

Documentary Drag

Johan Lundin & Rasmus Raphaëlle Östebro

Directing oneself

Director alone in an empty white room. Sitting down in front of a camera.

Camera: Cut and new angle for every sentence.

DIRECTOR

Seeing my self.

Going into a character: physically, mentally or both.

Directing my self.

Regarding force and survival, pt. 1.

Two actors collecting fake facial prostheses in a basement archive.

Camera: Environment, opening shelves. Details mainly (hands and objects).

ACTOR 2

Why would anyone rest in the security of everyday waking up to the same self image as the one they had when they went to sleep?

ACTOR 2

Isn't everybody in some sort of drag character all the time?

SIDEKICK 2

Everybody is in character. A character is needed for survival, for structuring, for understanding, for expressing.

Regarding force and survival, pt. 2.

Interview in studio. The fake facial prostheses are taped to Actor 2s face.

Camera: Front, from sides + Details (mouth speaking, articulating and eye closing).

ACTOR 2

Fading to computer voice.

Drag is everywhere, all the time!

But drag not being aware of itself is lacking several constitutional qualities that drag holds.

The power of mimetic: the opportunities of returning with a difference.

an ephemeral and precarious force born out of affect. A life / world situation born from the need of expressing what is not clearly enough outspoken.

Parodizing concealed rules of how to act as a human being.

Concealing my own unquestioned existing identity person with something I actually "not usually are".

Why I am acting

Interview with actor in makeup room, smoking in window.

Camera: Front, sides, overview. + Details (hands, feet, makeup applied, applying nail polish and smoke).

JUDITH BUTLER

If I am always constituted by norms that are not of my making, then I have to understand the ways that constitution takes place.

ACTOR 1

Någonstans har jag alltid känt en dragnig till att genom olika former av förkroppsligande gestaltning undersöka och expandera jaget för att närma mig ett någonting som skulle kunna stå i motsats till det jag av omvärlden reducerats till.

VOICE

Norms are constituted out of your control.

About Drag

Interview with actor in studio.

Camera: Front, sides, overview. + Details (hands and feet)

ACTOR 3

Drag är ett verktyg för att i en subjektskapande process bejaka och (lustfyllt) ifrågasätta delar i sin person....det är ett detroniserande av det seriösa genom det lekfulla, nästan anti-seriösa, där en kan vara seriös och allvarsam över det oseriösa och lättsinniga, lättsinnig och oseriös över det allvarliga och seriösa.

RENATE LORENZ

Drag is a way to understand how this constitution occurs, and to reconstruct it on one's own body. But at the same time, drag is a way to organize a set of effective, laborious, partially friendly, and partially aggressive methods to produce distance to these norms.

ACTOR 3

Jag tänker på drag som ett medvetet, omedvetet - upptrissat skådespel där den mimetiska (och stundtals parodierande) gesten, den visuella transformationen och sammansmältningen av karaktär och bakomliggande subjekt genererar en slags transparens i fiktionslagret. Drag väver samman det fiktiva med det dokumentära och skapar en plattform mellan två upplevda verkligheter, där det upplevda ter sig dubbelbottnat.

VOICE

Drag is questioning constituted norms by making them visible, by embodying them.

Directing others, pt. 1.

Interview with Director in studio.

DIRECTOR

Documenting something fictive, being a fictive documentary director is complicated.

This is problematic, leaving my true persona behind.

Turning around, looking into camera with glasses on.

DIRECTOR

Taking on this role, the role of the director.

Can I ever act natural in front of a camera?

Can I ever play the role of my true self in front of another person?

The me, who I am, and who I am when none else is around.

Directing others, pt. 2.

Interview with director in video-editing-room filled with hair extensions.

DIRECTOR

I would like to express it like this:

We are all always created in relation to each other.

I could never be a director without anyone to direct.

They think of me as a director, and that's who I become!

Loud bright voice, opening up body language. Then after the movement and gesture putting the hair back on the right place on the head.

I can always think of them, pretending they see me now.

DIRECTOR

Im thinking: Why would/n't it be possible for anyone to play a role? I mean:
Are they then not just a true person with a faked face acting the role of
someone invented?

That's the truth: They are all pretending to be someone.

Applying a face

Putting on makeup in "makeup room".

ACTOR 1

Det är en rätt skör process där varje steg känns avgörande. I spegelbilden växer en mer konkretiserad version av vissa utvalda fragment av mig fram. Jag är visst samma person, men de här konkretiserade fragmenten besitter olika förmågor och har olika kvalitéer som skiljer dem från varandra. Som jag får tillgång till.

ACTOR 1 *Thinking*

To be wearing a fictional character, adapting qualities and properties one do not usually own, entering a world or embodying this world with the own body, is this "the illusion of being a human person"?

When the whole body is transformed the whole perception of ones own body is camouflaged into something else, one has become an other being.

To be dressed out

Sidekick, who is gray and "natural", is standing in the middle, in the front of a big group of super dressed out characters.

SIDEKICK 1

Jag njuter av deras blickar. Hur kan en dömande blick kännas så befriande?

SIDEKICK 1

Såklart det finns en viss provokativ aspekt, men jag tycker det känns som en farlig förenkling. Samma gäller den underhållande aspekten.

SIDEKICK 1

Jag är betraktare, jag är aktör. / I'm a spectator, I'm an actor.

SIDEKICK 1

Aldrig ser jag mig själv så tydligt som i dessa stunder.

Hair growing out of skull

In front of a mirror in a shower room styling hair.

SIDEKICK 1

With the hair, this expression and the fact of embodying a created identity gets super strong because our hair is growing out from our skull, our body. It can be styled, cut and arranged in totally different expressions, totally different persons, identities, versions of who I am.

Taking a shower.

Voices

Played up during: Shower scene and outdoor scenes.

VOICE

Vi är någon slags karaktärer - verklighetsflyktens frukt.

VOICE

Livet är scenen och teatern är alltid närvarande.

VOICE

Det här är på låtsas till den grad att det ter sig verkligare än verkligheten själv.
Vi är så medvetna om fiktionen att vi ser oss själva i den och därmed suddar ut dess gränser.

VOICE

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Quotations / References

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SUSAN SONTAG

To perceive Camp in objects and persons is to understand Being-as-Playing-a-Role. It is the farthest extension, in sensibility, of the metaphor of life as theater.

RYAN TRECARTIN

So, in a sense, the makeup is not un-self-conscious—it's aware of itself as a means of exploring ideas and language that are not exclusively makeup-oriented. Makeup, however, is an area where we embrace a more intuitive extension of the personality of a character, or where we frame the character's conceptual focal points.

RENATE LORENZ

Drag shows everyday activities, costumes, embodiments, and narratives in a way that makes it possible to understand all everyday practices of subjectification as performance and mimetic repetition. Fundamentally, it is the function of drag to make it visible that all practices of subjectivization are 'drag'.