The Burden Of Selfhood

March 23, 2017
7 minutes, 57 seconds

Speakers: Stefani Byrd, Sarah Ciston, Amy Fox, Heidi Kayser, Fernanda Navarro

Transcribed by: Hanaa Moosavi

Time   Transcription

00:01   [IDEAS
        INITIATIVE FOR DIGTIAL* EXPLORATION OF ARTS + SCIENCES]

00:10   Robotic Woman: She is so pretty without makeup. You are so pretty with or
        without makeup. You are so beautiful, you don't even need makeup. You look so
        pretty and simple without the makeup.

00:13   [the burden of selfhood
        March 23, 2017
        Stefani Byrd, Sarah Ciston,
        Amy Fox, Fernanda Navarro,
        Heidi Kayser]

00:08   [Horns Sound]
        [There are no ugly women,
        only lazy ones.
        -Helena Rubinstein
        Founder of Helena Rubinstein Inc Cosmetics Company]

00:19   Speaker 1: The lengths some women will go to just to look beautiful.

00:23   [Cross-Talk of Beauty Videos]

00:24   Speaker 2: The look can be achieved if one worked hard and spent half an hour a
        day on beauty treatments.

00:30   [More Cross-Talk of Beauty Videos]

00:31   Speaker 2: You've waited all your life to look like this.

00:37   Stefani Byrd: So this is an extremely interdisciplinary project that, myself and
        Heidi, that we're alumni from the Visual Arts Department here from the master's
        program, Fernanda's from the music department as a composer, Amy Fox from
        cognitive science, and Sarah Ciston from literature/creative writing— that myself—
        that I work a lot in video installation and interactive media and something I was
        very interested in was projection mapping and this idea of our digital and our
        physical bodies and how those things intersect and interact with one another.

01:16   Sarah Ciston: Well as the, I guess, writer in this situation I've always just been
        interested in kind of the volume of text that is being processed through our bodies
        everyday.

01:29   Robotic Woman Narrator: She's so pretty without the makeup. You're so pretty
        with and without makeup. You are so beautiful. You don't even need the makeup.
        You look so pretty and simple without the makeup.

01:36   [Sharp Piano Chords] [Cross-Talk]

01:46   Fernanda Navarro: We had text produced by Sarah and she was reading her text and then I recorded that transformed that into midi and played it through an instrument called a Disklavier which is like a piano and so that's why it had a voice that sounds like a piano-voice, a human-voice and I also used a "computer-voice," a text to speech sound, so to kind of represent this disembodied voice

02:18   Heidi Kayser: So I tried to use the screen almost as if it was a face, and then the other thing is, after hearing Fernanda's wonderful audio, there wasn't really a way for the video to keep up with that pace and that frenetic energy that I was just getting and watching all of this, so I wrote something in Processing to handle loading the images that fast that and processing them and distorting them.

02:44   [Sped up Video]

02:48   NikkieTutorials: [Slowed audio] Hey guys, I'm here today to show you the power of makeup—

02:52   Speaker 3: —Power of makeup video which was actually started by NikkieTutorials here on YouTube

02:56   Mayra touch of glam: —Obviously inspired by the one and only NikkieTutorials

02:59   Speaker 4: —The tag was made up by a fellow YouTuber by the name of NikkieTutorials

03:05   PatrickStarr: —Inspired by none other than NikkieTutorials

03:09   Speaker 5: Today we will be recreating NikkieTutorials amazing video

03:13   Speaker 6: This is definitely one of my favorite videos to watch here on YouTube and so I thought I would go ahead and recreate it.

03:21   NikkieTutorials: Hey guys, I'm here today to show you [Distorted] power of makeup. [Distorted Audio] I've been noticing a lot lately that girls have been almost ashamed to say that they love makeup [Beep, Sped up audio] I'm truly going to transform one side of my face and the otherside is going to be me— raw [Beep] unedited [Beep] nothing [Beep] me

03:37   Speaker 7: Guys according to facebook, always take your first date to go swimming. Why? Because you will find out whether she stays beautiful or not. Check this face out, this is a very beautiful face right, but once the makeup comes off, "why you take her swimming on the first date" —Oh my gosh, look at that. Same woman, different light. This is prior to makeup, this is after makeup. Night and day difference, right.

04:15   Speaker 8: Feel like my face is a jack-o-lantern— [Cross-talk with other beauty videos] like I'm just going back and fixing my own mistakes— [Ominous Music] — exaggerate this whole process—

04:26   [Fairy Sound] [Distorted and Edited Cross-talk] Face! Face! Face! Face! Face! Mask. Face! Mask. Face! Mask. Face!

04:53   Speaker 8: [High Pitched Sound] I don't know about that, you guys, I feel like I am just making a mess now.

05:00   NikkieTutorials: So you can truly see exactly what makeup does—

05:05   [Many Different Voices Repeat] the Power of Makeup

05:30   [Distorted Sound and High-Pitched Sound]

05:35   Speaker 9: Makeup is so good. Makeup is so good. Your makeup is oh so good. [Cross-Talk]

05:44   [Cross-Talk] Fat! Fat! Fat!

06:01   Speaker 9 [Cross-Talk] Preserve and face emoji

06:09   [Cross-Talk] Pretend pretty. Pretend. Pretend pretty. Pretend. Pretend pretty. Pretend pretty.

06:20   Amy Fox: One of the most compelling components for all of us, from the very beginning, was the language that the tutorial givers were using in their videos and how there was this sort of dichotomy between the way that many of them framed the videos and some of the overt things that they said about how this was an act of empowerment and I'm transforming and enhancing my features, but then, if you sort of look below at the micro level and also some of the verbs that their using— they are using a lot of verbs about fixing, and concealing, and remediating and we found that juxtaposition really interesting.

06:59   Speaker 1: Here is this community that has evolved to find this— that they have found this strategy this way to reach for this unattainable level of perfection and we also wanted to point out the double bind that exists, that at the same that that you are reaching for this impossible level of perfection, there's also a community of people that will also criticize you for those efforts. So it's kind of— it's an impossible situation and that's— that's, I think, what we kept running into, is that— that it is— it's a rigged game and so it's— it's— in seeing how people navigate these waters so—

*Spelled as written. DIGITAL may have been misspelled.