creation, appropriated for use in the artist’s project.

Power and eros are always at play in appropriation-based artwork. To take an example from the early-1980s : Sherrie Levine rephotographing Walker Evans’ documentary photographs of the Depression-era American South has been celebrated as a “feminist hijacking,” a phrase that simultaneously invokes the artist’s marginal position relative to Evans, and the art historian’s titillation at her aggressive act.

Internet culture, though, makes possible a more open-ended relationship between an artist and their source material. Stripped of their context and set into motion on the network, online images interact with one another and with users to acquire new meanings with each share, moving across multiple contexts to become overburdened with an excess of meanings.

On the internet, the hijacking has often already happened before the artist ever encounters the image. It is already, in some sense, a crime scene.



Parker Ito has discussed these conditions in relation to his own work in a text about the 2015 exhibition *A Little Taste of Cheeto in the Night*, which was presented in Los Angeles this year by the gallery Chateau Shatto in an off-site space:

With such a density of information, the chemistry between things becomes unpredictable. The exhibition reaches a point where there is no one-to-one correlation between a reference and its meaning. It's like when people who don't read Chinese get Chinese characters tattooed on their bodies. Often those phrases are mistranslated, but it doesn't really matter to the person what the characters say. They're mostly interested in the qualities being conveyed by this kind of typography. That's how I think about content: It's not equivalent; it's a filter. I'm invested in the sensation of things.

One work from the exhibition, Ito's painting *The Razzle Dazzle of Inhaling B67 Fumes w/ Chains / Kombucha Dog (The Road to the Sleep Deprivation)*, also showing in "The Heart is a Lonely Hunter," features an image of Elaine Sturtevant, an artist who came to prominence in the 1960s by recreating other artist's works. Sturtevant always argued that her work was not copying or creating sameness, but using repetition as a way to generate difference, a stance that resonates with Ito's own open-ended reuse of found imagery.



Steel chains that suspend the painting from the ceiling seem to enter the canvas and imprison her practically indiscernible figure. The chains are accompanied by strings of LED lights; in *A Little Taste of Cheeto in the Night*, chains and lights together formed a kind of network that linked the images together, as well as the sculptures and ladders and screens that filled the room to overflowing. Everything was connected, but also confined, threatening to engulf the viewer. But the overwhelming sense was that images, packed together tightly and detached from their context, offer a kind of liberatory possibility for rewriting social meaning.

Employing repetition as difference (rather than copying) still allows for a dialogue with the historical meaning of reused images. Camille Henrot's contribution to "The Heart is a Lonely Hunter," which includes a series of watercolor drawings loosely based on Nicki Minaj music videos including the iconic *Anaconda*, exemplifies this.



Still from Parker Ito, *A Lil' taste of Cheeto in the Night*, 2015  
 HD Video, 6'33"  
 Courtesy of the artist and Chateau Shatto



The music video plays on the tropes of exoticism in art and literature, which flourished in Europe during its colonial period. Fantasies about unfamiliar cultures and places were played out in grotesque imagery that Europeans have projected on people of color. As Chris Marker and Alain Resnais wrote in the narration of their film *Les Statues Meurent Aussi*, “Already the white person projected on the black their own demons, in order to purify themselves.”

Anaconda takes on these demons and exaggerates them to the extreme, portraying Minaj as a kind of oversexed goddess who threatens to castrate the desiring viewer. This has led to debate about whether Minaj was merely participating in her own exploitation, or whether the music video was a way of destabilizing white patriarchy by bringing out its neurotic contradictions.

Henrot’s drawings take gleeful pleasure in this destabilization. If Western art history represents a kind of theater of white male desire, Henrot’s drawings play out desires of a somewhat different order, in which the subjugation or exclusion of men is a central theme.





## DRAWN FROM LIFE

Where Henrot finds a possibility for social transformation by working within seemingly oppressive and restrictive depictions of gender and the body, Lu Yang seeks instead to radically re-work the body as both symbol and lived reality.

Lu's character Uterus Man exemplifies this slippage. Uterus Man is an asexual character whose appearance is influenced by Japanese manga as well as Mao Sugiyama, a Japanese cosplay artist who undertook surgery to become sexually neutral. Drawing on these images, Yang developed the character of Uterus Man as a superhero with abilities linked to the female mammal reproductive system, with the ability to intervene in the genetic code of enemies. This character is explored through a short video, a playable videogame, a series of prints, and has also been explored through photographs in which Sugiyama dresses as Uterus Man and performs in public places, highlighting the porous boundary between fictional characters and lived experience.



In Yang's work, the transformation of the body represents a kind of liberatory potential. Hannah Black's new video, in contrast, suggests that reshaping the body can also reflect the same financial and aesthetic processes that reshape cities, reflecting a kind of subjugation.



Still from Hannah Black, *Bodybuilding*, 2015  
Video, 8'9".  
Courtesy of the artist and YARAT Contemporary Art Centre.

For the newly commissioned work, Black traveled to Baku and filmed and interviewed amateur and professional bodybuilders. Their sculpted bodies are collaged with images of vacant-looking new buildings in Baku, as well as a collage of sound and text: snatches of globally identical pop music heard in the gym, rock music recommended online for pumping iron, pleas for help found on online bodybuilding forums, and a fragmentary script written by the artist.

In the script, Black writes,

The effort of thought. The black rigs stud the coast. Real works of art. Muscles wear down. The effort of being safe by knowing nothing. Waiting to be full.

Although Black's video doesn't offer any easy path to liberation, it also reflects a deep sympathy for the people who are subject to the global processes that effect bodily and urban transformation. The bodybuilders are unimaginably strong, but their comments on internet forums reflect their vulnerability. "Please help," one of these comments begins, and the plaintive request invites empathy from the viewer along with a reflection on the strange futility of their struggle.

In the work of Jasper Spicero, bodies are similarly confined in systems that define and delimit their possibilities. Spicero's video, installation, and website *Centers in Pain* is narrative imagined for Wapato Prison, a disused incarceration facility built nine years ago in Portland, Oregon. It never once housed prisoners, and remains in pristine condition, empty except for a janitorial staff and occasional film crew.



After registering the domain name [www.centersinpain.org](http://www.centersinpain.org), Spicero created a number of unique sculptures for the prison. He installed the sculptures in the location, shot a film that included the sculptures as props, and took photographs. He also wrote a screenplay (separate from the film), and uploaded text, images, videos, and floor plans of the prison to a website that became a kind of narrative world unto itself.

*Centers in Pain* evokes a world of institutional grays, low contrast lighting, bodies hemmed in by Plexiglas, steel grated windows, accumulating dust, standard-issue uniforms. Three characters move somnambulently through this world, sweeping or gazing into mirrors.



In this context, Spicero's sculptures strike an incongruously comical note. Using 3D printed plastic and powder-coated steel and found elements, they exist somewhere between the aesthetics of the prison and the day care. Many of the sculptures become characters themselves, such as the hat-and-tie wearing desk lamps of the *Stand Alone Complex* series, which have an unsettling air of incomprehension about them.

The presence of these objects, which speak to childhood and imagination, are crucial to transforming Wapato Prison from an actual space of confinement to a depiction of a kind of mental confinement. The film in *Centers in Pain* ends with the characters huddled around the floor plans of the facility, which actual prisoners might use to plan their escape. The image suggests that in this narrative world, fictive imagery is threatening, and liberation comes only by finding a way out.



Still from Jasper Spicero, *Centers in Pain*, 2014  
Video, 15'42".  
Courtesy of the artist.



Spicero's inclusion of the blueprint marks a shift in emphasis from the pictorial to the schematic, which is mirrored in *Data for Desire* by Neil Beloufa. The film, shown in a sculptural installation, depicts young people at a party in a Canadian ski town. The footage is staged with amateur actors, but it is shot in a documentary style, with interviews of the subjects as well as fly-on-the-wall footage of their interactions, as they drink and flirt and argue. As they do so, a team of French mathematicians in a classroom-like space—who believe they are watching a documentary—discuss these performed interactions, rating their personal qualities and developing a statistical model to predict the likelihood of various couples “hooking up.”

Human emotion, though, is not determined by probability. The scientists' efforts, which call to mind the data-driven workings of a contemporary dating website or app, are equal parts disturbing and farcical. In their assessment of parameters such as “libido,” in measuring hormone levels and alcohol levels, the scientists embrace a deterministic world view, in which such variables dictate individual behavior. But their model seems certain to fail, unable to fully contain the richness and complexity of their lives. The film is presented in a sculptural installation in which rebar is used to make a kind of wireframe of a domestic space with suggestions of body parts, again reduced to a near-mathematical description.



While the partygoers are expected to perform as the subjects of the study, the scientists believe they are able to present themselves as neutral, almost disembodied. This comes across as a privilege, but also a disavowal of the ways in which their data, their obsession with these young people's bodies and sexual habits, reflects their own desires, their own libidinal investment, their desire for data.

There was an exhibition in New York in 2011 titled “The Death of Affect.” I didn’t see it, but I read a review by Sofia Leiby, who explained that the exhibition took its title from a 1974 J.G. Ballard text:

In the 1974 introduction to his novel *Crash*, Ballard describes the death of affect as symptomatic of 20th century’s media-driven culture: “the marriage of reason and nightmare which has dominated the 20th century has given birth to an ever more ambiguous world...” resulting in “the most terrifying casualty of the century: the death of affect.”

Ballard was arguing that the rise of mass communication technologies would deaden our ability to feel empathy and a sense of connection, an idea that has found new life in the discourse surrounding the rise of the internet and the handheld device. But the anxiety isn’t born out by lived experience: experiences of pain, pleasure, and desire are no less real because they happen on screen.

Likewise, portraiture (in its many contemporary guises) is not a mere representation or reflection of us; it serves as the site of human emotion and a part of the ongoing, beautiful, tragic process of constructing and transforming the self.

Text by Michael Connor



*The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, Carson McCullers, 2015  
 Ikebana: Painted ceramic vase, Corn Poppy,  
 Martha Washington Geranium, Plexi label  
 57.2 x 29.8 x 29.8 cm  
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures



ARTISTS

PIERRE HUYGHE  
BUNNY ROGERS  
CAMILLE HENROT  
HANNAH BLACK  
JASPER SPICERO  
LU YANG  
NEIL BELOUFA  
PARKER ITO

# PIERRE HUYGHE B. 1969, FRANCE

[www.hauserwirth.com/artists/63/pierre-huyghe/biography](http://www.hauserwirth.com/artists/63/pierre-huyghe/biography)



*One Million Kingdoms*, 2001  
Animated film, 6'

Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery



*One Million Kingdoms*, 2001  
Animated film, 6'

Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery



*Two Minutes Out of Time*, 2000  
Animated film, color, sound, 4'

Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery

*Two Minutes Out of Time*, 2000

Animated Film

Color, sound, 4'

Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman

The two animated films *Two Minutes Out of Time* and *One Million Kingdoms* are part of Pierre Huyghe's larger project *No Ghost Just a Shell* developed in collaboration with Phillippe Parreno. In 1999 the duo acquired copyright for an anime character from the Japanese agency Kworks, one of the key players in Japanese Manga industry. Normally, similar inexpensive characters were bought for commercial purposes and--due to their limited capacities--were employed only for a short period of time. Huyghe and Parreno christened the digital file as Annlee, gave her a 3-D makeover and offered her free of charge to fellow artists to develop different narratives, thus turning the character's commercial existence into an artistic one.

*Two Minutes Out of Time* serves as a prologue to the series in which a female voiceover introduces Annlee as a secondary character who has deviated from her insignificant existence. This sentimental tale of Annlee's short life gives a heartfelt dimension to contemporary conditions of digital capitalism, intellectual property and image consumption.

*One Million Kingdoms*, 2001

Animated Film, 6'

Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman

In *One Million Kingdoms*, Annlee is transformed into a fluorescent outline wondering through an ultrasound-built cosmic landscape. Annlee, speaking in Neil Armstrong's digitally synthesized voice, blends the famous transmission from Apollo 11 mission with excerpts from Jules Verne's 1865 novel *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*. Proclaiming that 'this is an expedition through territories topologically similar' the video conflates the core of the Earth, documented moonscapes and the digital space mediated by a screen. Intense with sensations of solitude and nostalgia, the work evokes nineteenth-century Romanticism and reintegrates it into a contemporary aesthetic.

In 2002 Huyghe and Parreno decided to "liberate" Annlee from exploitation and transferred ownership of the copyright to the character herself, which ultimately put an end to her existence.

## TWO MINUTES OUT OF TIME

'I can imagine you, it's easy. I can see you and I can see her. I'm looking at an image facing an imaginary character; she's a passer-by, an extra; she was designed just like that. Nobody planned that she would ever have to speak, given no particular abilities to survive, she would probably dead by now; this is her true story: a fictional character with a copyright, designed by a company and proposed for sale, that's it. While waiting to be dropped into a story, a theoretical life, she has been diverted from a fictional existence and has become what she is now -a deviant sign. She says:

-I've had two minutes, two minutes of your linear time, it's more than what I would have spent in a story before being forgotten. In less than two minutes I'll be gone. My name, my name is Annlee ... Annlee. I am a common name I was a frozen picture; an evidence submitted to you I've become animated, however, not by a story with a plot, no. I'm haunted by your imagination and that's what I want from you. See, I'm not her for your amusement, you're here for mine.

It was pretty... it was pretty (neat): all the paintings were really nice, but I saw one this one painting really caught my eye, it was called Water Lilies...I looked at it and I gazed at it and then I looked at the painting next to it.. it really was astonishing. And I forgot everything else that I had ever known; I could not even look at the name of the painting. All I saw was the girl in a boat. I looked at her; I wondered what she was thinking, I don't know, maybe she was suffering, maybe she was hurting... I looked at it, I looked at it... I couldn't think, I could not breathe, I don't know what happened, I was stuck. I saw a strange light, I didn't know what it was. Then I felt a beam on my shoulder, it kept, I felt something stronger on my shoulder, it hit me and it hit and it hurt. Finally I saw the light and it was getting bigger and bigger and bigger until I'd seen nothing else and finally I felt nothing, I was gone.'

## PIERRE HUYGHE

We bought a copyright of manga character, a sign. Normally this kind of signs are bought by people to make advertising or cartoons... it's a support for narrative, a platform for a narrative. This character is called Annlee and we give this character to different artists. Different authors speak through this character in a certain way. So you will have for example in a museum or in this space which is actually film on another place you'll have sculpture then you have a painting about this character. In mine Annlee is just talking about itself, so it's simply a character talking about this condition of being a character. We owned the copyright of the sign and decided to give the copyright back to the sign itself. It owns its existence as a sign, so it disappeared as an image, but it did not disappear as an entity; you can still talk about it, you can still make a novel about Annlee.'

Interview with *Art 21*, 'Art in the Twenty-First Century', Season 4, 2007



*Self- Portrait as clone of Jeanne d'Arc, 2014*  
 Fine Art Print on Hahnemühle PhotoRag Ultrasmooth 305 g, artist frame  
 70 x 58 x 4 cm / 27.5 x 22.8 x 1.5 inches, each (framed)  
 Courtesy of Jansen Collection



*Self- Portrait as clone of Jeanne d'Arc, 2014*  
 Fine Art Print on Hahnemühle PhotoRag  
 Ultrasmooth 305 g, artist frame  
 70 x 58 x 4 cm / 27.5 x 22.8 x 1.5 inches, each (framed)  
 Courtesy of Jansen Collection



*Poetry reading in Columbine Library with Joan of Arc, 2014*  
 Animated Film / 20 min. and Clone State Bench, 2014  
 Maple wood, orange faux suede, custom-made duffel bags  
 122 x 53 x 49 cm / 48 x 21 x 19 inches / Unique



*Poetry reading in Columbine Cafeteria  
 with Gazlene Membrane, 2014*  
 Animated Film / 20 min.



*Self- Portrait as clone of Jeanne d'Arc, 2014*  
 Fine Art Print on Hahnemühle PhotoRag \ Ultrasmooth 305 g, artist frame  
 70 x 58 x 4 cm / 27.5 x 22.8 x 1.5 inches, each (framed)  
 Courtesy of Jansen Collection

## BUNNY ROGERS B.1990, USA

www.meryn.ru

The works shown here form part of a larger series focusing on the Columbine High School massacre of 1999, in which two teenagers fatally shot one teacher and fellow students before taking their own lives. People in the US responded with a sense of shared grief as well as hysteria about violence in youth culture, while a small minority identified with and even glorified the killers. Rogers' installation recreates scenes from the aftermath of the tragedy, knitting together factual records with fictional characters drawn from the popular culture of the artists' childhood to explore the trauma that plays out in the sugar-coated images of adolescence.

*Poetry reading in Columbine Library with Joan of Arc, 2014*  
 Animated Film / 20'  
 Courtesy of the artist and Soci t 

*Poetry reading in Columbine Cafeteria  
 with Gazlene Membrane, 2014*  
 Animated Film / 20'  
 Courtesy of the artist and Soci t 

Rogers borrows the characters of Joan of Arc from *Clone High* cartoon series and Gaz from *Invader Zim* for her animated films that reconstruct computer-generated spaces of Columbine school. These antisocial and cynical cartoon characters, hugely popular in the early 2000s, represent the Columbine High School killers Dylan Klebod and Eric Harris and hence, merge fictional depictions of alienated youth with real-life prototypes. In the video they recite poetry from Bunny's book *Cunny Poem Vol.1*, initially published on her Tumblr feed that is lyrical and juvenile, vulnerable and nihilistic.

*Clone State Bench, 2014*  
 Maple wood, orange faux suede, custom-made duffel bags  
 122 x 53 x 49 cm  
 Courtesy of the artist and Soci t 

*Clone State Bookcase, 2014*  
 Maple wood, metal, Limited-Edition Elliott Smith plush dolls, "Ferdinand the Bull" third-place mourning ribbons, casters  
 246 x 309 x 61 cm  
 Courtesy of Jansen Collection

*State Skool Chairs, 2014*  
 Maple wood, grey faux suede, custom-made backpacks, custom- made ballet slippers  
 95 x 113 x 113 cm  
 Courtesy of Jansen Collection

Three sculptural installations knit together items that would have been present at the site of the Columbine shooting with the artist's childhood mementos and popular teen culture of the time. Library bookshelves are lined with plush dolls based on the singer Elliott Smith, whose 2003 death was ruled a suicide, adorned with "mourning ribbons" based on the cartoon character Ferdinand the Bull. Ominous duffels, like those that would have been stuffed with weapons by the shooters, and backpacks decorated with anime characters, like those their victims might have carried, accompany the institutional style bench and chairs.

*15 x Self- Portrait as clone of Jeanne d'Arc, 2014*  
 Fine Art Print on Hahnemühle PhotoRag Ultrasmooth 305 g, artist frame  
 70 x 58 x 4 cm each  
 Courtesy of Jansen Collection

Rogers' series of computer-generated prints, all titled *Self-Portrait as clone of Jeanne d'Arc*, takes its cue again from the character of Joan from *Clone High*, who was a 16-year old contemporary clone of the 15th-century French heroine. Along with Jeanne d'Arc, the portraits draw on other imagery such as Jodi Foster from *Silence of the Lambs* or Grizabella from the musical *Cats*, suggesting a concept of the self that has multiple facets, made up of found fragments, and constantly re-performed.

# Transcripts: Poetry reading in Columbine Cafeteria with Gazlene Membrane, 2014 with Gaz character as Eric Harris

“Performing yourself should fit like a well-tailored suit. Should feel loose in the shoulders,  
should feel natural. Stop conflating, acting with insincerity as if honesty exists.” (Bunny Rogers,  
Facebook status update, March 2014)

## Poem for Bernadette

i am very forgiving, watch this  
U are looking at a very forgivable very beautiful heartbreaker  
i look at you and i have no idea who you are  
i forget your name all the time  
you can laugh safely because this is what i wanted  
Its all tailoring u know that

## Poisonous snow

Everyone has stupid men in our lives  
that are sweet  
My heart is in the wrong place  
Sufficient example of toxic intelligence  
Emotional intelligence is another way of indicating  
wilting entertainment  
With art feelings are clear  
I stand by the manipulation  
With people feelings are muddy  
I want to be a good person  
You made michael significant  
How do i put this lightly

## I deserve a chance honey

Brains can be a challenge  
Berry your weakness  
Mutilate the earth

## Dark poem

Self-pity should be a crime punishable by death  
Even Safety Has A Purpose  
Goodbye Wednesday  
Goodbye Dad  
O, Columbine  
O Water of Life,  
Of Death

## A broken goat drowning a broken goat

watch the repairshop patrons escape priorities  
I fumble with needles and bind beads together  
Another sample for support facilities so strictly business  
I refuse the magnifying glass and continue to hate them  
“Looking for something to lighten up a dark corner?”  
Company at the foot of your bed to garble your griefings  
More eyerolls from me and I stay behind the  
counter knowing how fine im not  
I place my palms flat on the work bench because the  
whole surface is moving

## But bunny never came

Harry not again the TV.  
Careful is different than  
Cold and reserved and suspicious.  
You have to be so careful.  
Go home cop daddy...  
It will be quiet soon...

“Every living creature  
on this earth dies alone.”

Michael Scofield would stop at nothing.  
You are looking at two folded cranes.  
You are looking at two painted turtles.  
I hope you enjoyed them.  
You are looking at two painted turtles  
and the occasional crane.  
There are  
Two sets of footprints in the sand  
Charting your life's path, and  
During the hardest times in your life  
You see only a single set of footprints.  
You ask Agent Mahone,  
Agent Mahone why when I needed you most  
Did you abandon me  
And Agent Mahone says  
That that was when he carried you.

### Society

i do it all, fuck you!  
egomaniacs dont kill themselves  
im going international  
im going to die in long island

What if someone told u  
you were significant?

I like u when youre coherent  
Well.....

Does it work like that? It doesn't work like that

Blood will spill blood

Twin Peaks was created to tell Harold's story.  
Twin Peaks had nothing to do with Laura it had everything to do with Harold.  
It's about Harold and it was always about Harold.

@ one with the screaming in my head

Adorability is fuckability  
because children are adorable  
and men want to fuck children  
Acknowledge or die wow  
You are dead to me

Cp direct (sociopath)

that was a dangerous thing i said  
sometimes, sometimes there wont be a way back  
you cant watch your train pull away from the station with u on it  
how thoughtful  
how u intend to operate

martyr

I was built to be the exception  
Look at me  
Look at me of course im excited  
with so little effort  
with such conviction

## Morgentown

Regressus ad infinitum  
chocolate brown Hydrangem  
black roses, blue roses  
black and white roses  
Halloween roses

You know your place in the sky,  
He knows his way in the dark

Im an artist  
Im an angel  
Kill for me  
Die for me

As if wat is perceived as strenth

The voices in my head say youre crazy  
I laugh at you because you are all the same  
Take my American girl doll Sabbath set  
Take my dignity  
you and your fat cat vocab  
Feed me mud and light everything on fire  
United in death ill see u in hell

## Easy math

angel faced and ever hesitant  
i wouldnt call it a bag of trix  
but i would call it a bag of advantages  
in every cinderella story there is the dark story,  
there is the shadows  
cant decide if you would rather fuck an angel or a child  
I am hiding because I am not always interested in having  
my patience rewarded

the symbol of the face always turned away

We wil die in this life and life wil say gbye  
we will all say goodbye in this life

Do this in remembrance of me

Remember this crushing day and the weight of your stupidity.  
NO one is exempt there are NO options and there are NO alternatives.  
Welcome to the stupidest movie...  
None of your pain is real

TRANSCRIPTS: POETRY READING  
IN COLUMBINE LIBRARY WITH JOAN  
OF ARC, 2014

with Joan of Arc character as Dylan Klebold

Der Unhold the ogre

I Can't stop thinking of dying?  
Truly unlimited reverie all alone  
Flood angels, mud angels, blood angels  
A prison study

Doomed to be a "vodka girl"

i would not want to go to the airport right now  
now u know how my dad feels  
it was my ankle, and it's O.K.

soft flameless candle (Midian City dregging)

Here they are, reflected  
Deranged like cold interiors  
Im kissing you right now

Valentine's Day

I want a fine arts valentine  
One that's steady and that's true  
I want a fine arts valentine  
I spend so much time in school  
When I look around me  
All I see is kids  
Kids I'd like to spend the day with  
Kids I'd like to eat a meal with  
It's hard in school  
to know your boundaries  
it's hard outside  
to know your boundaries  
I'd like to touch some kids  
I'd like some schoolkids  
To touch me

Loving ru is easy

I think you are easy to love  
I feel good when I am around you  
I look forward to seeing you and  
Am Accepting of your attention



### My apologies accepted

It gives me great pleasure to see you safe.  
Feeling safe is most important.  
I love red...  
Because I am dramatic.

### my friend Catherine

told me how he loved me and all this other stuff  
on how he wanted to die alone and other stuff

### Same fuckin kid

Still same dumb fuckin kid  
w drug ravaged 80 year old body  
Fuckin birth defects  
fuckin face  
Untitled 3  
Fuck u  
I love u  
Fuck u tho  
I love u tho

### Andrea model

Andrea has porcelain skin  
Andrea is not vegan  
Andrea makes difficult work  
Andrea writes a lot  
Andrea does her homework  
Andrea looks young  
Andrea is sexually inexperienced  
And unaware  
Andrea has a fetish for constrictive fabrics  
I am perceptive  
Everyone is in love with Andrea  
Three straight men in our grade  
One shop tech  
And a handful of L train commuters  
Andrea needs love too  
Andrea doesn't deserve to die  
Want to start a fund to save Andrea

### Birthday poem

It means so much to have your words remembered  
It means so much to have your pain acknowledged  
People use proper spelling and grammar when they want to return the hurt.  
Sex is disgusting because I am disgusting

### Dotyk

It is important to keep my cellophone charged  
I have to provide the tools by which to reach me  
they have reason to touch you  
I need to keep doors "open"  
Weirdos get killed that's why

### A true mute is too tempting

Broken people don't get warm and won't get whole again  
I don't want to touch my body anymore (anywhere)  
and yeah, I have fallen leaves  
waiting on thin ice  
It's more important for you to be there  
You're already something (special too)

### The coldest shoulder

Two childhood animal friends  
find themselves forced to become enemies.  
No one breaks up with you  
Everyone just goes away

### In disgrace not much wrong

my aching knees right where you left me  
If u cry when u think about how u treat people  
Ur doing something right

### cloak

your name is so soft  
your heart is so soft  
your hug is so warm  
your eyes are so kind  
your grip is so light  
your touch is so light  
your eyes are so scared  
your kiss is so scared  
bold Comp ex

Never make excuses bc theres never enough material.

You will always accuse the ones you love  
everything is equally embarrassing  
u are the hot beating center of humanitys humiliation

Getting buried w my dog sanity  
Want my legs eaten by lava  
trick cars into hitting me like a dog  
drown in tub  
steamrolled

deeply bugged

Is it visible?

It mustn't be

someone would say something

someone would help

Can u say that thing about audience again

but then how does everyone know

Can u say that thing about audience again

the living novel

we have a history

I die knowing good

Vail's first snow

Big secret snowflake

With parasitic tendencies

i dont want these feelings

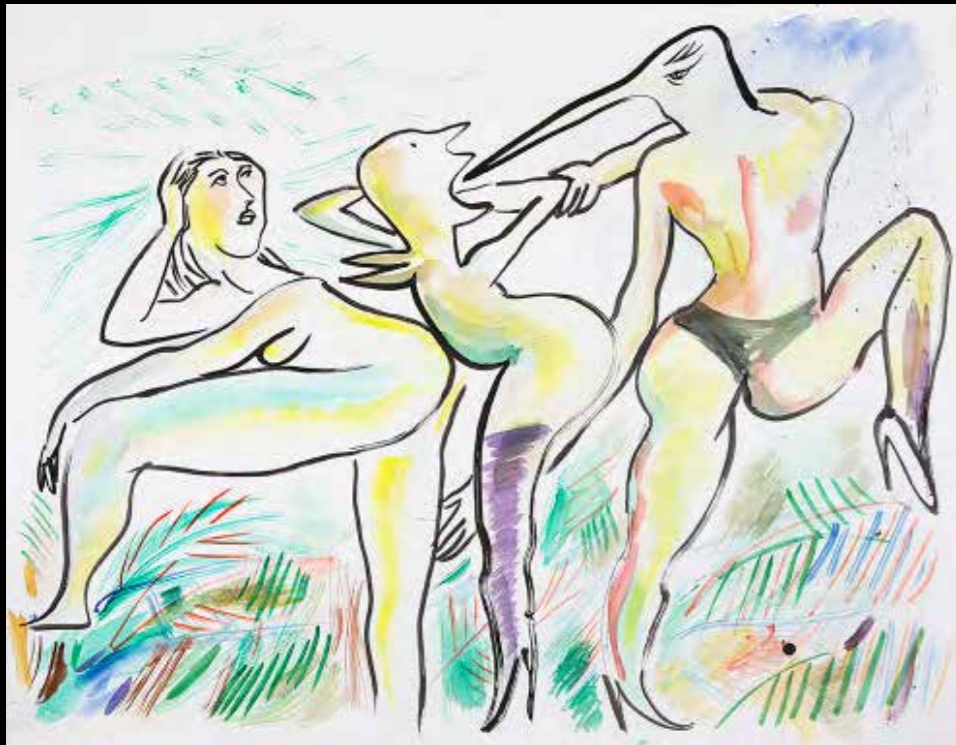
across a canyon

a snowful wail

unfolds a snowing mystery

# CAMILLE HENROT, B. 1978, FRANCE

[www.camillehenrot.fr/en/work](http://www.camillehenrot.fr/en/work)



*My Anaconda Don't*, 2015  
Watercolor on Paper mounted on dibond  
149.9 x 207 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures



*He Keep Telling Me It's Real*, 2015  
Watercolor on Paper mounted on dibond  
149.9 x 193 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures



*The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, Carson McCullers, 2014  
Ikebana: Painted ceramic vase, Corn Poppy,  
Martha Washington Geranium, Plexi label  
57.2 x 29.8 x 29.8 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

*My Anaconda Don't*, 2015  
Watercolor on Paper mounted on dibond  
149.9 x 207 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

*He Keep Telling Me It's Real*, 2015  
Watercolor on Paper mounted on dibond  
149.9 x 193 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

The watercolor drawings *My Anaconda Don't* and *He Keep Telling Me It's Real* were inspired by the Nicki Minaj music video *Anaconda*, and borrow titles from its lyrics. It has been fiercely debated whether the overtly sexual music video perpetuates the age-old stereotype of the woman of color as a hyper-sexualized or if it represents an attack on white heterosexual male desire for the exotic. Henrot uses the video's exaggerated motifs of European exoticism and references its history in fine art while taking gleeful pleasure in Minaj's themes of male castration and female domination. The artist gives one of the figures the head of a bird, which resonates with Egyptian mythology and in particular with the deity Thoth, Ibis-headed god of knowledge, writing, moon and magic, a symbol of powerful female sexuality; it could also refer to the recurring motif of the bird-like creature in Surrealist art and particular the character of Loplop in Max Ernst's work, which often suggested the threat of castration.

*The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, Carson McCullers, 2014  
Ikebana: Painted ceramic vase, Gerbera, Martha Washington Geranium, Plexi label  
57.2 x 29.8 x 29.8 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

*The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* is part of Henrot's Ikebana series *Is it possible to be revolutionary and like flowers?*, in which the artist employed the Japanese art of flower arrangement to translate famous book titles into bouquets, including the eponymous 1940 classic by Carson McCullers. Henrot's Ikebana pays homage to and visualizes her personal library that she had to leave behind in Paris after moving to New York. The artist researched flowers and their pharmacological and commercial exploits. She then formed connections with the narratives of the books and constructed bouquets following Sogetsu School of Ikebana. With these Ikebana, Henrot investigates the flower as a highly problematized symbol in Western culture that signifies and perpetuates received ideas of gender and class.

Neuroses can create intense identification with emotional representations, regardless of whether they are well thought out or bear any relation to external reality whatsoever. Sigmund Freud's patient "Rat Man" used the term "omnipotence of wishes" to describe the dominance that mental processes exercise over the facts of real life.

When Balzac was on his deathbed, he is reported to have called out for Bianchon, the doctor who figures in *La Comedie Humaine*. So intense was his identification with this fictional representation, he was prepared to entrust himself to the fictive doctor's care.

When the facts of life are painful, building a world of knowledge and ideas offers a shelter. "It is in knowledge that man has found his greatness and happiness," said Smithson, who was born out of wedlock and had no children of his own. His name yet survives in the [Smithsonian Institution] and in a stone (smithsonite).

Excerpt from *Elephant Child*: Camille Henrot (forthcoming)

Text by Michael Connor, Camille Henrot, Clara Meister, and Kristina Scepanski

# HANNAH BLACK B. 1981 UK

[www.vimeo.com/hannahblack](http://www.vimeo.com/hannahblack)



*Bodybuilding, 2015*  
Video  
Camera:  
Courtesy of the artist and YARAT Contemporary Art Centre

So, I know everything varies  
depending on the person

*Bodybuilding, 2015*  
Video  
Camera:  
Courtesy of the artist and YARAT Contemporary Art Centre



*Bodybuilding, 2015*  
Video  
Camera:  
Courtesy of the artist and YARAT Contemporary Art Centre



*Bodybuilding, 2015*  
Video  
Camera:  
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*Bodybuilding, 2015*  
Video  
Camera:  
Courtesy of the artist and YARAT Contemporary Art Centre



*Bodybuilding, 2015*  
Video  
Camera:  
Courtesy of the artist and YARAT Contemporary Art Centre

*Bodybuilding, 2015*  
Video  
Camera:  
Courtesy of the artist and YARAT Contemporary Art Centre

For her video *Bodybuilding*, Hannah Black set out to delve into the world of bodybuilding and investigate relationships between the art of body sculpting, repetition and larger social structures. At an invitation from YARAT, she traveled to Baku to develop the video there, working with amateur and professional bodybuilders at the Azerbaijan Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness. She filmed the sportsmen practising their favourite exercises, and interviewed them about training routines and athletic aspirations as part of her research.

The finished work draws on this research and footage to create a video poem that juxtaposes the carefully constructed bodies of the athletes with imagery of newly built and seemingly unoccupied buildings around the fast-growing city. These

are accompanied by a collage of sound and text: snatches of globally identical pop music heard in the gym, rock music recommended online for pumping iron, pleas for help found on online bodybuilding forums, and a fragmentary script written by the artist.

Designed by leading architects, the high-rise buildings signify prosperity and are seen as symbols of fast recovery from the traumatic Soviet past. However, through the lens of the artist they become simulacra of power and symptoms of a universal aspiration towards unattainable ideals of capitalism.

This work has been newly commissioned by YARAT CAC for the show.

## A CONVERSATION WITH HANNAH BLACK

*I wanted to ask you, a lot of your work and I'm sure a lot of things you talk about also in your interviews seem to always revolve around the idea of gender, sexuality and race. The body seems to be a very central element of it. Do you see it like that, or do you use it more as a tool? Do you perhaps feel that the body has some other role in your work?*

The body is actually not a very interesting category for me, but now I have this video called *My Bodies* which has been screened quite a lot and I think people tend to pick it up whenever they are doing anything about 'the body'. They're like, 'oh here's the thing it's called *My Bodies*' when the title was actually kind of a joke. Putting 'bodies' in the plural was an attempt to suggest that actually this is already a weird category. The idea that race and gender are also specific to the body is really weird to me. They are social forms; it's like if we start talking about labor, which maybe has more of an academic Marxist tradition, I don't think someone will say 'oh, you're talking about the body'. But labor is just as invested in the body as gender and race. Your class is probably embedded in your body in all sorts of ways.

*That is also what I picked up from the discussions around your work, but to me, while seeing and watching these videos over and over, it seems to be not necessarily about the body but more social constructs that happen to have something to do with the body as you say. For example in *All My Love*, *All My Love*, where two white sheets biomorphically move about and you have this love affair between two sheet bodies. Here the body is very much abstracted; although thinking of your practice one can think of the white woman singing to these white sheets... it is also very easy to read too much into it, so where does one stop?*

No actually it's cool, I'm happy you read them as a love story.

This video began with this anecdote from the 1950s experiments by the scientist Harry Harlow, in which baby monkeys were given to mechanical mothers. The initial goal of the experiment was to discover some minimal content of parenting by making a robot mother. But at the beginning of the experiment the robots weren't fully ready and the one they gave to the first baby monkey didn't have a face on it. Later on, when they painted the face on it, the monkey did not like it and turned the face around so that it was blank again because that was the face they'd first fallen in love with and got attached to as a mother figure... This was something I was not really in control of and someone had to point it out to me, but again towards the end of the video you have these two faceless figures...

I think it could totally make sense for it to have something to do with race. The role of race in that video is less explicit than in a lot of other videos but I think it's definitely in there. I had this tutorial with Andrea Fraser when I was doing the ISP in New York and she said 'why do you have such an antagonistic relationship with something that's obviously so important to you', which was kind of a provocative question and I think I found it helpful. I'm constantly trying to insist that that's not what I'm looking at, but at the same time in terms of making work it is actually important to me that they have some kind of visceral effect. That's why I use pop music because it's such a body art. I think it's the most amazing art form at least of now, if not of all times, because of this really intense visceral effect.

*I like the playfulness of sound in your videos. There is the language element of it, the visual poetry and then the sound has a very important role again. I think with pop there's quite a lot of sexuality, but also very much stereotyped sexuality, because you have the Britney Spears type- American, blond,*

*high-school girl videos and then you have RnB, which is much more sensual music where the body is very much present, like the soundtrack you are using in My Bodies.*

That is true and that's definitely really obvious in *My Bodies* - you've got images of middle aged white men and all the voices are of young black women but you don't see them, what appears are these CEO figures. But pop music is about archetypes. Maybe someone like Rihanna becomes more like a Britney figure, like with the video Stay which has some resonances with the video to the Britney song I quote in *All My Love, All My Love*. That's why I think Rihanna is an interesting figure.

*Speaking of Rihanna, what do you think about her BBHMM video? Do you think that is taking the whole body and sexuality and gender and violence discourse to an extreme?*

Yes, I think in that sense Rihanna's video is really striking in that it's so explicitly about things like reparations, especially as it came out just after the issue of reparations for slavery was being widely discussed in America and also the discussion about whether or not France should pay back the money extorted with gunships from Haiti when it was first being established as a republic. I think stuff like this is very present right now. What is amazing about pop music is not even about an ethical position, but more that it can respond to the most contemporary thing. It does not matter what it is; it could be white supremacy, it could be something to do with gender, it could have something to do with whatever thing that is in the air - pop music is able to take that in.

*Yes I think it is a very good marker of contemporary culture.*

Actually now I'm thinking about those elements in *All My Love*,

*All My Love* - all the videos have some autobiographical concept but I work through that in the videos really differently to how I do it in writing, where it is more explicit. I sometimes feel like the videos are somehow more real and more accurate exactly because they are not so verbal. I think *All My Love All My Love* in some ways really draws on my relationship with my mother. It's like what you said about Russians, when I was in Baku, when I asked about the relationship of Azerbaijani people to the complicated history with Russia. You said 'there are issues but of course we love them, we grew up watching their movies and reading their books and speaking their language, of course we love them'. I think that was a really nice summary of a relation someone might have to, for example, white women; of course I know how to love them, love has been mandated and enforced.

In a way these figures like Britney Spears can be weirdly abject figures. Britney Spears is so interesting; she becomes so abject that she becomes almost a queer figure, which is a weird word to use in this context. She becomes a kind of attack on white femininity, i.e. on herself: she shaved her head in public and attacked the machinery of representation with an umbrella. That spectacular moment of self-destruction is interesting to me because one of the demands made at the moment from feminists of color towards white feminists is to try and look at their own position as something that would have to be challenged or overcome.

*Britney Spears through her multiple reincarnations in a way becomes a master of deconstructing her own identity... With both Britney and Rihanna, of course we are interested in the images of them, they are negotiated to us through their imagery and these are all assumptions we make based on the images that are in the media, online or wherever. It's funny that in another work - Team Jolie, you have subversive imagery of two women. You use their most popular parts-*



*the mouth of Angelina Jolie and the eye of Jennifer Aniston, amongst another media scandal between the two.*

They are totally archetypal. My relation to the celebrities whose music or images I use is not really a fan position. It kind of touches on a fan position and I probably sound like a fan sometimes and I am a fan of some of these people's work, but at the same time the interest is not from this; the interest is that you've got this incredibly intense shared mass culture archetypes that are instantly recognizable. In Team Jolie I was trying to get at what everyone knows when they look at and think about Jennifer Aniston and Angelina Jolie: what does everyone know without even having to say it to themselves? In the same way, advertising slogans have become a weird catechism of the commodity form. A problem of capitalist modernity, primarily in the West but also spreading to wherever you have that social form, is that there is not that much meaning given to individual lives by the social. Your social power and significance is mainly invested through money and allegiances to money or through labor. In a way, advertising and pop music operate as these kind of insufficient sites of meaning. These investments of meaning are really weird and they are a bit gappy and they don't quite go all the way down. It's the same as with celebrity gossip - we all share these stories and it is not really clear if you're actually supposed to care or not.

*One might just see it as pure entertainment...*

I'm interested in these impoverished forms of social meaning in a social form that does not really generate a lot of meaning besides the relations determined by value, by labor.

*It boils down to the time invested in all these discussions and people sharing opinions about them, but actually there's very little meaning it seems to the*

*actual people concerned with this matter.*

Celebrities are really archetypal, they are almost like Greek gods, who are badly-behaved and not exemplary: the form of a god where a god is not the most moral being but just a more powerful being.

*A line I picked out from Team Jolie is 'everything you could know about her was immediately visible'. This is unfortunately an all-too-common judgment based on mere appearances - that the way a woman looks tells her entire story. What's interesting about it is that now you are making a video about appearances of men. Male bodies are idealized just as female ones and often even more so, throughout history if you look at antiquity and images of gods especially. So why did you make this transition and was it purely by chance or was it something you were already thinking about for a while, can you tell me a bit more about it?*

I started out with an overly affirming sense of bodybuilding. I wanted to treat them almost as utopian bodies, to treat the bodybuilder's body as a utopian body. Bodybuilding is I guess a utopian practice of self-fashioning - with enough time and enough dedication you can make your body into anything, and I found it appealing in that sense. It was a slightly perverse reading; I think the more obvious reading would be to read bodybuilding practices as neoliberal or capitalist. In Azerbaijan everyone mentioned Arnold Schwarzenegger, who is now a right-wing politician, as a bodybuilding hero. In terms of the actual politics of bodybuilding, I imagine that it is probably something that converges much better with a self-determining, self-entrepreneurship, self-ownership kind of discourse. But I kind of wanted to make a perverse reading; I guess perversity is maybe a wrong word, but the weirdness of gender presentation in bodybuilding...

*They are all very aware of their image of course*

Of course, it's a totally visual sport; all the assessments are on how good you look. They do these poses also when they lift the weights, it's very formal and visual and their entire lives are shaped around looking really good. There was a guy saying he hadn't eaten bread in four years... A lot of these things, rightly or wrongly, I personally associate with a femme position- this concern for your appearance, reliance on other people to affirm your appearance. Also they look so strong but with an under-employed strength, a kind of passive strength. A lot of them said that bodybuilding is something underneath all other sports, like this idea that it is an infrastructure of other sports. But they've gone so far beyond that; you don't need muscles like that for anything.

*I guess it becomes this preoccupation with your own body image. A gym psychology, where you go in and you see results and you become better and better and then you start getting this perfectionist obsession where you think this is a perfect body you have to achieve and you lose the grasp of it.*

It is completely excessive; whereas you can make an argument that the reason women invest in looks is that then they can upgrade to maybe a higher social status with a husband or whatever - there's a literal return you get as a woman from looking good. Women have to look really good to be actors, while men can look like shit and do character roles and be really famous. So there are all sorts of ways that it does not seem to belong to their position for them to want to look really good.

*An idealized manly body is always interpreted as something homoerotic as opposed to very macho and masculine in terms of masculine-feminine*

*dichotomy. So I feel like you're right, but it's also something that probably they do not realize. This has become something very commonplace or it has always been commonplace.*

These masculine spaces can be quite hard to read from the outside and I think that the logics of it are a little bit inaccessible to me. The other idea of bodybuilding was that I was trying to think of something that I could conceivably use as material for an artwork while going to a country that was very unfamiliar. I mean, of course there are women who are bodybuilders but I was interested in men who bodybuild specifically and the idea that it might have been a bit inaccessible seemed to converge with the idea that I was going to a place that would be inaccessible in some way.

*So apart from researching a new subject that you were interested in, it was also your own journey because you arrived to this place you've never heard of before and it was kind of challenging in terms of your own adaptation to a new environment and new ideas of the local people here, because they also differ, at times quite substantially, to those in Western Europe.*

I mean the reference point is America and I think that's also kind of weird the way we're all under this hegemony of American culture - all these celebrities I've mentioned earlier are American. It does seem to generate these archetypal figures, at least in terms of the globalized imaginary, the USA is the capitalist heartland that produces these empty signifiers that can give meaning but it's not clear what the meaning is. Bodybuilding is an interesting example. It can literally give your life a meaning in that 'here's the food you should eat, here's what time you should get up...' but it's not clear what it's for. So I think in that sense American culture is this culture of 'how do you give your life a meaning

when there is no meaning'. And I'm not trying to be nostalgic for a hypothetical time when there was meaning. I've never lived in that world, I've only lived in this world and as a position of critique this kind of emptiness also seems to be something that you can feel and the fact that that emptiness is all I've ever known also feels quite fascinating. I do have emotional investment in these things and this idea of a gym or of a pop star or whatever it is, is in a way an emotional call.

*Do you think that depending on where you are and where you come from, these signifiers get treated differently? For example an American bodybuilder might have a completely different approach to this particular thing than somebody from Baku...*

No, it is more globally standardized. It's funny because when we interviewed the guy who runs the bodybuilding federation he did not like it when I said that one of my interests in bodybuilding was this repetitive form; I was really interested in the idea that everyone is doing the same thing all over the world. I was going to this gym in Berlin where people told me, 'Monday is chest day', 'Tuesday is legs day'. And this guy at the federation was against that idea, obviously he was a really talented bodybuilder; he said 'you have to feel your body and what's right for your body and never repeat - every day is new' and I thought I was totally wrong. Afterwards, going into filming I decided to ask people three exercises they liked to do, I did not want to control the exercises they were doing and of course lots of it was similar; there are not that many things you could do to build muscles in your arm, maybe 5 different things you could do...

*Working on oneself, either beautifying yourself or in case of these men trying to*

*buff up a bit more, is also in a way an attempt to transport themselves from one social category to the other, from a regular guy to a muscular, strong looking type, that can be a powerful image.*

I think what is happening with the process of making the video is different. I have a feeling that individual people are not going to appear in the video and I'm going to replace them with me. Although not me as just myself, some sort of avatar or something. But I knew already that it would not be a documentary. I have basically used the bodybuilders as a material, not as subjects; I think that was another reason why I wanted them to be men. In a way choosing to work with men and not women is about the level of freedom I wanted to give myself. I think I would have felt a lot more cautious with women's images and would have felt more obliged to represent them in a way that they could feel good about themselves.

*What's interesting is whether you were surprised at certain things from your experiences of coming to Baku and also from your experience of actually speaking to these men. Do you think all the ideas you had about them just got reinforced in your mind?*

I expected that the feeling of being there would be different from what I'd thought, and in a way that was a good assessment or maybe I was so convinced that I had a good assessment that I just found what I'd come to find. I can't trust myself to have any insight and also generally it would have been a bit different if we had worked with more local gyms. The initial idea was to work with amateurs and then in the end not many of them were amateurs. Those who were amateurs did say more different things and probably it would have been a different video if it had been amateurs but I don't know, maybe it would not have been. In a sense

you're traveling with yourself and all I'm finding are kind of ways of what it's like to be me in different places. I can't say what it's like to be someone else.

Also what I'm working on, maybe not in the video but partly in the video too, is this idea of contemporary art as critique that is quite common to the places where I've been an artist - London, Berlin, New York; this idea that the artist has a position of critique. It's very strange to go somewhere where both the kind of critique that might be happening and political critique that might be urgent is very different from what exists in London, Berlin and New York. Like bodybuilding, contemporary art is another global form that's been brought to Azerbaijan that might not have existed there 30 years ago in the same way. It felt to me like a more traditional patriarchal structure than I am used to. The men I was hanging out with were buying me things and opening doors and I had no idea how to do the corresponding feminine performance, because I was not brought up in it...

*Some experiences are universal, other experiences here are more shared, let's say, with Mediterranean countries or the Middle East as opposed to Western Europe or North America. And it's also the case with contemporary art when all of these constructs are very new to local audiences and I'm expecting a lot of these men when they come to see it, if they come to see it, to be very surprised because they're probably expecting a full fledge documentary about bodybuilding and in the end they are going to find something a little different.*

I feel like I have to invite them but I feel like I'm not actually as brave as I would want to be. And this gesture of using people as material does feel a bit weird.

*It was not the first time you used real people in your work*

I've worked with performers before. I guess TV and video and maybe also film are the places that you are allowed these wildly exploitative gestures. I didn't want to try and represent the bodybuilders as they are. In the end I think that would be more violent. They probably think the opposite, but for me the more violent thing would be to attempt some kind of authentic representation. I don't believe I am capable of that. All I can talk about is myself - the various histories that I embody and cultural and social training that I embody. I cannot speak from a position of a 40 year old man in Azerbaijan who goes to the gym every day and maybe has a family; and even if they told me all the information about themselves that still wouldn't give me anything of their experience. At the moment I'm very committed to that idea, to the practice of "staying in my lane".

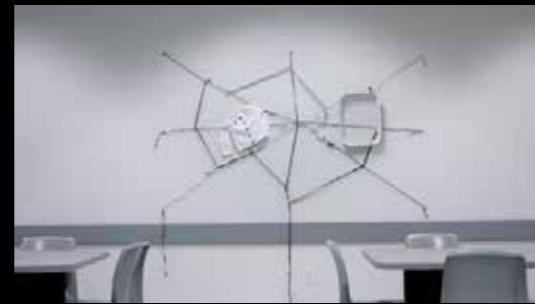
Interview by Suad Garayeva

JASPER SPICERO  
B. 1990, USA

[www.jasperspicero.com](http://www.jasperspicero.com)



*1-2S.M.A.R.T. Picture Frame, 2014*  
Redprinted plastic, digital print, wall paint, hardware  
Courtesy of the artist



*Beatrice IX, 2014*  
Shoe laces, miniature barbed wire, airplane window,  
universal cable chain, printed plastic, embroidered sweater,  
gel pen, house paint, sliding lock, hardware  
Courtesy of the artist



*Centers in Pain, 2014*  
Video, 15'42"  
Courtesy of the artist



*Incomplete License Plate, 2014*  
Disposable pillow, knitwear, printed plastic, quilt, coffee, handheld tape recorder, bed, shoelace  
Courtesy of the artist

*Centers in Pain, 2014*  
Video, 15'42"  
Courtesy of the artist  
C.I.P. Video System 4B  
medical cart, television, distressed dvd player,  
distressed computer speakers  
Duration: 15min 48sec

*S.M.A.R.T. Picture Frame Red, 2014*  
printed plastic, digital print, wall paint, hardware  
Courtesy of the artist

*Security Proctor, 2014*  
printed plastic, bow-tie, universal cable chain,  
magnifying lamp, daycare furniture, knitwear,  
wall paint, hardware  
Courtesy of the artist

*Incomplete License Plate, 2014*  
disposable pillow, knitwear, printed plastic,  
quilt, coffee, handheld tape recorder, bed, shoelace  
Courtesy of the artist

*Blue Star, 2014*  
shoe laces, miniature barbed wire,  
airplane window, universal cable chain, printed  
plastic, embroidered sweater, gel pen, house paint,  
sliding lock, hardware  
Courtesy of the artist

*Centers in Pain* was inspired by an abandoned minimum-security jail, Wapato, in Portland, Oregon, which is now occasionally employed as a film set. Cosmetically maintained by a small team of janitors, the building is otherwise empty; Spicero saw the site as the building's 'center in pain'. He rented out the location and developed a project around it that grew into a website, a video, a narrative script and a number of sculptural works. Spicero superimposes pain, both physical and emotional, with the torment of a building haunted by phantoms of imprisoned people who never inhabited it.

The short film *Centers in Pain* follows imagined inmates of Wapato going on their daily routine, diligently doing their chores. Apart from the surveillance camera introduced at the beginning of the video, there are no guards to supervise this pristine order, suggesting that the video is CCTV footage and putting audience members in the position of watchful prison wardens. Spicero, interested in these power relations, explores the logic of institutional architecture and how it imposes structure and subjugation.

## A DROP OF MEDICINE

INT. COMPLEX XIV - LIVING ROOM

On an aging designer sofa MARTHA stares into space. She is mid-forties, blond hair, wearing a ragged shirt and blue jeans.

CLOSE UP:

Hands in her lap with spots of pale light from an open window nearby.

ON SCREEN:  
10 DAYS AGO

Judith is stopped halfway down the living room staircase turned toward Martha. She is frozen in thought.

JUDITH

Have you seen Beatrice?

He descends the staircase and stands by her side.

JUDITH

Anyone home?

Grabs her leg and shakes it. Martha squints as though she just woke up. Shields her eyes from the pale light with a throw pillow.

MARTHA

What did you say little saint Judith?

JUDITH

I haven't seen Beatrice for a couple of days.

Sets the pillow on the floor. Kneels to Judith's height.

A foggy look on her face like a hospital patient's. Places a slender hand on his shoulder.

MARTHA

The world is sick Judy. Everyone is a drop of medicine. Even you, a tiny star.

We hear the sound of a faucet turning off and on in the next room.

INT. KITCHEN

CLOSE IN:

The kitchen sink sprays water than abruptly stops. Starts again. Stops. Above the sink is a window without glass. Snow is falling. A plane goes by.

CUT TO:

'BLOOD IN THE SNOW'

EXT. COMPLEX XII

A young man standing in a snowy driveway. This is SHANE.

VAGRANT O.S.

My family is at 43 on the other side of the tower.  
We need food. I have a son, Carl.

PAN FROM SHANE TO VAGRANT:

Lying on the ground. Blood dripping from his nose. One eye swollen shut.

INT. COMPLEX XIV - JUDITHS ROOM

Judith lying in his bed listening to a hand-held tape recorder.  
We hear a voice through the speaker.

LISA V.O.

I was 11 when my real dad showed up at our complex. We were eating with my stepfather, Carl. When he answered the door my dad dragged him out into the snow. He started hitting him in the face and wouldn't stop. I'll always remember the blood in the snow.

Judith stands out of bed. Passes by a bedside table with a picture frame turned face down. Walks to his window to see Shane towering over the vagrant.

EXT. COMPLEX XII

SHANE

You are weak. Like birds are weak.  
You let Flower Complex change you.

VAGRANT

Don't do this.

Honey approaches Shane and places a hand on his shoulder.  
She is tall with long brown hair in a pony tail.

HONEY

He doesn't want anything from us.

SHANE

If I let him go he will come back to hurt you or Judy. He's obviously lying. I wouldn't hurt him if he needed food for a hungry child.

Still image of Shane with Honey behind him. A number eight tattoo on his shoulder. Eyes half open.

CUT TO:

'VIII'

INT. COMPLEX VIII - ROOM

CLOSE UP:

A turtle crawling on the concrete floor. The room is mostly empty save a pile of distressed clothes in one corner. Judith picks up the turtle and looks into it's eyes. In the background we see Honey enter.

HONEY

You shouldn't be here, Judy. It's not safe. Think how Shane would feel if he knew you were here alone.

He sets the turtle down.

JUDITH

I wonder what Shane sees in that turtle.

HONEY

He thinks it was theirs. His and Lisa's. From when they were kids.

She looks down at Judith's untied shoe laces. The turtle is climbing onto them.

EXT. FLOWER COMPLEX - PATHWAY

A sidewalk that runs along the perimeter of Flower Complex. Judith is following it home. His hair and clothes are wet from rain.

WINTERS V.O.

Think back as far as you can remember and start there.

YOUNG MAN V.O.

I remember a long car ride. It is unsettling because I don't know who is driving or where they are taking me. At St. Jude's they say your journey is a snowflake. It can't be taken or given.

He arrives at Complex XIV and walks through the front door.



LU YANG  
B. 1984, CHINA

[www.luyang.asia](http://www.luyang.asia)



*Uterusman-Prototype Conceptual Diagram*, 2013  
Inkjet print on canvas  
60 x 50 cm



*Uterus Man*, 2013  
Single channel video, 11'20"  
Courtesy of the artist and Beijing Commune

*Uterus Man Arcade Machine*, 2013  
Assembled arcade machine, video game  
Courtesy of the artist and Beijing Commune

*Uterus Man*, inspired by the biological shape of a uterus, is an ongoing project developed around a super hero whose powers are linked to the abilities of female mammal reproductive organs. The androgynous hero alters genes and heredity functions of his enemies, inflicts his opponents with genetic disorders and mutates them into weaker species. The video demonstrates the abilities and powers of *Uterus Man*, which

come into play in a videogame (displayed here in a custom arcade case) where the hero is fighting to save the world from a crisis of evolution. In the age of genetic engineering, active debate around sexuality, gender identity and seemingly boundless possibilities offered by plastic surgery, Lu Yang envisions a future of humanity in which the self is synthesized from selected parts.



*Baby Weapon # 1*, 2013  
Lu Yang x hhuuaazzii  
Inkjet print on archival paper  
75 x 45 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Beijing Commune

*Summoning the Baby Weapon*, 2013  
Lu Yang x hhuuaazzii  
Inkjet print on archival paper  
52 x 120 cm



*Pelvis Chariot Attack-Deep Throat Laser Cannon*, 2013  
Inkjet print on archival paper  
83 x 120 cm



*Sanitary Pad Hover Board*, 2013  
Lu Yang x hhuuaazzii  
Inkjet print on archival paper  
140 x 90 cm

## SUAD GARAYEVA SPEAKS TO LU YANG ABOUT BIO-ART, NEW MEDIA, AND HER SUPERHERO PROJECT - UTERUS MAN.

*You graduated from a New Media Faculty at Hangzhou University and your work continuously explores new technological possibilities within art. You once mentioned that technology should be understood as a part of nature. Could you please expand on this notion and further describe your relationship to technology in art and life?*

As we are born in this time, the technology is part of our lives. We cannot avoid it. This technology and we make this moment, that's why I think it's also nature. There is no "new media" or "old media"- each era has its own peculiar characteristics.

*Your work is often described as "bioart" in a way that it is interdisciplinary through your research into science and biology. Do you see yourself as a "bioart" artist and what is your main interest within this field?*

For myself, I am just a creator who makes all those works. The labels are always put by others. I don't think I'm a bio artist, I don't even think of myself as an artist. Rather just a person still alive right now, who spends time on this before she dies.

*Do you think the relationship of people towards disease and disability, be it physical or mental, changes across culture and geography? Some issues are openly discussed in places while being taboo in others- how has this affected your practice?*

It seems taboo in many places in the World; people tend to avoid those topics. But diseases and disabilities are also a part of us. I don't think they are taboo for me- I like to observe these phenomena and to imagine how they would affect me, my own body.

*There is a strong connection to the human body in your work- be it through infrared imagery of *The Cruel Electromagnetic Wave above Absolute Zero* or the musical score to the Parkinson's patients in *KRAFTTREMOR*. Do you think our relationship to our own bodies is misguided? Are we offered different interpretations through science and spirituality, such as Buddhism?*

Nowadays Buddhism and science and technology are not that much different conceptually. Especially the Physical Science sometimes seems to prove Buddhist concepts and ideas. We can observe this world in different ways, from the perspective of either Science or Religion. In the end we know very little. How can we be sure of what is absolutely right and how can we be sure the World is as we see it? These are interesting questions that remain universal.

*How has the current overexposure to the body image through advertising and the Internet affected your views on this, if at all? Do you think we have become more superficial?*

The world seemingly looks better and better. Our physical lives look greater than in any other generation. However, this does not mean that we are actually better in our minds. Indeed, I do think we are becoming more superficial.

*Your work can sometimes come across as risqué- the playful kawaii rendition of the most dreaded disease in *Cancer Baby* or the amusing dance of bisected frogs in *Underwater Zombie frog Ballet*, are they deliberately subversive? Do you attempt to critique the social conditions around the understanding of human physiology and perceptions of the grotesque?*

I do not want to critique anything. My work is playful but not deliberately critical. Although it can be seen as such.

*Your most talked about project- Uterus Man, is a sort of a satire on gender relationships. How did this work come about?*

The shape of the female uterus resembles the outline of a person standing straight with her arms' open wide; this is the source of inspiration for the character Uterus-Man. In the configuration of Uterus-Man, each part of its armor coincides with different parts of a human uterus. The ambiguity of the gender of Uterus-Man may seem to be male given its super hero powers, however, the source of these super powers originates from the uterus' unique ability to propagate. This contradictory configuration determines the asexuality of Uterus Man. "It" possesses all kinds of unique ultra-deadly weapons. Some of these retain the power of altering genes and heredity functions. For example, using the power of gene alteration, its attack can instantly change the enemy into a weaker species, and then carry on the attack. The power of altering hereditary functions can change the sexual gender of the enemy, or instantaneously evoke a genetic disease to weaken the enemy, and then attack again. This contradictory configuration calls into question the law of propagation of natural beings. These queries on the biological gender, grading of species, genetic breeding and evolution are all hidden within the integrated setting of Uterus-Man.

*You worked with a rather scandalous figure- Mao Sugiyama in Tokyo- by casting him as your asexual superhero. How has the public response been to that?*

Some people feel it is a very strange work. I don't know. I get varied responses to my works and I am used to that. This is a prerogative

of the public.

*There seems to be a strong association with pop and youth culture in your works, as well as Uterus Man, through your choice of soundtracks and aesthetic elements, Could you talk about that?*

Indeed, I chose pop music for *Uterus Man* works, and also some youth elements like manga anime style vision. Firstly, I like manga and anime since my childhood. These are natural elements for me and they made me relax during working on this project. On another note, I do not set any boundaries between any kinds of art. Not contemporary, not pop art. I just see it as the thing that can make people feel and accept.

*The game element of the project is interesting. How does interactivity enter your practice and do you see yourself doing more projects with games?*

*Uterus Man* game was made in cooperation with the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum. They invited me to participate in a Triennale in 2014 and asked me to make some interactive or new media thing for the show, so I chose to make a game. For me, gaming is the most interactive way in any kind of method.

*Your characters- such as the genderless superhero- and the problems they face- such as the cancer cells in the game- speak of the contemporary condition. How much do you invite a socio-political interpretation of your work?*

Maybe it's inevitable... because I was born into this world, I can't say I haven't got those influences for sure. But I just see no boundary between all these things, a priori. I wish my art had no gender, that people wouldn't judge your work because of your gender. Every soul has their body when they are born. I'm just a soul using my own body to produce my own things.

NEIL BELOUFA  
B. 1985, FRANCE/ALGERIA

[www.neilbeloufa.com](http://www.neilbeloufa.com)



*Data for Desire*, 2014  
Video, 47'39"  
Fine Steel Construction  
165 x 265 x 182cm  
Installation view, ICA London, 2014



*Still from Data for Desire*, 2014  
Video, 47'39"



*Still from Data for Desire*, 2014  
Video, 47'39"



*Still from Data for Desire*, 2014  
Video, 47'39"

*Data for Desire*, 2014  
Video, 47'39"  
Fine Steel Construction  
165 x 265 x 182 cm  
Courtesy of the artist

In *Data for Desire*, Beloufa staged a typical Anglo-American party setting and filmed it in a manner that evoked the numerous reality TV shows that observe people on a journey of finding love. Observational footage from the amateur actors interacting at the party was then shown to a group of French mathematics students, who understood it as a documentary and attempted to work out a formula to predict which of the partygoers would pair up.

The juxtaposition serves as an apt analogy for the methods of quantifying desire employed by social networks to allow them to extract economic profit from human interactions. In Beloufa's pseudo-scientific experiment, the formula failed in its prediction; suggesting that the outcomes of romance and fiction cannot be probabilistically determined. Left unclear is whether

the "desire" in the title really refers to the staged behavior of the party-goer subjects, or to the rapt, near-obsessive attention paid to them by the mathematicians.

The video is displayed within a sculptural arrangement titled "rationalized room" that uses a grid of metal bars, some bent in organic shapes, to suggest a domestic interior with the outlines of furniture, a curtained window, a cup of coffee, and a woman's deconstructed legs, suggesting both rational order and subjective, fragmented desire.

The work in the exhibition has been specially produced for YARAT CAC as a new installation with special help from Rashad Alakbarov (artist, Baku)



*The things we do for love (so proud so alone)*, 2014  
 Silkscreen print over digital pigment print  
 17.52 x 22.64 inches, 44.5 x 57.5 cm



*The Razzle Dazzle of Inhaling B67 Fumes w/ Chains / Kombucha Dog (The Road to the Sleep Deprivation)*, 2013-2015  
 Oil on canvas, acrylic on aluminum strainers,  
 artist frame, hanging hardware  
 122 x 96 x 2.5 inches, 310 x 244 x 6.35 cm  
 Recto / verso (recto view)



*The Razzle Dazzle of Inhaling B67 Fumes w/ Chains / Kombucha Dog (The Road to the Sleep Deprivation)*, 2013-2015  
 Oil on canvas, acrylic on aluminum strainers,  
 artist frame, hanging hardware  
 122 x 96 x 2.5 inches, 310 x 244 x 6.35 cm  
 Recto / verso (verso view)



*A Lil' Taste of Cheeto in the Night*, 2015  
 HD Video, 6.33 minutes  
 Video stills

# PARKER ITO B. 1986 USA

[www.parkerito.com](http://www.parkerito.com)

*The Razzle Dazzle of Inhaling B67 Fumes w/ Chains / Kombucha Dog (The Road to the Sleep Deprivation)*, 2013-2015  
 Oil on canvas, acrylic on aluminum strainers,  
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 310 x 244 x 6.35 cm  
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 HD Video, 6'33"  
 Courtesy of the artist and Chateau Shatto

I WANT TO MAKE EXHIBITIONS where there is always a potential for the work to be shifting. There is a sensation that I'm chasing: an exhibition beyond the pacified white cube, something indigestible, something profuse. The question became how to make something that feels like my website, where I'm always making new work and adding things on. In a sense, my website is my masterwork: It's like a grand edit of everything I've ever done, and it takes on a life of its own where things are infused in a bigger structure. I came up with this two-year project of trying to make something so total and intricate it couldn't be comprehended—where you could zoom in on the details endlessly, but never zoom out completely. "A Lil Taste of Cheeto in the Night" played out in several stages. It began with a prelude in the beginning of 2014: I hung eight paintings in an Atwater coffee shop. They were completely anonymous and ambient. After the exhibition, the paintings came back to my studio to be painted on some more, and they now hang in this show on the back of larger double-sided paintings. Part one was at Smart Objects, a project space in Los Angeles, in May 2014. It was the first time I considered the whole building as a medium. I left the main space of the gallery empty. A nonsensical neon sign was hung facing out toward the street. There was a disused, three-story elevator shaft in the building and I broke through the wall to hang a bronze sculpture inside the shaft. Wallpaper was installed in the bathroom, and I hung a series of paintings throughout the second-floor apartment where the dealer lived. I painted a mural on the roof, too. Part two was at White Cube in London last July. I considered this a trailer for "A Lil Taste of Cheeto in the Night." This was an effort to make an exhibition that spilled beyond the confines of the designated exhibition space. Children of the gallery's staff contributed to some of the paintings that were hung throughout the offices, and

flower vases made by other employees were scattered around the show. There was also a video piece, which is an episode of another ongoing work, and the receptionists wore pairs of bespoke slippers for the duration of the show. We added live parrots for the documentation. The show was credited as the work of Parker Cheeto and my eight studio assistants. People thought it was a group show. The content in the current LA exhibition goes through a process of absorption. There are numerous sculptures riffing off the iconography of the local company Western Exterminator; my works feature an iconic top-hatted man with a mallet that sits atop company buildings and vans. They're something you see often in LA because you're constantly on the freeway, and Western Exterminator has depots at several freeway locations—off the 101, the 405. I think about how part of being alive is having to constantly process so much information that you're pushed to a space where you don't really know what the thing is—it's just floating. I wanted to be able to incorporate as many media, processes, and strategies, as many kinds of content, as I could grasp. With such a density of information, the chemistry between things becomes unpredictable. The exhibition reaches a point where there is no one-to-one correlation between a reference and its meaning. It's like when people who don't read Chinese get Chinese characters tattooed on their bodies. Often those phrases are mistranslated, but it doesn't really matter to the person what the characters say. They're mostly interested in the qualities being conveyed by this kind of typography. That's how I think about content: It's not equivalent; it's a filter. I'm invested in the sensation of things.

500 Words for Artforum, as told to Chris Kraus

This saga started in a coffee shop in early 2014 on the eastern edge of Los Angeles. Over a year-and-a-half, Parker constructed an exhibition in a protracted form, spread over time and across different sites. The distance between the edges of these presentations raised the level of attentiveness required to summon the entire 'show' in one's mind. Still life paintings were exhibited anonymously in a local coffee shop in Los Angeles, while concurrently, 10ft double-sided oil paintings were suspended from chains in a notorious blue-chip gallery in central London, with the authorship attributed to Parker's assistants and fabricators. Part I of the exhibition demonstrated total avoidance of the gallery space, instead seeking opportunities within the peripheral edges to position the

work. Part II was essentially a trailer for Part III, which took every possible surface, volume and cavity within the exhibition space as a fertile site to host this exhibition-as-internet. There was a rhythmic sense that the presentations were crescendoing towards A Lil' Taste of Cheeto in the Night - the most abundant, conversant, materially complex and agglutinant of all the presentations - in an industrial building in downtown Los Angeles.

When A Lil' Taste of Cheeto in the Night opened, there was maybe 60% of the material in the installation that it would eventually accrue. Visiting during these nascent moments, artist Helen Johnson typed the following notes into an email:

Thinking about Parker's show - that

as the 'main body' of the text, it is also a body in terms of being a penetrable gestalt - Caro made gestalts but you couldn't penetrate them. Whereas Parker's sort of mindtricks you into penetrating it by being grounded in painting, which invites you into surface in a way that sculpture alone does not. Parker's preoccupation with the density of the show connects to the idea that it needs to serve as a gestalt on first impression, as an overall form. Caro, further, buried his subjectivity in formalism, whereas Parker buries formalism in subjectivity.

In A Lil' Taste of Cheeto in the Night, the cues are so profuse that the possibility for a singular 'reading' of the work evaporates when it comes into contact with subjectivity. Involuntary autobiographical memory orbits

around references that are packed with historical (and often art historical) data and meaning can be both attributed and mined. The paintings and sculptures, the indexed art objects in the installation, permit moments of renewed depth amongst the density. Regular shifts in the material composition of things accelerated the impossibility of devising fixed positions. A painting of a painting of Joan of Arc changes not in content, but in chemistry, depending on what is facing it or leading into it. Content may be guided in many directions.

By Liv Barrett

THE  
HEART IS A LONELY  
HUNTER

CURATED BY  
MICHAEL CONNOR  
& SUAD GARAYEVA



***YARAT***

2015