

# **GOOD LIFE BAD REP**

## **Naomi Elizabeth O'Donnell**

*Documents submitted to the Faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of the Master of Fine Arts in the Department of Art*

2015

Approved by Roxana Pérez-Méndez, elin o'Hara slavick, Cary Levine

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Naomi Elizabeth O'Donnell  
Artist Statement

*Honey Cult* is a serialized lullaby inbetween fantasy and delusion. Videos, installations, and performances center on the Technicolor dystopia that is the town of Honey Creek. Saturated collages, inhabited by supernatural personalities, reflect the artist's cinematic dreams and desires. Characters are stuck in a perpetual cycle of romantic anticipation and disappointment, seeking commiseration in an apocalyptic landscape that mutates around their moods.

This is a post-pubescent Neverland, where distraction is a conciliation prize for contentment. Oversize lynx, built into the set, accept your strokes only because they are inanimate. I am interested in the growing amount of social time spent alone, relating to synthetic objects and investing in virtual realities as a means of connection. Ironical, attractive, and deeply sincere, *Honey Cult* acknowledges the limitations of a networked society and concocts new ways to engage with it.

Settings and situations weld queer identities with timeless fables, linking past and present mythologies. The work considers our increasingly curated lives, strategically presenting the androgynous self in a gendered culture. Performers treat clothing as costume, perpetually in drag, opening Pandora's Box and embracing its contemporary contents. My practice evaluates moral standards and suggests alternatives, a vote for rebellion in a Puritan state. Allegorical narratives are digested and fitted to a space that is visually sensitive yet emotionally exhausted. Borrowing from timeless tales to paint an outsider's experience equips the viewer with a point of access into a highly personal perspective.

*Honey Cult* often operates as a collective, engaging the public while embodying the disenchanting attitude of its eponymous series. Live installations contain an interactive element: dispensing custom fortune cookies, stickers, badges, and printed material. Familiar tokens are given new life as evidence from this alternate reality, where raffles offer love letters as prizes. Generous in its collaborative spirit and alien regarding its individualized content, the ongoing project reflects our coexisting private and public faces. By changing the context, revealing the seams and embracing everyday theatricality, *Honey Cult* reinvents femininity inside a compressed world with hopes of affecting the larger.

Naomi Elizabeth O'Donnell

*honey cult's*  
GOOD LIFE BAD REP

2015 Thesis Presentation





the approximation of a myth  
about naomi elizabeth  
elizabeth



Jacques Demy, *Donkey Skin*, 1970



Dario Argento, *Suspiria*, 1977



Ludwig Berger, *The Thief of Bagdad*, 1940




Jim Jarmusch, *Mystery Train*, 1989









the approximation of a myth  
about naomi elizabeth  
elizabeth































Akira Kurosawa, *Dreams*, 1990



Akira Kurosawa, *Dreams*, 1990



Akira Kurosawa, *Dreams*, 1990



Akira Kurosawa, *Dreams*, 1990



Akira Kurosawa, *Dreams*, 1990



Akira Kurosawa, *Dreams*, 1990





Zoltan Korda, Jungle Book, 1942



Zoltan Korda, Jungle Book, 1942







Joachim Wtewael, *The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian*, 1600









Oh, Naomi... *not again.*







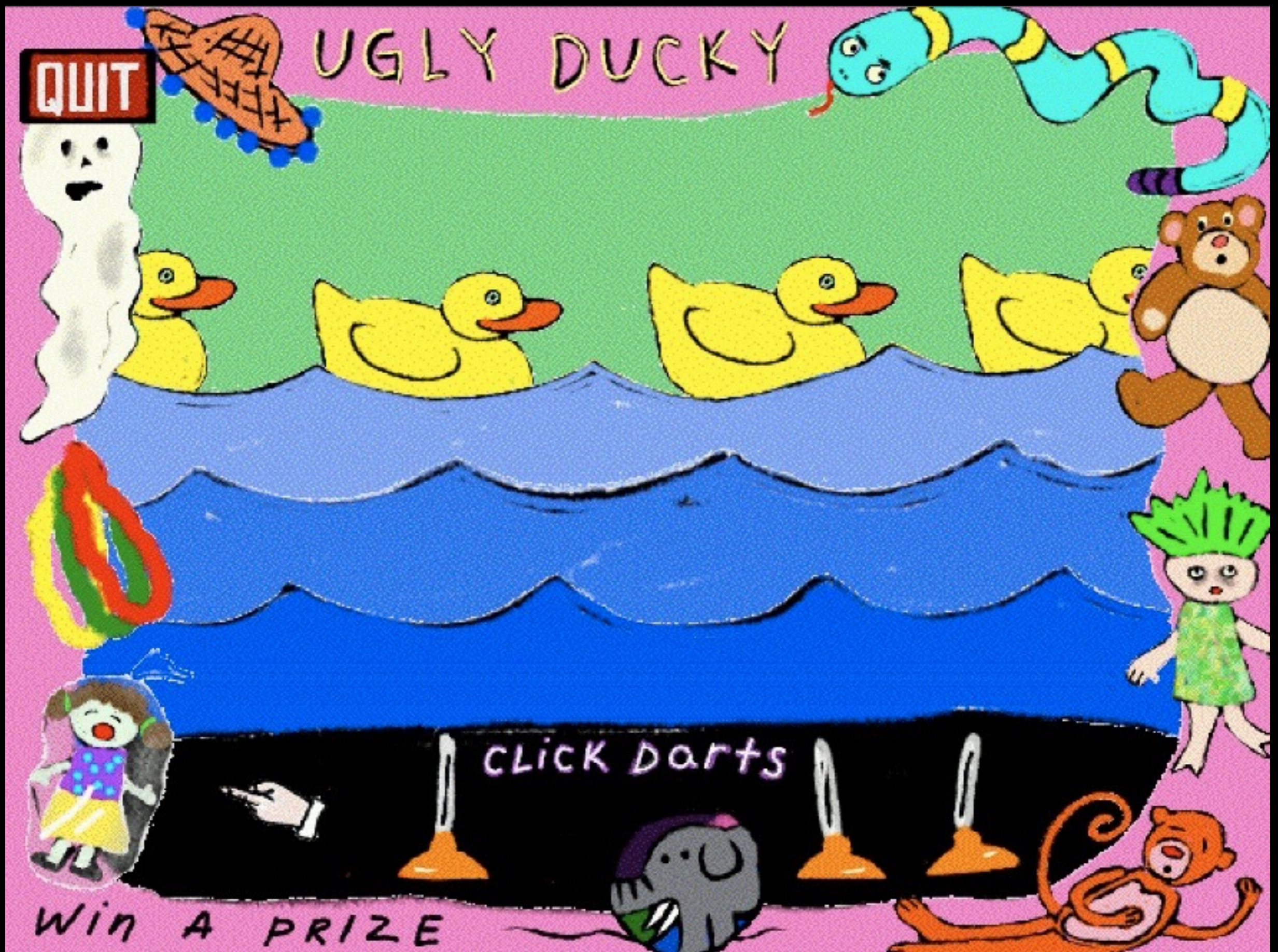
Laurie Anderson, *Puppet Motel*, 1994



Laurie Anderson, *Puppet Motel*, 1994



Theresa Duncan, *Chop Suey*, 1995



Theresa Duncan, *Chop Suey*, 1995







Banana Yoshimoto



Cory Schmitz, 1Q84 Cover, 2012



Franz Xaver Winterhalter, *The Decameron*, 1837



Returned amid kamikaze jellyfish, swollen pink with their sting.

# ESCAPE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN



John Hough, "Escape to Witch Mountain", 1975





It was volcano season in Honey Creek.





while watching the Other for signs of climax or conclusion.



*Sailor Moon, 1992 - 1997*



Darren Star, *Sex and the City*, 1998 - 2004



Logo TV, *RuPaul's Drag Race*, 2014 Cast



Pussy Riot







Nagisa Oshima, *In the Realm of the Senses*, 1976







licked her own salty lips instead.

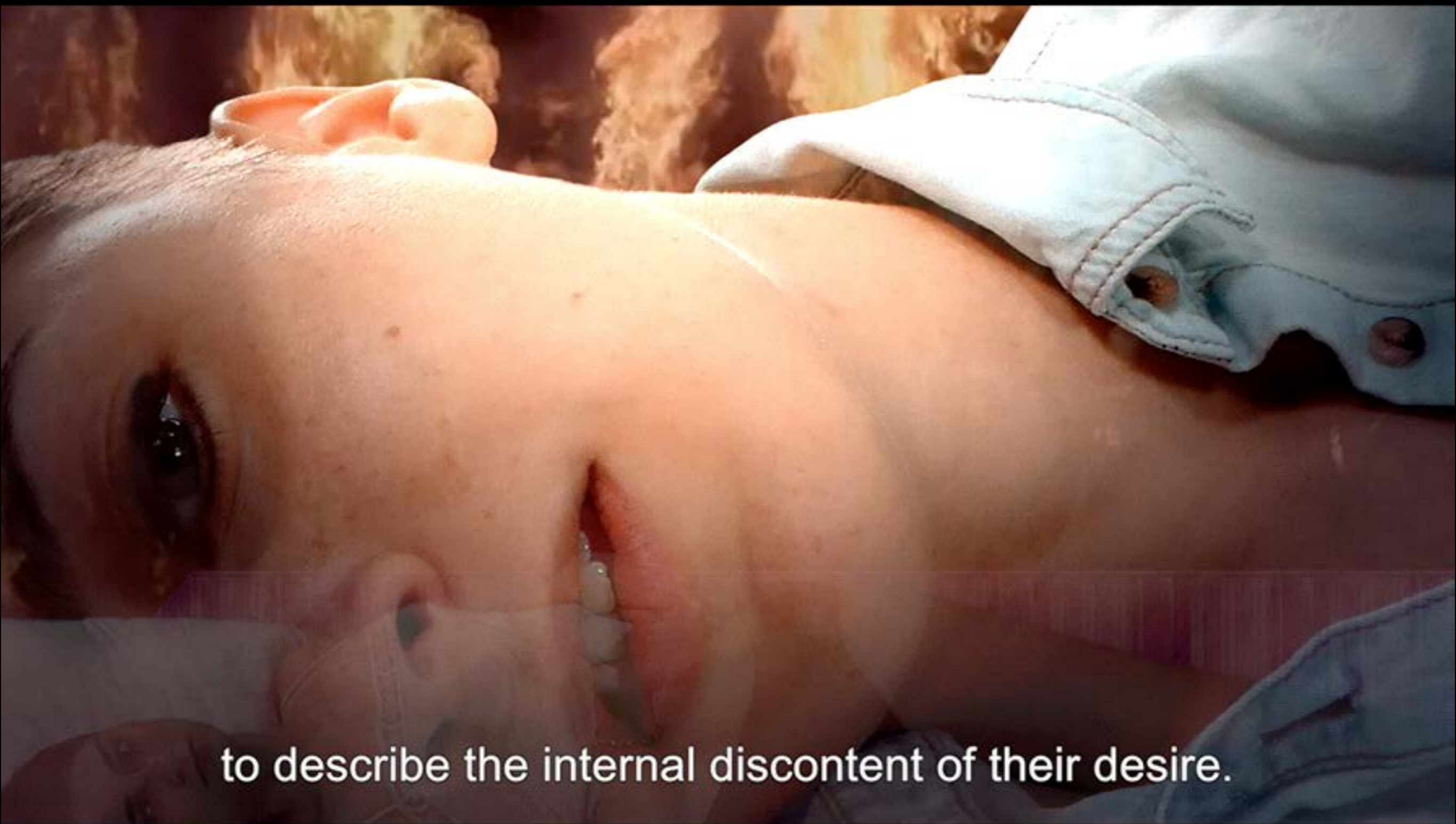


Peter Weir, *The Truman Show*, 1998





Dynasty Handbag, *Remote Penetration / Stain of History*, 2014



to describe the internal discontent of their desire.



Sussex County Fair, 2010



Nathan Thomas Milliner. Sleepaway Camp DVD Cover, 2014



Whoop Dee Doo, Kansas City Arts Organization



Sarah Sandman, Thomas Hirschhorn's *Gramsci Monument*,  
2013

# HONEY CULT CREEK CAMP



@ THE CARRACK MODERN / 4/21-5/2 / 111 W. PARRISH ST, DURHAM

RECEPTION & 4/24  
LIVE EVENT 7-10pm



TRU ROMANCE 5/2,  
STORY HR 7-10pm



TRU ROMANCE  
STORY HR  
5/2, 7-10<sub>pm</sub>

RECEPTION & 4/24,  
LIVE EVENT 7-10<sub>pm</sub>

# HONEY CULT CREEK CAMP

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No 424

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## HONEY CULT

1st prize you're really here  
2nd prize you'll disappear

[www.HCULT.com](http://www.HCULT.com)  
cross your eyes  
swallow your spit  
forget her

No 424



Phil Collins, *they shoot horses*, 2004













THANK YOU

