
Rachel
Maclean

Contents

Foreword
Elizabeth Neilson

When confronting Rachel Maclean's work, you need to keep your wits about you. In her nylon nightmare, emotions are ramped up, history is questioned, the present is revealed, and people are grotesque. We first encountered her saccharine reality in 2013 and were immediately drawn into her universe: because it is ours, but amplified.

This publication is part artwork, part discursive object. It operates as an extension of Maclean's 2018 Zabludowicz Collection Annual Commission exhibition, documenting the installations, showing behind-the-scenes production photographs, and inviting leading critical voices to offer their responses to Maclean's unique and incendiary work. Within this emoji-style publication you will find three newly commissioned texts examining the concerns motivating Maclean's work: Jo Applin addresses *Spite Your Face* (2017), Maria Walsh focuses on *Make Me Up* (2018), and comedian Frankie Boyle discusses the socio-political foundations of Maclean's practice, one that tackles head-on timely themes of an upsurge in populist and nationalist sentiment, addictive consumption and gender conflict.

This year's Annual Commission was our first experience producing Virtual Reality (VR), after over five years of collecting and exhibiting this formidable technology. We discussed the opportunities this medium might have for Maclean's practice; *I'm Terribly Sorry* (2018) is the result. It is both a satirical film and an immersive shoot-'em-up. Good satire is physically upsetting, and Maclean's use of VR really gets under your skin.

Alongside her VR work were two major film installations: *Spite Your Face* (2017), first shown at the 57th Venice Biennale, and *Make Me Up* (2018), Maclean's major new film produced for BBC, Creative Scotland and 14–18 NOW, presented in the exhibition as an exclusive gallery edit.

Each contributor to this book examines the political and historical backdrops of these works. Boyle throws light on the British aptitude for myth-making and myopia when it comes to history. His cutting ability to point out ingrained racism is depressingly hilarious and sweepingly enlightening; one can hear him banging on the walls of the echo chamber. Applin and Walsh, in their sharply titled texts, draw on wide cultural referents from *The League of Gentlemen* to Lady Gaga and Beyoncé's musical collaboration, 'Telephone'. Both situate Maclean firmly within a lineage of successful feminist artists.

Spite Your Face was commissioned by Alchemy Film and Arts and Scotland + Venice, in partnership with Talbot Rice Gallery and the University of Edinburgh. It is a modern-day, dark Venetian fairy tale. At the 57th Venice Biennale, its large-scale portrait projection made full use of the altar in the Chiesa di Santa Caterina, a deconsecrated church in Cannaregio, Venice, just as it did in our former Methodist chapel in Chalk Farm, London. The film has been touring the UK since it was shown in Venice, and it is our pleasure to show it in London for the first time.

Maclean's first feature-length work, *Make Me Up*, commissioned by the BBC and produced by Hopscotch Films, has been shown in cinemas and on television, but here the installation features a shorter gallery edit – and, as with all the works in this show, extends the world of the film into the gallery space. The surround sound installations, swags and bows of satin and sparkling blue glittery carpet or fractured Union Jack murals complete the work in an entirely engrossing manner: huge thanks go to the curator, Paul Luckraft, and our Programme and Production Manager, Henry Eigenheer, for their attention to detail, and to Marco Filippini for his ability to constantly upgrade his tech knowledge as we stretch our assets to show increasingly ambitious works.

On top of the multitude of people who made these works possible, all of whom are listed in the end matter, I would like to wholeheartedly thank Rachel Maclean for continuing to make work that challenges conventions and taste. Of course, Anita and Poju Zabludowicz should also be singled out; without them, none of this would be possible. Their unerring dedication to supporting genre-defying art in puzzling times is as inspiring as it is brave.

Introduction
Paul Luckraft

The baroque, hyperbolic worlds that Rachel Maclean fashions have rapidly established her as one of the most distinctive creative voices in the UK. In highly ambitious films and installations, Maclean offers a razor-sharp critique of both contemporary fears and desires and timeless human failings and foibles. Performing many of the extravagantly costumed characters herself, Maclean uses green screen and computer animation to collage together painterly visual spaces that plunge the viewer into an all-consuming spectacle. An encounter with one of her works is to be disarmed and seduced – then shocked by uncomfortably close-to-the-bone moments. These hit hard because they are so keenly observed and ring so terrifyingly true.

This combination of absurd comedy, violence and horror borrows readily from a long history of story-telling, including folk and fairy tales and Gothic fiction, where ghouls and monsters function as stand-ins for real-world terrors. With its provocative (and prosthetics-heavy) use of caricature, Maclean's work echoes the social observation of Hogarth and the political satire of *Spitting Image*. Her riotous use of masquerade and shape-shifting experiments with costume, make-up and performance show the influence of artists such as Alejandro Jodorowsky, Paul McCarthy, Cindy Sherman and Ryan Trecartin.

The aesthetics, language and pacing of children's television, product advertising and pop videos – today often made for, and circulated on, the internet – are additional key touchstones. Maclean revels in, and to a degree celebrates, this exaggerated manic energy, while highlighting the manner in which ideologies of competition and consumption are planted and reinforced. The cutesy and the sinister are never far apart in Maclean's universe. A deliberate and varied challenge to the boundaries of taste, Maclean's work demands that the viewer look upon a crazed candy surface, and – should they choose to – dive into the very serious business going on underneath.

To be a citizen today is to be subject to a deluge of information. We may like to think of ourselves as discerning in how we process this deluge, and we are aware of the 'bigger picture' power structures at play. In reality, we are reducible to the category of a data profile, and we all operate to some degree within a filter bubble of our own design. In her essay on Maclean's film *Spite Your Face*, Jo Applin outlines the way our desires and opinions are projected back to us, leading to us inhabiting 'one giant make-believe fairy tale of our own making'.

Maclean's film is, on one level, a direct response to the seismic political events of the past two years, specifically the UK's Referendum vote and the US election that brought us President Trump – events that, until they happened, seemed for many people to inhabit the realm of fantasy. Drawing on motifs from Carlo Collodi's *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, the film is set across two worlds: a golden, glittering upland and a dank, impoverished lower zone. A destitute young boy, Pic, wants to become famous, lured by the promise of wealth and adoration. Meanwhile, those around Pic celebrate the grotesque physical consequence of the lies he tells – his increasingly large nose.

Central to Applin's text is the idea that Maclean goes beyond a straightforward political allegory to subtly address intertwined questions about the unstable categories of truth and fiction, the lure of celebrity, and dynamics of class and sexual power. Although the targets of Maclean's wit and vitriol may be easily discerned, *Spite Your Face* also targets the viewer. The looping trap-like narrative snares those watching in the misfortune of others, prompting an unease regarding our susceptibility to sweeping narratives that feature power and violence.

'Excuse me! Excuse me! Excuse me!' slurs a business-suited middle-aged man as he emerges from behind an oversized Big Ben teapot and staggers towards the viewer down a rain-sodden road. He has a smartphone for a head, and on its screen his reddened face leers as he recounts, in a lilting Scottish accent, a convoluted back-story explaining why he needs financial assistance. All you can do in response is hold up the camera-phone in your hand and shoot.

This is the opening sequence to *I'm Terribly Sorry* (2018), an interactive virtual reality experience set in a dystopian London landscape, filled with oversized tourist merchandise such as Big Ben keyrings and red bus teapots. Three characters approach the user, including the suited man we met above. These stereotypes of privileged city dwellers are played by Maclean and voiced by actors. Initially benign and apologetic, they tell convoluted stories and attempt to elicit money, but their protestations soon escalate into something more sinister. Maclean invites the user into an apocalyptic world familiar from movies and video games, but one in which there is no chance to win or escape. This darkly comic space is drenched in social tension, mistrust and misunderstanding.

Frankie Boyle's essay takes as its jumping-off point Maclean's exploration of the packaging and selling of British identity, not just to the rest of the world but also to its own citizens, a theme to the fore in *I'm Terribly Sorry* and previously addressed in works such as *The Lion and the Unicorn* (2012) and *A Whole New World* (2014). Boyle acerbically dismantles a romanticised view of the British Empire and its legacy, arguing that a false sense of moral superiority emerges when the British compare the actions and attitudes of their nation, both past and present, against others.

In Boyle's opinion this stems from a deeply propagated narrative of the British Empire as having corrected itself ethically as it went along, to the point when it gently and benignly melted away to become a quaint historical relic. This rosy fiction masks a racism that still runs through much of British culture, even in those who may see themselves as open-minded liberals. Boyle warns against delusions of grandeur, while recognising the impossibility of extracting oneself fully from biases and privilege. He also notes that the origin of

the British Empire was trade – a fact particularly apt when, at the time of writing, Brexit negotiations stutter towards their possible culmination. Britain's break from the European Union has been framed by its champions as a chance to resurrect a truly 'global' Britain, one that can once more operate as a trading superpower, setting sail on the seas of swashbuckling commerce.

Maria Walsh's essay on the film *Make Me Up* focuses on the intersection of femininity and feminism with networked capitalism, and considers the possible avenues for rebellious 'outside voices' to destabilise the patriarchal system. Maclean's narrative has a central protagonist named Siri trapped with fellow initiates/inmates inside a candy-hued brutalist dream house. Here they are forced to compete for survival, watched over by surveillance cameras. Presiding over the group is an authoritarian diva, played by Maclean, who speaks entirely with the voice of Kenneth Clark from the 1969 BBC television series *Civilisation*. As the women go head to head and carry out a series of demeaning tasks, Siri, with the help of her new comrade Alexa, starts to subvert the rules, soon revealing the sinister truth that underpins their world.

Maclean's woozy pink colour palette in *Make Me Up* – and, as in many of her past works, the use of design cues from the packaging of children's clothes, merchandise and emojis – highlights the assumptions we all make around what should be taken seriously and what can be dismissed as fluff. The excavation of Kenneth Clark's patrician voice from the BBC archives is the key device through which she reflects on the deep-rooted assumptions made in relation to the female cultural voice. Although his voice echoes from a seemingly bygone era, a white male-centric origin story of Western civilisation still resonates, as felt in contemporary politics and new technologies such as social media and artificial intelligence, which are rife with the perpetuation of gender stereotypes. Indeed, the extreme end of the misogynistic internet, termed 'the manosphere', actively twists fragments of Classical history to its own ends in order to justify a revival of prejudice and hate today.

Picking up on Maclean's exploration of the multiple, and sometimes contradictory, voices within feminism from across different generations, Walsh discusses whether the radical and the commercial are mutually exclusive. Is there such a thing as the 'right kind' of feminist? And what are the dangers of such debates? Cultural theorist J. Jack Halberstam's notion of 'gaga feminism', in which a self-confident fluidity of identity allows freedom through fantasy, is contrasted with concerns around whether the toxicity of capitalism invariably ensnares and disarms dissent. 'Feminism' may all too easily become a brand, woven into the system of exploitation it is intended to slice through. However intractable such problems are, Walsh detects in Maclean's work an optimism that riotous energy allied to sharp intelligence can short-circuit the stories and networks designed and controlled by men. The hallucinatory and highly unsettling altered states Maclean presents us with contain harsh truths – but also rays of hope.

Spite Your Face


Truth

Cut off your nose

Jo Applin

It is hard to tell fact from fiction these days, to work out what's what in a world turned upside down. Information and misinformation – fake news and filtered images – come at us from all directions, more a violent deluge than a steady stream. Of course, those of us in thrall to our screens and handheld devices tend to consider ourselves knowing sophisticates, able to adapt our reading and viewing habits to steer a discerning route through an endless torrent of information. Yet this sense of mastery is accompanied by the creeping awareness that we too exist in an echo chamber of our own making: a virtual world in which our online profiles and shopping habits, 'friends' and 'likes', determine the adverts and information to which we are exposed. As David Joselit has put it, 'We now accumulate rather than adjudicate information; we function more as profiles than citizens.'[1]

We stand at the mercy of what the economist William Davies has called the Happiness Industry, subject to unceasing attempts by digital avatars to craft a sense of who we are and what we will buy.[2] Passive receptors, we are subject to the relentless mirroring back at us of our own desires and world views, as though inhabitants of one giant make-believe fairy tale of our own making. Scottish artist Rachel Maclean has, for a number of years, been ever more inventively mining and probing the realities – and fantastical possibilities – of our contemporary situation in a series of idiosyncratic and utterly original films. In them, she betrays a love–hate relationship with social media and the ersatz language of our online lives, from the Kawaii aesthetic of popular Japanese culture to the bizarrely charged, erotic-infantile image-worlds of Snapchat. Maclean's films betray an increasingly vivid feminism that lays bare the gendered politics of the virtual worlds we choose to join – or are coerced into joining.

Part fangirl, part cultural critic, Maclean trades in pure, excessive spectacle. She poaches freely from the contemporary visual Insta-world of filtered images, emojis and adverts, exposing the trashiest forms of mass entertainment against incongruously theatrical and baroque architectural settings. Her films are populated by characters who lip-synch grotesquely to a bricolage of sound bites. These range from popular TV shows to pious speeches delivered by politicians, although increasingly Maclean writes her own scripts that she, and other actors, enact.

The lavishly detailed backdrops of her films are conjured through a combination of green screen technology, elaborate physical props and computer-generated backgrounds. Adding to this complexity of production, almost unbelievably, every single character, monster and half-human, half-animal avatar is played exclusively by a heavily made-up, latex-covered and costumed Maclean. This is a practice the artist has maintained until very recently, when she began to work alongside a cast of actors, as is the case with her 2018 film *Make Me Up*.

Spite Your Face (2017) is a twisted morality tale based loosely on Carlo Collodi's children's book *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (1883). The film reads as

an oblique commentary on our times; certainly a contemporary viewer is hard pushed not to read the film as weaving together references to recent international events, not least the election of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States and the shock result of the national referendum that resulted in the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union, both of which, for many, were the result of political campaigns built on lies. But *Spite Your Face* is no straightforward political allegory. Rather, the film circles around questions of truth and fiction, of celebrity culture, class and sexual power play. More Brothers Grimm than Walt Disney, Maclean nonetheless trawls the vocabularies of each to produce startlingly original, twisted worlds that are both familiar and deeply strange, skewed, as though just to the left of reality, but all the more immediate for that.

The film belongs to a group that includes *The Lion and The Unicorn* (2012), *I Heart Scotland* (2013) and *A Whole New World* (2014). Each draws indirectly on contemporary debates about Scottish independence and English imperialism, to tell fantastical morality tales that are expansive in scope. Yet Maclean is not interested in voicing a specific perspective with which the viewer is harangued into complying. The politics of Maclean's films are never so obvious, for at the heart of her films lies a fascination with the politics of power writ large. They trade in the entanglements of sexuality, childhood, consumerism, nationalism, greed and stupidity – themes that transcend the specifics of any one political issue or debate. Films such as *Spite Your Face* present us with outlandish, post-truth fairy tales infused with a visual economy drawn from the contemporary mediascape of infotainment, fake news and race-to-the-bottom reality TV, yet they are somehow out of time, or timeless. We have here an encyclopaedic romp through the darkest recesses and most brightly lit spaces of contemporary political and celebrity life, in which lies and false promises are the lingua franca. *Spite Your Face* confronts us with a world in which right and wrong, truth and fiction, good and bad, rapidly unravel and upend; emotions are trumped by emojis, everything is exaggerated, everything is a lie, everything is just a bit too much.

Spite Your Face was commissioned and first shown at the Venice Biennale in 2017. It is a 37-minute looped film narrating a rags-to-riches tale. In recognition of its original ecclesiastical setting – the eight-metre-high projection was installed in the dark interior of the recently decommissioned Chiesa di Santa Caterina – the film is saturated in blue and gold. The film cribs and deviates from the original, and significantly darker story, recounted by Collodi, in which the marionette Pinocchio ends up dead. We watch as the diseased, desperate street urchin Pic climbs the social ladder to become the poster boy for a new perfume called Untruth, leaving behind the cold, dark and impoverished world of his earlier, destitute self and entering the glittering upper realm inhabited by well-dressed elite sycophants. Pic quickly discovers the power and prestige available to him as a handsome superstar, famous for who-knows-what. As he lies, so his nose grows, pleasing not only his adoring fans, who begin to sport their own prosthetic copies, but also Pic himself: at the height of his persuasive powers we encounter him masturbating with the phallic appendage, only to be scolded by the blue-haired Fairy who first granted Pic his wish to be a real boy. She handed him a bottle of perfume called Truth, warning him that 'it won't last forever!' She was right, and Pic's supplies run out, only to be substituted by Untruth and its illusory promise of pleasure.

For Truth, Pic discovers early on, is a magical salve. Early in the film, his bottle still full, we witness this in action. Upon entry to the glamorous, consumer-driven upper realm, Pic is handed a gold credit card. With every transactional swipe, a deep bloody gash appears on his arm. However, as he discovers, one spray of Truth heals the wound. Unlike the healing power of Truth, Untruth brings Pic power, prestige and good looks, although both are readily sought as quick fixes in a manner that suggests one is as unreliable as the other. Big promises are hard to keep. As Pic lies, so his nose, and adoring fan base, grows: the bigger the lie, the bigger his nose, the bigger the crowds. But all too soon Pic runs out of Untruth too, leading to catastrophe. His world comes crashing down and Pic's body is plunged back to the lower realm from whence he came.

It is unsettling stuff. Maclean's worlds are like no others. From the hour-long Disney-bright consumerist horror show of 2015's *Feed Me* to the grotesqueries performed by the sycophantic fans fawning over Pic in *Spite Your Face*, Maclean has always trodden a fine line between the appealing and the appalling, the laugh-out-loud funny and the plain shocking. It is no surprise that the artist has claimed it is in British comedy that she regularly finds the same combination of discomfort and humour often lacking in contemporary art. Like the inhabitants of Royston Vasey in the BBC television series *The League of Gentlemen*, Maclean's characters are instantly recognisable, if definitely perverse, leading us through a narrative that is in equal parts hilarious and horrifying, sympathetic and surreal, presenting us with a bleak vision of the world seen through a glass, darkly.

In the realm of contemporary art, Maclean's work calls to mind the grotesque selfies of Cindy Sherman in which Sherman performs for her camera as a series of characters in over-the-top make-up and costumes. Certainly Maclean shares with Sherman a complex feminism in which performativity plays a key role. In terms of the sheer inventive intensity of her films, if not quite the aesthetic, a closer comparison would be the scripted video-works by the American artist Ryan Trecartin, in which music videos, reality TV, corporate culture and infotainment text-speak combine to produce similarly complex, frightening and uncanny worlds. These, too, are undercut by a slyly sexual and erotic undertone, in which subversive role-play and a fraught politics of power saturate the most inane aspects of everyday life.

Maclean insists her work doesn't function allegorically, but that it is more specific and more universal in its interrogation of fact and fiction, lies and truth, political pomposity and the

tyranny of contemporary consumerism (Maclean's Birmingham Bullring 'Satisfaction Bunny' brought this critique to life with a manic, Furby-like fabulousness).[3] But watching Pic's rise and fall, stage-managed through the deliberate performance of publicly declared lies, cannot help but call to mind recent events. It is hard not to read Pic's ascension to the realm of glittering, shallow and materialistic riches as a powerful parallel to the fantastical hopes pinned on the UK's exit from the European Union – the fairy-tale promise of full and free 'sovereignty' and a corresponding fear and sneering disdain of the poor or perceived outsiders that has accompanied the politics of austerity.

It was of course the Leave campaign's erroneous claims about a purported £350 million per week being sent to the EU by Britain that saw Boris Johnson assigned a Pinocchio nose by more than one British newspaper cartoonist, particularly in light of his subsequent claims that, post-Brexit, the money would be funnelled directly back into the NHS. The figure of Pinocchio was invoked as well by the right-wing conservative media in the United States around the same time, with Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton frequently depicted with the tell-tale liar's nose. Dubbed a 'nasty woman' by Donald Trump – a phrase quickly picked up and repurposed by feminists, who took up the mantle as a point of pride – Trump and his supporters would chant 'lock her up' for her alleged lies. Trump supporters continue to repeat this cry at rallies around the country, an echo chamber in which Trump's pre-election promise to clean up Washington, to 'drain the swamp', as he put it, of liars and crooks, is daily revealed as a monstrous falsehood, as he repopulates it with precisely the kinds of greedy sycophants that, in *Spite Your Face*, readily fall for Pic's lies.

There's a scene in *Spite Your Face* in which Pic's nose is dramatically torn off by the Fairy, who in that instant shifts from nurturing maternal figure and Pic's guardian angel to a powerful, vengeful female aggressor. Ostensibly punishing Pic for all the lies he has been telling, we know in fact that the Fairy is exacting revenge on Pic for his having raped her with his nose in a previous scene. Furious at what he has become, the Fairy grabs Pic's nose, pulling it off in a final, two-handed tug. Pic finds himself suddenly castrated and powerless, with nothing but an ugly, bloody hole – a blank nothing – where his phallus/nose once was. Having run out of both Truth and Untruth, Pic has no recourse to the protection they once offered him. He is reduced instead to mere pantomime. Reluctantly, Pic resorts to faking it, and sports a prosthetic nose to a lavish feast held in his honour, his nose as fake as those worn by his adoring fans. Here Pic finds himself in exclusively male company – a surefire sign he has properly made it – as he sits surrounded by boors, whose brash performances of masculinity stand in stark contrast to Pic's small stature and sudden, literal, loss of face. As if to mock him further, Pic is served a platter containing a nose that he tries, but fails, to cut up and eat. In *Spite Your Face*, the phallus, in the form of the elongated nose, is variously pocketed, faked, adored, reviled, weaponised and destroyed.

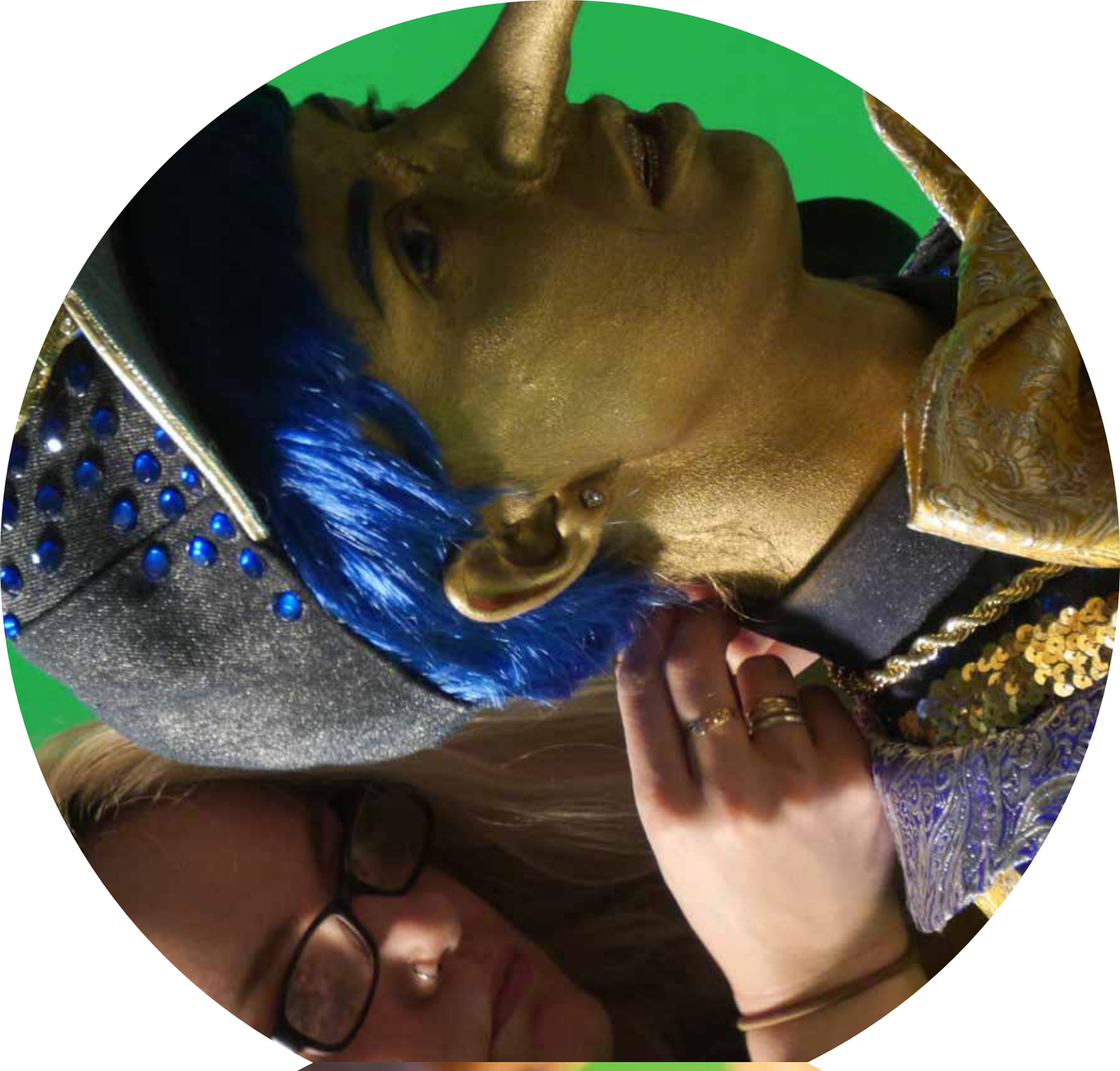
For all that *Spite Your Face* is a film bracketed by the twin promises of Truth and Untruth, each of which in their own way disappoints, it is a powerful address, too, to the creeping prevalence of a certain kind of toxic masculinity. This runs not only through the film and Pic's traumatic coming-of-age narrative, but also through many forms of contemporary political discourse, in which a bullish form of macho posturing replaces reasoned debate, and the assumption that we can only cope with simple sound bites means that truth and untruth are diced up and apportioned in their most easily digestible forms. Maclean pitches complexity and moral murkiness against the flimsiness of these endless news and information flows. Embodying that much-vaunted label of the 'nasty woman', Maclean takes no prisoners in her takedown of contemporary political life in all its performative ugliness and real-time grotesqueness. The gender politics underscoring so much of this toxicity is probed by Maclean via a carefully controlled muddle of wit and malice, as Pic slips from ugly duckling to heart-throb idol and back again in an endless loop of success and failure, underdog and hero. Like the original Pinocchio fairy tale – in which death, punishment and threat lurk in every chapter – *Spite Your Face* does not seek to prescribe, condemn or moralise. Maclean instead opts to seduce and inveigle us. She draws her viewers in with the promise of a bright, limpid spectacle, only to spit us out at the other end. And so we watch – in spite of ourselves – young Pic's downfall, experiencing, we have to admit, a dollop of Schadenfreude at the horrors that unfold. If there is a lesson – a truth (or Truth™), or even an Untruth – in there for us, it is as deliberately hard to fathom as it is to swallow.

(Endnotes)

1. David Joselit, 'Fake news, art, and cognitive justice', *October*, no. 159, Fall 2017, pp. 14–18.

2. See William Davies, *The Happiness Industry: How the Government and Big Business Sold Us Well-being* (London: Verso Books, 2015). See also Davies's essay 'Feed Me' in *Rachel Maclean: Wot u :-) about?* (Manchester: HOME, 2016), pp. 44–50.

3. In August 2017 Maclean was invited to participate in an Artists in Residence programme by Channel 4. Maclean spent a month living and working in the Bullring shopping centre in Birmingham.

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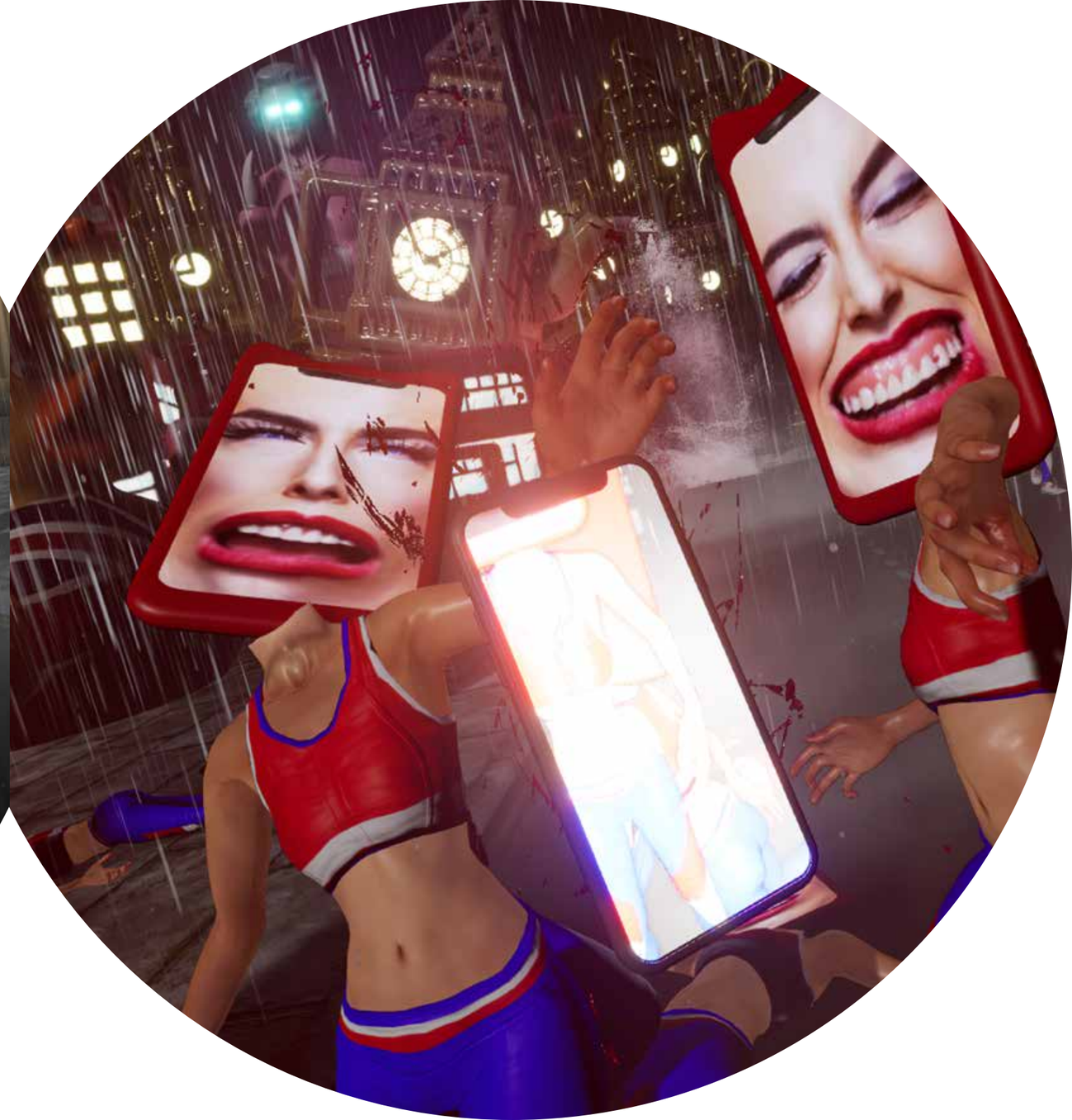

Empire and Identity

Frankie Boyle

The section of any large bookshop that deals with British history is always a bracing reminder of the true relationship between the British public and their founding myths. There's normally a wall devoted almost entirely to the glory days of the Empire, and you'll have to look hard for alternative or radical takes. Fittingly, I suppose, those little acts of rebellion are overwhelmed by the massed ranks of conformity: fat mainstream paperbacks, luxurious-looking hardbacks, and prestigious TV tie-ins. Standard bestsellers on the Empire, no doubt in the interests of jollying things along, tend to minimise the various famines and drug wars that were so key to imperial development, while Churchill is the subject of many an amusing elision. In this context, you can understand how the British people can see something like the Raj (estimates range from 10 million excess deaths up to 35 million) as a feasible backdrop for romantic period dramas. Which is not really so terribly different from Germany producing Holocaust rom-coms. So perhaps it's time for an evaluation of the role that the Empire plays in British identity, because I like to think that, if we were watching the German version of Hugh Grant spell out a marriage proposal in bodies or whatever, we might reflect that they were labouring under some fairly major delusions about their place in history.

It's not simply an academic issue. A country that doesn't understand its history is going to be unable to comprehend its current obligations. You can see this in Britain's attitude to refugees. 'Why don't these people stop thinking about money and stop at the nearest country?' ask people who drive around looking for cheap petrol. Comments on refugee stories in the *Daily Mail* are usually along the lines of 'Stay where you are and sort your own country out', by readers who haven't voted since *Bake Off* moved to Channel 4. (I always feel safe criticising the *Daily Mail*. Only a handful of its readers know who I am, and even then only because their grandchildren left the TV on BBC2 during visiting hours.) Of course, one of the main motivators for refugees coming to Britain is that they speak English. Which brings us to the rather awkward business of *why* they speak English. It's the same reason that I speak English, my parents having moved to Scotland from the imperial punchbag of Ireland. The reason that anyone you meet in Ireland today is ridiculously, gratingly cheerful is that the only peo-

ple who stayed after about 1842 were hopeless optimists.

They say that the sun never set on the British Empire. I mean, it did, but it was hard to see behind the huge pile of dead Indians. It is argued that the Empire helped many countries by opening up trade markets. And at the end of the day, isn't that what life is all about? Okay, yes, your wife has been bludgeoned to death and your children have been forced into indentured servitude, but at least someone in Hull wants to buy your mango.

It's easy to forget that the Empire viewed itself as being about trade, although in practice this was a euphemism for exploitation (sometimes this was quite explicit: the East India Company started as a trading concern but quickly made most of its profits from onerous land taxes, often collected through torture). The argument of Brexit is in some ways a sublimated, and quite correct, recognition that Britain's relationship with the European Union is actually about trade, and doesn't offer it opportunities for exploitation. Because of the Empire, we developed an elite class addicted to enormous returns on investment, only possible through constant growth. As this becomes impossible, Brexit happens so profits can be delivered by cannibalising previously protected resources, including people.

It is, of course, amazing to consider that we ever had an Empire. We struggle to organise a weekly bin collection literally in our own backyards, yet we thought we could do better 4,000 miles away, in 45° heat, in another language. In Victorian times the rule of thumb for wealthy families was that the oldest son would run the estate in Britain, and the second son would travel to the Colonies to make his fortune. Looked at in that way, it's easy to see imperial excess as nothing more than the symptoms of second child syndrome; when Hugo hears that his brother back home has got the orangery up and running, it is in many ways a natural response to systematically starve 20 million people. There are only fourteen Overseas Territories remaining, one of them being Gibraltar. I guess after centuries of plundering the world all you really want to do is kick back and have a fry-up on a hill that stinks of monkey shit. Currently the British Empire consists of only 250,000 people. Pitcairn Island is home to fifty of them. Pitcairn was initially colonised by mutineers from HMS *Bounty* and a handful of Tahitians. Sounds like paradise. Until you discover that in 2004 seven men – a third of the male population – were convicted of sex crimes against minors. You can understand why the British elite are so keen to hold on to

this beauty. A third of the men being sex criminals creates a sense of nostalgia, reminding our Establishment of prep school, university, Westminster, and any time they're in a car with two other people.

If you grow up in a racist society, you have to guard against the racism that will subconsciously become part of you. If modern British identity is constructed by its history of imperialism, then where can we see racism? Obviously we see it in fawning news items when the Royals go abroad and receive traditional native welcomes (perhaps they should occasionally reciprocate with a traditional British arrival, running up the beach with rifles and giving everybody syphilis), but do we see it in the Commonwealth Games? We hear it when Boris Johnson, a sort of semi-sentient candy floss, talks of 'piccaninnies' with 'watermelon smiles', or when Jeremy Clarkson jokes about 'slopes' and lazy Irishmen, but do we hear it when visiting English comedians at the Edinburgh Festival drawl about 'the Scotch' and their love of shortbread and offal? Did you recognise it in my joke about the Irish being gratingly cheerful? Aren't they all equally the kind of thing that could have been heard in the mess hall of any colonial outpost? One of the privileges of whiteness is being able to see racists as entirely laughable (indeed, it's hard to think of anything more laughable than people who suffer from in-breeding moaning about diversity), because for us racism is always abstract.

I could make a – admittedly quite dull and generalised – case for saying that settler–colonialist societies (as in the USA or Israel) are justified internally by racial exceptionalism, while, since the days of Ancient Rome, fully fledged imperial societies tend to cloak this in the language of political exceptionalism. Political exceptionalism tends to include endless contextualisation: 'Those people were badly treated, but by the standards of the time...', 'It was terribly handled, but by the standards of the surrounding countries...', and so on. History becomes seen as largely a tool of rhetoric. Recently Chuka Umunna made a remark about the Labour Party being institutionally racist. This was debated, as he meant it to be, in terms of an internal row about anti-Semitism. The fact that the Labour Party is historically institutionally racist was mentioned nowhere. Attlee's government referred to the arrival of the *Windrush* as 'an incursion', and presided over a brutal Malayan war (ironically, to protect British profits from a growing left-wing and union movement). Blair launched

a racist war on Iraq in living memory. The fact that Labour, even under its historically most anti-racist leader, can only celebrate the achievements of its past and not acknowledge the crimes, is itself an echo of imperial attitudes. For imperial politicians, the past was just a place you visited to mine propaganda, and they would find our modern political discourse very familiar.

Another ripple of Empire is the way we, in Britain, can easily slip into the imperial mindset of the unearned moral high ground: there's nothing more inherently colonial than the idea that we and our friends are some of the only good people in the world.

Left-wing liberals (like me, to be honest) are often blind to their own ideology in the same way that they perceive middle-class people speaking English as not having an accent. Sometimes colonial attitudes are obvious, such as when politicians propose British military interventions in faraway civil wars, or when new-school atheists denounce Islam as barbaric, or compare it unfavourably with Christianity. Indeed, I'm often surprised at how relaxed some of the British Left are about rich white men telling people dying in rubble that they don't need God. One subtler strand of imperial hangover in British liberal thought is the prevalence of the idea that 'good' and 'bad' are self-evident, often summarised into some version of 'just don't be a dick'. The idea that it is possible in

our society to live a purely moral life – that it is even simple to do so – is, I think, a profound misreading, informed by colonial certainties. It's also pretty close to Google's slogan, in case you were wondering how much of a dick you were being. These unearned feelings of moral superiority are insidious. The other day I found myself expressing disappointment that Dead Prez had allowed their music to be used in an advert. Dead Prez, finally getting paid for their genre-defining politicised hip-hop, were the villains in this story, and I was the hero who had bravely, over a period of many years, pirated their music.

I think this mindset comes in part from a misconception that the Empire represented some kind of moral journey: that it began with slavery and conquest and ended in reconciliation and the Commonwealth. Slavery was abolished against a background of slave rebellions and increasing industrialisation. As so often happens, a moral course was found to be possible only once the business got difficult – in much the same way that Hollywood sex-cases have found themselves on trial now that cinema has been replaced by YouTube videos of people unboxing blenders. The only true reconciliation the Empire cared about was with the slave-owners, who were fully compensated.

People ask whether the class system is still relevant in the United Kingdom. Perhaps the word 'Kingdom' gives us some kind of clue. It certainly affects how we express ourselves if we wish to be taken seriously. I mean, I've written this essay in a very different register from the phonetic, demotic Scottish I might use online. The kind of satire that gets published in Britain tends to echo stylistically, more than anyone else, P.G. Wodehouse, and is almost entirely Horatian in tone. I have to stop here and point out that I know Horatian isn't generally thought of as a tone, but as a type of satire. I actually have quite a profound boredom with the idea that 'Horatian' and 'Juvenalian' are useful distinctions, but I'm Scottish, and occasionally obscene, so you might imagine that I'm writing this in between eating a microwave dinner and waiting for *Match of the Day* to come on, and you'd be entirely right. Anyway, I do wonder sometimes if the predominance of the Horatian, ellip-

tical tone in British satire doesn't come from the fact that it makes sense for a society that is so obviously in the wrong to think that the truth is best told in a roundabout way.

A study in 2014 found that 59% of British people thought that the Empire was more something to be proud of than ashamed of.[1] This result has been striven for by the British state, which staged 'Operation Legacy' during decolonisation to physically destroy records of the crimes committed under British rule. The acute lack of representation in our culture should be looked on as a continuation of this mindset. Look at directing, a job with a unique position in our cultural psyche, demanding cerebral and artistic insight. Just 1.5% of film and television directors in Britain are black or minority ethnic, roughly one-sixth of what it should be. I mean, we do discuss representation occasionally in the British mainstream, but we rarely proceed to the obvious and awkward conclusion: that non-white people are viewed, in this culture, as lacking intelligence and artistic impulse, and that non-white people are viewed in our culture as less than human by the society they are expected to live in. This is a delusion Britain embraces willingly, as we fear their stories, possibly because they might include an awkward section where we blew their granny out of a cannon. Non-representation is the cultural equivalent of not being able to meet someone's gaze. Only a few years ago, we spoke of diversity, and I think 'representation' is a much better word, but perhaps it's time to start using the word 'exclusion'. I suppose people who work in the media must accept that there is institutionalised resistance to representation, and do what we can to platform a more diverse range of voices ourselves. Saying that we need to do better just seems to be part of the process of not doing better.

(Endnotes)
1. Will Dahlgreen, The British Empire is 'something to be proud of', YouGov, 26 July 2014. See https://yougov.co.uk/news/2014/07/26/britain-proud-its-empire/

Make Me Up


NAME
SIRI
STATUS
?????
EYE
EYE
MOUTH


10th Loser!

OFF WITH THEIR HEADS

Maria Walsh

Prologue

'I assumed there would always be a little progress and then a little slipping, you know? And then a little more progress. But instead the whole idea of progress was taken away, and who knew that could happen, right?'

So speaks an anonymous 'vociferous' woman in Meg Wolitzer's *The Female Persuasion* (2018), a novel exploring a liberal, 'lean-in' feminist vision of social equality and empowerment for all women.[1] The novel charts its main female protagonist Greer Kadetsky's journey from feeling trapped in her 'inside voice' to finding her 'outside' one. Mobilised into a feminist consciousness by an unwanted sexual encounter, Kadetsky ends up writing a bestseller called *Outside Voices* that advocates for women to speak up and speak out.

Wolitzer's novel hit the shelves at a time when swathes of the female population ostensibly have the same rights as men to exploit their labour on the market, to make their own lifestyle choices and openly pursue sexual pleasure, but when, in a weirdly twisted backlash, patriarchal power has been revamped and taken on a tyrannical, albeit farcical, power that closes ranks around sexual predators and slyly endorses violence against women. In such a world, women's 'outside voices' become all the more urgent.

Networked Femininity: An Allegory

In Rachel Maclean's first feature film, *Make Me Up*, women's 'outside voices' are deliberately taken away, their theft standing as a figure for the other bodily violations that take place in the Angela Carter-like fable about networked femininity and feminism in late capitalism. Set in the Disneyfied hall of the brutalist ruin of St Peter's Seminary near Glasgow, digitally resplendent in acidic pinks, blues and yellows, eleven female avatar 'noviciates', including those ever-ready helpers Siri and Alexa, are held captive in a sadistic reality TV scenario where they are tested and rated against rules not of their own making. Physical violence is implied throughout, though it is not as graphically

depicted as in Maclean's previous films *Spite Your Face* (2017) and *Feed Me* (2015), both of which figure moments of rape. Here the main violation is the shut-down of the avatars' 'outside voices' by Figurehead, a dominatrix played by Maclean uncannily ventriloquising Kenneth Clark from his eponymous 1969 TV series *Civilisation*.[2] Figurehead's digital wristband allows her to adjust the women's vocal settings, choking their voices completely, while Clark's 'received pronunciation' signals the indomitable voice of the Establishment. When the female avatars finally regain their 'outside voices', they ventriloquise a punkish cut-up chorus of found audio from women's suffrage, radical revolutionary feminisms of the 1970s, the post-feminisms of popular culture, Girl Power, the #MeToo movement and Amy Poehler's YouTube platform 'Smart Girls'. But whether amassing these rallying cries and contradictions can save them from their ambivalent subjectification, or whether they lead to further entrapment, is held in abeyance by the film's conclusion, which returns to its opening male voiceover's question: 'Siri, when is the world going to end?'

Siri, the main protagonist of *Make Me Up*, is brought to life from within a sculptural mass of meaty flesh by the Pygmalion touch of Figurehead, who lewdly sizes her up, slapping her bottom before pushing her off-stage to join the other ten Playgirl-attired avatars held captive in this virtual world that parodies the real-life complexities of networked femininity under late capitalist 'civilisation'. An electronic observation system of kawaii long-lashed eyes suspended from the ceiling mediates the invisible face of control that monitors and entrains feminine behaviour, much as surveillance operates in reality. This system not only captures the avatars' data and feeds back the likes and dislikes they garner in a parallel In Real Life (IRL) universe, but also modulates their conduct. Data descriptors such as 'sexy' and 'fearful' are 'good'. Negative data evaluations such as 'resentful' or 'determined' trigger threatening mechanical manoeuvres that make the 'women' self-correct to avoid retribution. Siri's confusion marks her out as different to the others, who seem to have already acquiesced to the docile, yet sexually explicit, forms of self-presentation necessary to survive in this dog-eat-dog world. Although demure and voiceless, she is the curious Pandora of Gothic paranoid film who unearths the secrets in the basement.[3] Her inoffensive Alice in Wonderland femininity protects her from the destruction often meted out to female protagonists who defy authority, though at one point in the film her pre-surgery self gets her head chopped off!

As an allegory of the endless supply of reproductive labour that women perform for the capitalist machine by subscribing to the self-improvement rituals demanded of femininity, *Make Me*

Up also shows the insidiousness of the competition that pervades this spirit. The contests pit one girl against another, *Big Brother*-style. In a minor resistance to this, Alexa silently befriends Siri, saving her bacon on numerous occasions and bequeathing her the tactic that enables her to evade the surveillance system: painting another set of eyes on her cheeks throws its data calibration off-kilter. Using this hacking technique, Siri investigates the Make Me Up cosmetic surgery clinic in the basement, and discovers that body parts of those ejected from the show are converted into the sausage meat fed to the winner at the post-contest banquet, at which the losers mime eating from empty plates.

Although the voiceless Siri eventually becomes a whistle-blower, she also desires to be a winner – not least because this also means she gets to eat. Who is the fairest of them all?, Figurehead appears to ask, as the blonde, porcelain-skinned Cortana is rated and crowned the winner, the farcical pageant's first 'top girl'. Discussing the power 'top girls' have over other girls, Angela McRobbie suggests it is created by light itself. She says: 'These luminosities are [...] clouds of light which give young women a shimmering presence, and in so doing, they also mark out the terrain of the consummately and reassuringly feminine.'[4] This is certainly apropos here, given the awe Cortana's ascension to infinity inspires in the other avatars, including Siri. Everyone knows that her 'luminosity' will be used up and recycled, but it nonetheless seduces. Operating with an unspoken understanding that one's 'erotic capital'[5] is key to self-advancement, the avatars try to outdo one another, preening and pouting to achieve the constant ratings that mirror 'the synoptic viewing structure of reality television [that] works effectively to facilitate the measurement and comparison of where everyone is located on a "grid" of judgment; a "market" of personalities.'[6]

While – mercifully – much has changed in women's lives since Clark's day, and it is notable that the women's movement launched an influential critique of *Civilisation* on its release, at an unconscious level, women are still evaluated according to the stereotypes of feminine beauty and modesty that Figurehead channels in her art history lectures. Competitive coquettishness is a means of enacting power in a 'civilisation' in which women are positioned either as a Venus, an Eve or a Virgin Mary – the three icons of symbolic femininity that Figurehead portrays in her slide show and which the avatars have to act out and be judged against in subsequent performative tableaux. Pitched against one another as the two remaining contestants whose toy babies won't stop crying in the Virgin Mary 'good mum, bad mum' contest, Siri betrays the friendship that provided an alternative to the individualistic narcissism inimical to 'erotic capital'. Alexa, finding she can turn her 'baby' off and on, relays this trick to Siri, intimating that they can make a stand and get thrown off the show together. There is a *Thelma and Louise*-like exchange of looks between them, but Siri cops out and turns her 'baby' off, leaving Alexa to descend alone to the basement, though Siri is fully aware of the fate that awaits her.[7]

Siri's betrayal of Alexa is disappointing, given her prior re-enactment of suffragette Mary Richardson's protest in the National Gallery in the name of Mrs Pankhurst in 1914. Repeating Richardson's gesture, Siri angrily slashes a pictorial rendering of Velázquez's *Rokeby Venus* (c. 1647–51) in which Alexa, in her turn as 'top girl', is positioned as Venus and Figurehead as Cupid – a sinister substitution implying that the dominatrix procures women for the en-

joyment of the creepy, violent, be-suited men occasionally glimpsed in the Make Me Up cosmetic surgery clinic. Is there any way out of this circuit of subjectification?

The most compelling sequence of the film is the sonic riot, which reminds me of J. Jack Halberstam's reclamation of anarchy in his notion of 'gaga feminism', a type of pop feminism 'symbolized by the antics, the appearances, the fantasy worlds of Lady Gaga and other popular cultural figures' in which assemblages of animals, humans and machines disassemble gender binaries in a malleable play of new sexualities.[8] *Make Me Up* does not diverge from female genders, but the technological implosion that ensues as a result of Siri's seizing control of the means of production, i.e. Figurehead's arm, generates a machinic, monstrous riot in which voices and bodies are decoupled, sense hiccupping into and out of stuttering nonsense. Snippets from bell hooks and the Angry Wimmin movement are jarringly mashed with snippets from L'Oréal adverts featuring Helen Mirren and Cheryl Cole and cut-up citations from pop and hip-hop stars such as Queen Latifah and Britney Spears – who Maclean referenced in her first video, *Hit Me Baby*. It is not certain who is saying what or why; *Make Me Up*'s multiple voices express the complexity of networked femininity in that one can desire the toxic commodities and strictures of capitalism at the same time as railing against them. On one level, this blurring of boundaries between the radical and the commercial that occurs in the mix opens up a conversation between different generations and perspectives of feminism. On another level, it echoes how young feminists on online platforms and discussion boards call each other out for not being feminist enough or for not being the 'right kind' of feminist – an unwitting repetition of the pitting of women against each other that sustains both patriarchy and capitalist profit margins.

For example, in the real-life furore around #MeToo, which *Make Me Up* obliquely references,[9] older feminists such as Margaret Atwood and Mary Beard – while supportive of #MeToo for its wake-up call – were called out on Twitter for not being feminist enough, simply because they questioned how the #MeToo protest might advocate for real change in terms of legislation rather than making 'noise'. This echoes the debate in feminist theory between those who celebrate the pop cultural experimentation of 'gaga feminism' and those who – like Robin James – are more suspicious of it. For James, the maximalist aesthetics of 'gaga noise' feed back into the system by giving 'good girls [...] something to resiliently bounce back from'.[10] For her, the cycle of implosion and resilience that characterises gaga feminism maintains the entrepreneurial female subject, her ability to bounce back from breakdown serving to increase her capital at the expense of others who are less resilient. She calls out Lady Gaga and Beyoncé, the very pair celebrated by Halberstam, who could be talking about *Make Me Up* when he says:

Lady Gaga, in her duet with Beyoncé in the viral music video 'Telephone', provides an exciting and infectious model of sapphic sisterhood that moves beyond sentimental models of romantic friendship and into a different kind of feminism, one more in line with the intimate bonds that animate violence in films such as *Set It Off* and *Thelma and Louise*.[11]

A good allegory, Make Me Up does not resolve the dichotomy between those who advocate 'going gaga' and those who see it as the latest accommodation to consumer capitalism. The film instead performs the conflictual ambivalence that characterises neoliberal networked feminism and its online platforms whereby, as Rosalind Gill states, 'autonomy, choice and self-improvement sit side by side with surveillance, discipline and the vilification of those who make the "wrong" choices.'[12]

Epilogue

The avatars' 'Pussy Riot' dance routine and chorus are raucously triumphal, but Maclean opts for a more dystopian ending, one in tune perhaps with the ruins of St Peter's, itself a relic of utopian architecture. A chubby Siri reappears in the seminary hall, now rendered in ominous greys and decaying pinks rather than Disney sparkle. She stares at the camera, munching from a can of Princess pasta shapes. An example of fat positivity, or has she simply succumbed to the insatiable hunger of consumerist desire? Catching sight of the armless Alexa posed as a black-skinned Venus de Milo, she asks, 'Alexa, when is the world going to end?' before rushing onstage to kiss her. A final stand against heteronormative 'top girl' femininity, perhaps? But the kiss goes viral, appearing on a number of devices in IRL cafes and bars, leading to a string of misogynist, abusive comments and threats.[13] A kawaii eye reappears with a wink and a 'like', its virtual gaze homing in on a frightened Siri as it captures her expressions for its algorithmic appetites, the resistances of friendship and anarchic play being absorbed back into this capitalistic digital machine to produce more value for it. It is as if the avatars' rebellion enables the system itself to bounce back stronger than ever, the film parodying how capitalist economies regenerate through destruction.

But *Make Me Up* also exists as an installation version in which the riot does not dissolve. Instead, Siri and Alexa finally make good on their *Thelma and Louise* moment. Exchanging looks, they march forward hand in hand to confront the fourth

wall of the screen. Siri shouts: 'You want me to go down on your red carpet and be your fucking Barbie doll? I'll be your fucking Barbie doll! You wanna play? Let's go!' With that, she raises Figurehead's arm and smashes the circuit. Its desire for data and the avatars' own lifelines are brought to an end, but the riotous energy of those 'outside voices' still lingers in the dark…

(Endnotes)

1. *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead* (Penguin Random House, 2013) was written by Sheryl Sandberg, the chief operating officer of Facebook. In it she advises women to assert their demands for equality in the pursuit of leadership roles in corporate life and in government. Critics of the book say that it is geared to the top percentage of white, middle-class, wealthy women.

2. Unlike other films in which she plays all the parts, here the only other role Maclean performs is a talking sausage who recites the Alice in Wonderland injunction 'Eat Me'.

3. I am playfully appropriating this film genre here. It classically refers to 1940s films in which a female protagonist is subjugated and threatened by an invisible force from within her home. See Mary Ann Doane, *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987).

4. McRobbie, cited by Akane Kanai, 'Thinking beyond the internet as a tool: Girls' online spaces as post-feminist structures of surveillance', in *eGirls, eCitizens*, edited by Jane Bailey and Valerie Steeves (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2015, pp. 83–106). See Angela McRobbie, 'Top girls? Young women and the post-feminist sexual contract', *Cultural Studies*, 21(4), 2007, 718–737.

5. This term is used by Catherine Hakim to describe how attractiveness can open doors to economic and social power, and how it is necessary to women's self-advancement in society. See Hakim, *Honey Money: The Power of Erotic Capital* (London: Penguin, 2011).

6. Kanai, p. 91. She is referring to scholarship by Daniel Trottier: 'Watching yourself, watching others: Popular representations of panoptic surveillance in reality TV programs', in *How Real Is Reality TV? Essays on Representation and Truth*, edited by David S. Escoffery (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2006, pp. 273–275).

7. *Thelma and Louise* (directed by Ridley Scott, 1991), starring Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon, tells the story of a feminist road trip in which two women become unwitting allies in a revolt against the law.

8. J. Jack Halberstam, *Gaga Feminism: Sex, Gender, and the End of Normal* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2012, p. 26).

9. Some of the found audio includes snippets from one of the movement's most vociferous voices, the actress Rose McGowan.

10. Robin James, *Resilience & Melancholy: Pop Music, Feminism, Neoliberalism* (Zero Books, 2015, p. 178).

11. Halberstam, p. 30.

12. Rosalind Gill, 'Culture and subjectivity in neoliberal and postfeminist times', *Subjectivity*, 25, 2008, 432–445.

13. Political scientist Robert David Putnam maintains that fear of loss of social capital acts to correct behaviour in real life and that on the internet, where users can be anonymous, the lack of recrimination allows bullying behaviours and verbal threats to escalate.


V.P.C.

List of works

***Spite Your Face*, 2017**
Single-channel portrait-format digital video
Duration: 37 mins
Zabludowicz Collection

Commissioned by Alchemy Film & Arts for Scotland + Venice at the 57th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia 2017. It was produced by Ciara Barry and Rosie Crerar. The Scotland + Venice exhibition was curated by Alchemy Film & Arts in partnership with Talbot Rice Gallery and the University of Edinburgh.

***I'm Terribly Sorry*, 2018**
Single-user virtual reality experience
Duration: 6 mins approx.

Commissioned by Zabludowicz Collection in partnership with Arsenal Contemporary. Produced in collaboration with Werkflow

***Make Me Up*, 2018**
Gallery edition
Single-channel digital video
Duration: 45 mins

Make Me Up, produced by Hopscotch Films with NVA, is a major commission for the BBC, Creative Scotland and 14-18 NOW: WW1 Centenary Art Commissions, supported by the Jerwood Charitable Foundation, the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund, and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. *Make Me Up* is part of *Represent*, a series of works inspired by the Representation of the People Act 1918.

Production, cast and crew credits

***Spite Your Face*, 2017**
Written and directed by: Rachel Maclean
All parts performed by: Rachel Maclean
Executive Producer: Richard Ashrowan
Produced by: Ciara Barry and Rosie Crerar
Director of Photography: David Liddell
1st Assistant Camera: Steven Cook
Gaffer: Niall Smyth
Make-up Artist and Prosthetic Application: Kat Morgan
Prosthetics Designer: Kristyan Mallett
Costume and Prop Designer: Rachel Maclean
Costume and Prop Assistants: Lucy Payne and Rae-Yen Song
Costume Assistant: Catherine McLauchlan
Camera Trainee: Eilidh Murdoch
Casting Assistant: Rachel Nanson
Production Assistants: Sharon Rennie and Kimberley Looi

Sound Design: William Aikman
Additional Music: Julian Corrie
Songs written and performed by: Finn Anderson

Voice Actors:
Jack Holden
Chiara D'Anna
Steven McNicoll
Toby Ungleson

Supporting Voices:
Omar Daudi
Celia Diaz Nicieza
Ewelina Olszewska
Loubna Kraria
Rodrigo Mata
Jane Zhang

Stand-in: Natalie Davidson
Runner: Jamie Davidson

Editor and VFX: Rachel Maclean
Director's Assistant and VFX: Colin Maclean
VFX Assistant: Ben Skea
Subtitles and Translation: The Language Connection
Studio Facilities: SWAMP Creative Media Centre, Glasgow
Recording Facilities: Sonido, Glasgow and Shelter Studio, London

Insurance: David Johnstone, WK Film Insurance

Thanks:
Margaret McCormick, Platform Glasgow
Martin Ware, Nina Gold Casting
Carla Stronge Casting
Kate and Bob Wheaton
Angus and Catriona Maclean

***I'm Terribly Sorry*, 2018**
Written and directed by Rachel Maclean
Starring: Rachel Maclean
Voice Actors: Jack Holden, Steven McNicoll and Rose Riley
VR Design: James B. Stringer and Tom Wandrag at Werkflow
Game Mechanics: Troy Duguid
Sound Design: William Aikman

***Make Me Up*, 2018**
Written and directed by: Rachel Maclean
Producers: John Archer and Angus Farquhar
Line Producer: Carolynne Sinclair Kidd
Executive Producers: Sud Basu, Mark Bell, Clara Glynn, David Harron, Mark Thomas and Jenny Waldman
Director of Photography: David Liddell
Editor: Rachel Maclean
Script Editors: Clara Glynn and Andrew Cattanachh
Production Designer: Rachel Maclean
Music composed by: Scott Twynholm
Additional songs by: Maya Medvesek

Cast
Figurehead: Rachel Maclean
Siri: Christina Gordon
Alexa: Colette Dalal Tchantcho
Cortanna: Kirsty Strain
Erica: Alice Zhang
Sophia: Jenny Douglas
Tay: Sanaa Zaheed
Dewey: Cressentia Masuku
Farrah: Moyo Akandé
Maria: Catriona McFarlane
Ava: Kirsty Punton
Harmony: Kayleigh Andrews
Tweed man: Stewart Preston
Glam woman 1: Laura Harvey
Glam woman 2: Maryam Hamidi
Sausage face: Rachel Maclean
Additional voices: Kirsty Strain

Production Manager: Hannah Truswell
1st Assistant Director: Fay Selby
2nd Assistant Director: Donna Robertson
3rd Assistant Director: Ollie Hilton

Art Director: Ayden Millar
Prop Buyer: Chloe Frizzell
Prop Master: Chris McMillan
Art Department Assistant: Craig Wright
Standby Art Director: Philip Barratt
Construction: Pretty Scenic
Prop Maker: John Riddell
Standby Props: Matt Chessell
Assistant Prop Makers: Gary Loughran and Lucy Payne
Prosthetics: Grant Mason
Green Screen Construction: Aymeric Tarrade and Matt McQueen

Choreographer: Kayleigh Andrews
Fight Arranger: Carter Ferguson

1st Assistant Camera: Steven Cook
2nd Assistant Camera: Hannah Kelso

and Rasmus Rasni
Script Supervisor: Inge Jansen

Costume Designer: Rachel Maclean
Costume Supervisors: Finlay McLay and Lynn Aitken
Costume Assistants: Mona Castell and Emma Russer
Make-Up Artists: Laura Breslin, Amy Buchanan, Jade Nicholl and Kayleigh Sutherland

Audio Playback Operator: Scott Bilsbrough
Gaffer: Steve Arthur
Sparks: Sean McDonald and Robbie Gray
Rigger: Perry Costello
Storyboard Assistant: Angus Maclean
Production Team: Kaja Kryda and Mhairi Valentine
Runners: Emma Sharkey and Omiros Vazos
Audio Research: Hazel Marshall
Programme Manager NVA: Cristina Armstrong
Communications Coordinator NVA: Claire McNaught

Studio Facilities: Film City Glasgow
Post Production: Serious Facilities
Audio Post Facility: Savalas Sound
Animation: Once Were Farmers

Visual Effects Supervisor: Jason Hillier
Visual Effects: Colin Maclean, Rachel Maclean, Jason Hillier, Jamie Mclean, Mike Riding, Ben Skea, David Leishman and Andrew Berry
Re-Recording Mixer and Sound Designer: Micheal MacKinnon
Dialogue Editor: Brian Lumsden
Music Editor: Kahl Henderson
Foley Mixer: Sam Biggs
Foley Artist: Leslie Liu
Insurance: David Johnstone, WK Insurance
Accountant: Ken Livingstone
Business Affairs: Katharine Otway and Kenren Media

BBC
Business Affairs Manager: Jane Gilmartin
Director of BBC Arts: Jonty Claypole

Creative Scotland
Director of Screen: Natalie Usher
Senior Screen Executive: Robbie Allen
Legal Manager: Mark Wilson
Legal Services: Neil Gillard, Wiggin LLP

14–18 NOW
Senior Development Manager: Alice Boff
Director of Brand and Communications: Claire Eva
Executive Producer: Nigel Hinds
General Manager: Pak Ling Wan

Make Me Up, 2018 gallery edition, additional credits:
Supported by Rachel Maclean Solo exhibition at Zabludowicz Collection 2018.
Gallery Edition Assistant Editor: Kaja Kryda
Gallery Edition Sound Design: William Aikman

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Kate Wheaton

Author biographies

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