

From:susanne oberbeck

<[REDACTED]@hotmail.com>

Date: Thursday, 3 July 2025 at 18:43

Desire Inc. for me highlights how the media system it exposes is linked to exploitative capitalism - the idea of celebrity, perfection of appearance, and unattainable sexual partners create a new kind of class system, except it seems as though anybody can have a go. Which is something social media exploits now in order to get people to create humungous amounts of unpaid content, while giving away personal data for free.

Stylistically i like how even though exposing serious issues, the video is quite camp and funny with the editing and performance styles, and the specificity of the characters' stories brings back the humanity the media system is trying to flatten. All of the characters seem victims of a seemingly disembodied and socially isolating system, whether it's working in a factory or attaining fame by being seen on tv, to hoping to have amazing sex by calling a phone number.

I also worked in factories when I was younger like the German lady, and there seem to be other characters possibly immigrants in the video too. This made me think about cultural imperialism, which seems to be happening in extremis with Instagram now.

I also liked that she is infiltrating a mainstream medium and addressing a general audience with the videos, rather than a specific art audience. Even though it's an

experiment, actually the issues at hand affect most people and are not hard to understand. This is why i always thought music was a great medium. Audiences are usually more open to unusual things than the industry wants people to believe.

Kontakt Lizzy Deacon (<

[REDACTED]@gmail.com>)

kirjutas kuupäeval N, 3. juuli 2025 kell 20:25

Hey everyone!!! Xx

One responder to the TV ads in Desire Inc. says 'thin, blonde and longhair, who knows, maybe that's what sells'.

After my Grandad cheated on my Granny with her best friend in the 80s, my Granny put an ad into her local papers lonely hearts column, similarly describing herself as a 'blonde haired, blue eyed, thin mother of two'. Three men responded and she ended up marrying one of them.

Desire Inc., makes me think about means of dating, and how the medium has shifted from newspapers, to TV ads, to reality shows, to apps. Desire Inc experiments with the performance of self as a means of seduction, provocation and 'selling yourself'. I was struck by how nothing has really changed since the lonely hearts column and Desire Inc in the 80s/90s, with this mode of mediated self-branding and self-promotion being more dominant and normalised than ever in contemporary

media. Lynn's work is emblematic and a prelude to the commodification of the self on privately owned platforms.

I recently spent £19.99 for a month of Raya (a dating app marketed for celebrities). I was slightly confused why they accepted me seeing as I'm not a celebrity, but I was curious to see if I recognised anyone on there.

People's Raya profiles are structured with their photo, name, job title and instagram handle. Their branded selves and curated identities packaged up into a profile to be swiped left or right. This app represents the darkest times where intimacy isn't just mediated, it's simulated and commodified. Desire Inc. exposes the performance of seduction not just as a flirtation, but as labour. The same labour is at play on Raya. This app represents an extreme moment, where there's been a collapse in the public-private boundary, and it's in this collapse that there's an attempt to create an elite, with Raya advertising their exclusivity via their screening process and no-screenshot policies. The film is a prelude to the present, and has never felt more relevant.

(By the way, the only famous person I saw on there was Jojo Siwa)

From: Niina Ulfsak

<[REDACTED].com>

Date: Fri, 4 Jul 2025 at 23:22

hi all!

In the film one of the characters mentions projected desire, which for me is always to be desirable. Maybe one of the only truly selfish parts of ourselves. Through layers of communication and mediatisation the addictiveness of desire outlasts and the simplicity of propaganda, however complicated in form, remains such a simple and effective act. Desire inc. But growingly anticlimactic, the desires that are being utilised or triggered in this very moment are rather a-sexual and immensely violent. Selfish (Palestine Action got declared as a proscribed organisation today).

It is 23:05 and after a day of apathy and no desire to do or be anything (but working regardless) I jump on a lime bike to travel an hour to a warehouse, resembling the form of desire from Party Girl to today in hopes of something becoming clearer, but I doubt it will. It is supposed to be the anti inc, the true liberated desire, which it definitely isn't. Hershman Leeson makes me think what are the urges that are the most revealing and behind which layers of media and algorithms have they crawled to hide.
Nxxx

From: Ruth Angel Edwards

<[REDACTED]@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, 8 Jul 2025 at 13:23

In 2020 I disseminated some video art I'd made using paid targeted ads on instagram from anonymous accounts. It was something I was sort of experimenting with during a period of weirdness for art making that happened during the first wave of Covid 19 lockdowns. With long periods of not much

to do I temporarily rediscovered getting stoned and had gone down a weed induced paranoid wormhole which involved re-reading the Hakim Bey TAZ book I had as a teenager which talks about 'poetic terrorism'; an idea of art existing in unexpected spaces in the world for no clear purpose apart from itself.

Unofficially putting art in a space which ordinarily exists to sell products to consumers can be a form of 'subvertising'; a genre of politicised counter cultural art which isn't really around much any more apart from at Glastonbury festival where I have recently been, as well as in (some of) the art of Banksy, and things like the group Led by Donkeys. I have always been a fan of this niche genre. It allows us to speak back to the voices of commerce and propaganda that speak at us all day long.

It's not right to equate the two exactly, but Niina's raising of the recent changes to laws around protest is relevant here because it's maybe part of the reason subvertising is not seen so much now. There are few spaces left where it's possible for this kind of subversion to really happen and if it does the stakes are higher. Anything that harms business(profit) now is highly criminalised and the main arguments for peaceful forms of direct action being further criminalised seem to focus not on any shift in general moral position but because of how much the damage caused by things like cutting a hole in a fence, throwing paint on something or defacing a billboard apparently costs. Debate around individual political causes is sidestepped and instead everyone can agree that interfering with capitalism by causing

any "disruption" is something really, really bad. Nevermind 'poetic terrorism', now even standard forms of peaceful protest are suddenly redefined by law as actual terrorism. And anyway, in a chronically online climate where everyone is stating their position about everything constantly really clearly and in accountable and traceable ways perhaps this form of anti-establishment art feels less appropriate - if you have something to say people need to 'get it' immediately with no ambiguity, and bad things are no joke so protest isn't supposed to look funny.....Even though actually the opposite is also true because no one is accountable online and its full of anonymous trolls who may or may not be real people.... In which case maybe the space of endlessly evolving internet memes could be said to satisfy an urge for critique and antagonistic observations enough now without people needing to go out of their way to actually have a sincere opinion or deal with anything physical in the real world?

TV advertising in the 80s and 90s relied on psychological manipulation of viewers and mild titillation to try and lodge the idea to buy something in people's stupid little minds, but it is now possible to see online exactly which stupid little minds were supposedly reached by any given content and whether or not those minds 'engaged'. Seeing these statistics in front of me was something much less interesting and revealing than I thought it was going to be when I put my targeted ad art onto instagram in 2020, unlike Hershman Leeson's work which was a kind of gateway eliciting a range of meaningful responses and

interactions from the public. Sexual desire is more obviously present in adverts for luxury goods - things like perfume adverts which most audiences understand in a kitschy way now anyway. Whereas a lot of ads you see online are just extremely direct, straightforward and sexless. Most advertising is now so crap that who would even want to make a satire of it?! Tim and Erik's spoof adverts were inspired by advertising on American cable TV in the 2000s which was then so absurd and unsophisticated in its attempts to sell stuff to people that it was actually a very free and visually anarchic space by comparison. However the lack of sophistication in targeting now can be quite funny. A single male friend of mine in his early 30s kept getting adverts for products clearly designed for incels such as an extremely strong 'technical glove' which enables otherwise pathetically weak men to punch through car windscreens, so he changed his youtube profile to a woman in her 70s because he preferred seeing ads for Saga cruises and new conservatories in between his rap music videos.

Lynn's work makes me think of the importance of art reaching big audiences with no given context and how useful this can be for both the artists themselves and for people seeing it without the usual set of instructions explaining it away. It's so rare to experience something in your daily life without really knowing what it is.

Anyway lots of unqualified random thoughts and opinions here, probably badly articulated! Am fully reminded of why no one normally asks me to write anything! :P

Although very much enjoying getting the chance to respond. Lynn's work is truly an inspiration. It's an honour to be asked.