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Affective Iconoclasm: Codes of Labour as a Human Characteristic

Abstract: This text argues that a number of recent works of contemporary art have developed an anthropomorphised code to signal "humanness." Primary within this code is representations of labour, which the artworks connect to mimetic or realist stylisation as well as to the history of image production and often specifically Western art-making. It elaborates this thesis with regards to recent videos by Pierre Huyghe and Sidsel Meineche Hansen, and at a critique of social media labour in a lecture-performance by Jesse Darling, which all draw a link between human and non-human subjectivities and economic productivity. In focusing on different examples of nonhuman likenesses, the text also uses primatology to suggest that the colonial relationship between labour and species and racial hierarchies continues to colour representations of labour today.

Keywords: primatology, posthuman, labour, Pierre Huyghe, Jesse Darling, Sidsel Meineche Hansen

The cultural debate on the essence of humanness, following attempts at answering what "makes us more and less than human" (Pettman 2017), has pointed to labour as a key indication of human idiosyncrasy, manifested through "capacity for conscious, collective, and creative production" (Milner and Browitt 58). Affective labour's management of emotions and social relationships reflects the transformation of (humanist) characteristics of human behaviour—the capacity for empathy or the ability to support complex social structures—into activities with an economic aim. Recent works in contemporary art reveal how deeply this economic imperative has been embedded into performances of being human, particularly in cases in which the human is not a given, such as those involving other species or those that, like digital animations, must draw their figures ex-nihilo. These artworks underline the dehumanising (and anthropocentric) aspects of labour and deconstruct its representation through non-human contexts.

A study of a number of recent endeavours of video and digital art further connects work as an anthropomorphized code to mimetic or realist stylisation. This text will focus on Pierre Huyghe's *Human Mask* (2014), Sidsel Meineche Hansen's exhibition "SECOND SEX WAR" (2016)—including *Seroquel®* (2014), *Right Way 2 Cum* (2015), and *DICKGIRL 3D(X)* (2016)—and Jesse Darling's *Habeas Corpus Ad Subjiciendum* (2012), in which affective or service labour and mimeticism are co-existent and challenged. These works, addressing the exploitative nature of service, affective, or social media labour, frame the production of images as specifically related to a Western cultural tradition and as enforcing different animal, racial, and gender hierarchies.

Primatology and Capitalism

The body of work that goes under the title of posthumanism and its associated field of animal studies broadly seeks to efface the divisions among species, as well as those imposed by race, gender, and neurological and

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emotional norms. In *What Is Posthumanism*? (2009), for example, Cary Wolfe overrides the divide between the human and the animal by presenting both as examples of certain types of feedback-governed systems, transferring the question of the ontologies of humanness and animalness, which have been grounded in language and other human-centric modes of interpretation, onto the more neutral ground of systems theory. Wolfe's understanding of the posthuman follows N. Katherine Hayles's studies of cybernetics and information in its emphasis both on feedback systems and on the importance of the materiality and contextual embeddedness of human and animal subjects. As Wolfe writes, he "opposes the fantasies of disembodiment and autonomy" (Wolfe xv) given by transhumanism and interrogates the belief that one could use technology to transcend one's own embodiment. Similar to Rosi Braidotti's idea of *zoe*, but through a slightly different route, Wolfe returns to the idea of an embedded and embodied understanding of experience, whether this is the experience of homo sapiens or that of a different species.

However, contemporary art discourse often rhetorically upholds the categories that separate man from animal, reiterating the distinction in order to investigate the complex of cultural assumptions and biases behind humanness. In looking at a number of bodies of work that situate themselves on these categorical dividing lines, it is clear that certain codes of representation have emerged to signal an anthropomorphic standard—in distinction to conceptual and perceptual shifts that reject this divide, and reflecting a still stagnant and conservative (if not reactionary) social praxis. Among these, labour and economic productivity have become major mode of signalling anthropomorphic behaviour, as well as—and as a subset of a kind of labour—image-making. Contemporary artworks code the production of conventional and naturalistic art images as inextricable with the human: that is, the history of artistic production is presented as another form of anthropocentric activity.

Broadly put, the use of animals in contemporary artworks functions to link, on the one hand, a critique of capitalism's denaturalising effects and the art world's Western biases, with, on the other, ecological failure and anthropocentrism. In a short text from 2015 in the magazine *frieze d/e*, the critic Ana Teixeira Pinto examined a sudden uptick in interest in primatology in a critical sector of the art world from the mid-2010s to the present, framing the use of primates within artworks as the "privileged site . . . where battles over gender, race, sexuality and human rights are fought" (Teixeira Pinto 108) and as emblematic of a "post-historical" condition (Teixeira Pinto 107).[1] Operating as a site of anthropocentric critique, these works also test the geographic and historical context in which animals are engaged. Henrik Olesen's *The Companion Species Manifesto* (2014), for example, a series of doctored safari photographs, demonstrates how viewing "in the wild" can be better stated as "on an African safari." (It is worth mentioning that most of the artworks on the contemporary art circuit are made in the West, replicating the geographical biases of thinking/Western and viewed/animal/subaltern.) In the curator Anselm Franke's essay for his show "Ape Culture," which he co-curated with Hila Peleg, he uses a comparative analysis to situate current theories around primates against those of non-Western cultures, looking at animals not only as a means to critique anthropocentrism, but also Western science. He notes, for instance, that Western cultures see humans as those who have advanced upwards from being animals, while Mesoamerican cultures see humans as lapsed animals or those who have lost the oneness shared by animalia (Franke 15), reiterating a loose connection between animals and subaltern modes of thought.

The demarcation between animals and humans is often mined as an evocative site of overlap, and frequently in representations of the activity of labour. Amalia Pica's *At Arm's Length* (2017), for instance, analyses chimpanzee tool use in relation to social structures, while Julieta Aranda's *Tools for Infinite Monkeys (open machine)* (2014) looks at an experiment with monkeys and writing where six macaques were trained to use typewriters. The overlap is also the subject of Pierre Huyghe's video *Human Mask*, which

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1 Pinto surveyed recent artistic endeavors such as Huyghe's *Human Mask*, Henrik Olesen's *The Companion Species Manifesto* (2014) and Julieta Aranda's *Tools for Infinite Monkeys (open machine)* (2014); and the exhibitions "Beastly/Tierish," curated by Duncan Forbes at the Fotomuseum Winterthur (2015) and "Ape Culture" (2016), curated by Franke and Hila Peleg at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, which each brought together a further number of contemporary works focusing on animals. The critic Filipa Ramos's edited anthology *Animals* appeared in 2016, offering a compendium of art writing about animals and art projects that have utilised animals, such as Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla's *THE GREAT SILENCE* (2014), written with the sci-fi author Ted Chiang, which imagines parrots' own reactions to their species' extinction.

has become highly influential within an art context, in terms of its exhibition history and the academic attention it has received, and which forcefully argues the connection between a capitalist organisation of labour and artistic mimeticism.

Human Mask was inspired by a popular YouTube video (Higgie np) that showed two macaques, an intelligent species of monkey, who had been trained as waiters in a restaurant north of Tokyo. Huyghe's 19-minute video focuses on one, Fuku-chan, showing her both in the restaurant where she works as well as isolated in a room, which she moves about as if looking for something to do. Huyghe designed a mask for her to wear, made out of smooth, white resin, and based in technique and aspect on traditional Noh masks. He dressed her in a wig of long dark hair, a top and skirt. These scenes of Fuku-chan are interspersed with drone footage of Fukushima, in a signal of ecological disaster.

Huyghe's elaboration of Fuku-chan's role sets up a connection between her deceptiveness as acting "like" a human and the deceptiveness of naturalist idioms of art, linking labour, the constructionism of human systems, and image-making. The title's focus on deception and reality is extrapolated by the representations of nature that appear in the video's mise-en-scène, such as a vase of dead flowers, a watercolour landscape painting, and curtains imprinted with a pattern of trees in a forest. This thesis is further grounded in specific examples drawn from Western art history. Included alongside the video when it first shown, in "In. Border. Deep." (2014) at Huyghe's London gallery, Hauser & Wirth, two square tanks showed fish and vegetation taken from the ponds in Giverny, made famous by Monet, while a reclining sculpture made in stone was heated internally to a human temperature to allow moss to grow across its body: a disjunction between a naturalist representation of life and life itself.

The exhibitions' works question the validity of mimesis as art-historical deception, presenting it as a systemic fault with, as *Human Mask* makes clear, enormous consequences: *Human Mask* suggests a humanity blinded by its own narcissism, seeing everything via as a reflection of itself, with the footage of Fukushima providing a very real warning of the dangers this implies. The video further shows how this history of cultural mimeticism is also related to the history of species distinction, critiquing the tendency towards thinking of monkeys as like humans, even while soliciting this response. Inspired by the video showing Fuku-chan at work—a video presumably popular because it showed a macaque in a "human" activity—the work also emphasises the affective dimension of its subject: she moves about the apartment as if forlornly, touching her face and gazing out of the windows, in conventional gestures of melancholy that invite the viewer's empathetic and anthropomorphising response.

Anselm Franke, who included *Human Mask* in his exhibition "Ape Culture," frames the mode of Western engagement with apes through what he calls "simian mirror," or the idea that species are defined only on a yardstick of mimetic relation to humans. Rather than employing language as the distinction between animal and man, the "simian mirror" focuses on the human interpretation of ape behaviour, specifically tool-use: the question is not about tool use, but about whether apes use tools or if they simply mimic human's use of tools. This opens up onto a larger history of labour, which Franke suggests as the historical context in which to understand human-animal relations.

As Franke observes:

> The tie between capitalism and primatology begins with the disciplinary imperative of work . . . and the biblical banishment from paradise which condemned humans to work. In the eighteenth century early illustrations of great apes tie their speechlessness to the refusal to work . . . (Franke 17)

According to Franke, the act of putting Fuku-chan to work means entering her into the system of capitalism that was developed in order to exclude her. She is exploited not only by the conditions of her servitude (the expression "working for peanuts" is not far off—she gets tipped in soy beans) or her lessened capacity for self-determination but by the relation between labour and species division that posits her as "below" humans. The discourse around primatology emerged in the eighteenth century at the height of European colonialism and reveals two major subconscious preoccupations of the era: the realisation and categorisation of different races, and the movement towards the total population's involvement in capitalism. Having apes at the bottom of the hierarchy allowed both the configuration of evolutionary advancement, which could

extend both to species and to races, as well as a means to twin capitalism with this pyramid's pinnacle: a productive, Western member of society at the evolutionary apex, while at the bottom was a lower race or species that did not participate in capitalist labour. As is well known, the lower or non-Western race was conceived as closer to being primates or apes, a level from which "cultured" races of humans "advanced."

The social history often activated by contemporary art projects bears out this understanding of human/animal subjectivities as grounded within racial categories, and again specifically how "human" denotes high cultural traditions, notably Western and upper-class. In *Human Mask*, the gauzy, Japanese-like features of Fuku-chan's mask suggest the racial stereotypes of Japanese women, particularly their servility and their girlishness. These are set against the European art-historical reference points of Monet's gardens and odalisques that are elaborated elsewhere in the exhibition: the non-Western remains located within the sphere of animal. The fact that Japan is not conventionally regarded as a subaltern site but as a former regional empire is also reflected in the high-art, Noh origins of the mask: Fuku-chan's deception challenges the Japanese cultural tradition in the same way that Huyghe's aquaria challenge the deception of Monet's paintings. Huyghe's presentation of animals as obverse to the high Western cultural tradition is consistent with other artworks investigating animal species. Aranda's project *Tools for Infinite Monkeys (open machine)*, for example, set out to test the "Infinite Monkey Theorem," which states that "an infinite group of immortal monkeys, arranging letters at random for an infinite amount of time will almost surely produce eventually a given text, such as the complete works of William Shakespeare" (*Art-Agenda* 2014). Here again, the divisions are clear—monkeys vs. Shakespeare—and traversed by the act of labour, or the monkeys at the typewriters, which the theorem seems to posit as a laughable, ridiculous feat. Aranda researched an experiment scrutinising the theorem, which found that monkeys did indeed eventually produce pages of typewritten material, but mostly of the single letter "S." (The exhibition consists of a typewriter, typed pages of the letter "S," and a photo of a macaque.) Like *Human Mask*, Aranda's project anthropomorphises the monkeys, giving them names ("Elmo, Gum, Heather, Holly, Mistletoe & Rowan"); in the photograph of one of them, he or she appears to be vamping for the camera. Here, the monkeys edge into the role of being human by successfully participating in cultural production.

Mediating Human Likeness

The imperative of acting and even looking like a human, and the connection of this likeness to the representation of human labour, is also apparent within recent digital animations. While the digital representation of human activity differs ontologically from projects that use primates in anthropomorphic activity, the code that develops for signalling the human is remarkably similar: labour and mimetic or naturalistic idioms emerge as key, twinned modes. This facet is made apparent in the exhibition "SECOND SEX WAR" by Sidsel Meineche Hansen, which sits on a range of codes of human similitude, anthropocentrism, and gender politics.

"SECOND SEX WAR" is composed of videos and sculptural objects and was held at the London space Gasworks and the Kunstmuseum Trondheim in 2016. The project emerged from the purchase and development of three digitally animated characters who appear in two videos, *No Right Way 2 Cum* and *DICKGIRL 3D(X)*, which each approximate online porn, as well as a longer video, *Seroquel®*. The latter comprises a more elaborate narrative and dialogue, while the first two are more performative in character, consisting of both the videos and Hansen's purchasing and developing the digital animations that populate them. *No Right Way 2 Cum*, played as an 80-second loop, shows the animation known as Eva v3.0, naked and masturbating on a bed in a pristine white room, until she reaches climax. The three-minute looped *DICKGIRL 3D(X)* depicts an example of heterosexual sex in which the gender roles of the performers are either scrambled or baldly figured as part of economic relationship: Dickgirl, a character with an enormous glowing blue penis, penetrates an oddly shaped, clay-like object named iSlave, a pre-animation that one can download and then develop, which Hansen chose to leave unfinished. Along with *Seroquel®*, the videos critique the monetisation and legislation of gender and subjectivity. *Seroquel®*, for example, ruminates on how the pharmacological industry treats emotional equilibrium as a revenue source, in anti-psychiatric

pills and mood stabilisers such as the drug of the video's title. *No Right Way 2 Cum* was made in response to the UK's injunction against showing the ejaculation of female fluid, which at the time of the video's making had been recently deemed obscene (Hansen 2017, pers. comm.).

As in Huyghe's *Human Mask*, Hansen's visual articulation of her figures connects human likeness and economic productivity. Hansen's statement that she created *No Right Way 2 Cum* in order to contest pornography laws is underscored by the non-human-likeness of its digital sex labourers, who contravene conventional figurations of body, subjectivity, and gender, and also, more fundamentally, what it means to look human. Eva v3.0 is rendered as a fleshy pink—not lifelike but with a raw, even foetal appearance. Dickgirl appears as a roughly hewn brownish figure made of shiny clay, with an enormous member that glows bright blue. The iSlave entirely lacks humanoid traits; it is just a lump, repeatedly penetrated. They are imperfect models for productivity: they look too inhuman to be properly pornographic and fail in the elicitation of desire.

Seroquel®, by comparison, is articulated in a more realist idiom. The video mimics the tone and look of marketing material, and shows a shapely female form who ingests the mood-stabilising pill of the video's title. The voice track is comprised of a dialogue between a mother and a daughter (both voiced by the punk musician Lydia Lunch), in which the mother responds to the daughter's feelings of being "dead" inside. These feelings of negativity and anxiety, she learns from her mother, can be addressed by taking the pill Seroquel. For the mother, who represents a sort of superego of financial, legal, and institutional norms, the danger posed by the daughter's death drive is that she will cease to work:

> Sustaining the ego [i.e. taking Seroquel] is central to a capitalist society. In this context, productivity is rewarded whereas resistance to productivism is prevented by legal and medical sanctions (Hansen).

The video follows the pill as it travels down the digital animation's oesophagus, and alternates between images of the woman and interior images of the pill's progress through her body. Bald-headed and toned, the woman appears in bra and underwear in a generic, sterile kitchen, and later in a science lab, where she inspects the slide of a microscope that appears to show Seroquel's effect on the neural mapping of her brain, reordering it along normative lines. Her human-like form and alignment with gender conventions of slim, white, professional women is a clear contrast to Hansen's more rudimentary digital animations from the quasi-pornographic videos. For this figure, a colonisation from within of mood-enhancing drugs yields a human intent on being—and looking—ever more human: being ever more able and happy to work, fulfilling the convention of anthropocentric behaviour.

Importantly, like Huyghe's reflection on its own Western cultural context, "SECOND SEX WAR" looks inward at its own economy of image-making. The digital animations used in "SECOND SEX WAR" are taken from the virtual sex trade, employed via the same working methods that real porn videos use: The press release for the exhibition describes Eva v3.0 as a "royalty-free product," manufactured by a company that makes stock 3D models for both computer games and adult entertainment, while Dickgirl and the iSlave are animations that Hansen purchased from an online marketplace. (The iSlave's name also places it within a lexicon of technological consumerism). To animate Eva v3.0 Hansen worked with the 3D designer Nikola Dechev and the digital arts studio Werkflow Ltd., aping the collaborative methodologies typical of the adult entertainment business. The other works of "SECOND SEX WAR" further elaborate the focus on economies of production: the clay relief *Cultural Capital Cooperative Object* (2016), for example, which Hansen made with the artists Manuela Gernedel, Alan Michael, Georgie Nettell, Oliver Rees, Matthew Richardson, Gili Tal, and Lena Tutunjian, is an attempt to create a cooperatively owned object that would operate outside of regular art market channels (Hansen pers. comm.). The works reveal the parallels between the immaterial labour of digital art production and that of adult entertainment: the contemporary art market's commodification of affect—as well as collaborative working methods—into material artworks and market tradables. Moreover, it also makes clear that art as a form of image-making labour entails the disappearance of the artist in the secondary and tertiary art markets, which the *Cultural Capital Cooperative Object* recuses itself from, in that the money from the resale of an artwork never return to their maker. The sex work of the digital animations and the labour that Seroquel's customer aspires towards, and Hansen's own labour as an artist, exist within

a mesh of codes of legislated, commodified, and art market exploitation, which the exhibition's works by turns contest and conform to.

The Panopticon of Affective Labour

The idea of art-making as exploitation is also taken up by the performance *Habeas Corpus Ad Subjiciendum* by Jesse Darling, which challenges the relation between mimetic representation and labour in a performance context. The lecture-performance likewise presents the art trade as another example of immaterial labour: a commodification of a production of affect, emotion, and feeling, both in artwork and in artists' social-media and profile upkeep. Darling's lecture-performance provides an analytical framework for this commentary while also attempting to deflect easy circulation: in so doing it seeks to demonstrate how the processes of visuality on the internet are both theoretically and practically hostile. As they argue in the performance, images circulating online are taken at face value: a feminist image of female sexuality, for example, travels as simply a sexual image. In the work's attempt to avoid this interpretation, *Habeas Corpus Ad Subjiciendum* rejects not only mimeticism but also embodiment, attempting to represent a non-gendered subjectivity that cannot be "pictured."

The work, undertaken by an artist who themselves has a high social media profile, reflects on the way that social media and affective labour have become understood as a site of controlled (and controlling) exploitation. The research of Mark Andrejevic and Trebor Scholz, for instance, frequently associates social media labour with both exploitation and surveillance. Andrejevic, writing in 2002, connects the online paradigm of surveillance to Foucault's panopticon in order to underline how social media activity is engineered to maximise economic gain (Andrejevic 233). Andrejevic stresses not the potential for control implicit in the panopticon, but its desired effect of increased economic productivity. As he writes, the panopticon is not intended to produce a passive body, but rather to stimulate its subjects: "Docility and pacification are certainly among the goals of discipline, but the real power of surveillance is a relentlessly productive and stimulating one" (Anderjevic 234). The subject is made, as he quotes from Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, to "develop the economy."

Habeas Corpus Ad Subjiciendum investigates this imperative of productivity from the standpoint of someone on the inside looking out: the perspective of the surveilled subject. Darling stands in front of a PowerPoint presentation, onto whose screen various slides, ranging from critical theory to reflections on Darling's social media presence, are projected.[2] They read social media labour both as sex work ("At 17, on a round bed with 6 cameras, I took everything I learned as girl and worked it hard for money") and profile-raising within the context of a competitive art field where social connections translate into opportunities ("What? I'm fine! Just practicing my Social Media Brand Strategy, like I even recuperate the collateral of my own emotions for social capital?"). These apparently autobiographical slides are complemented by critical theory analysis of social media platforms. For instance, Facebook, the lecture performance argues, quoting from Foucault and Binoy Kampmark,

> is much like the panopticon . . . For Foucault, the major effect of the panopticon is "to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power." The prison inmate "is seen but does not see; he is the object of information, never a subject of communication" (Darling).[3]

Further quoted commentary positions the social media labourer as a subject who is unable to "look back," a term they take from Nicholas Mirzoeff's "Invisible Empire: Visual Culture, Embodied Spectacle, and Abu Ghraib," which analyses the outsize importance of surveillance in the war against terrorism; Mirzoeff submits that a crucial constraint of these inmates of these surveillant systems is the inability

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2 The text of the performance varies, as given by the slides: this text quotes from a 2016 performance at Studium Generale Rietveld Academie, in Rietveld, NL, which can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNJePOHZi-U (published on 7 March 2016, last accessed on 16 August 2017), and draws on a 2013 performance at Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridgeshire.
3 Quoted from Binoy Kampmark, "Giving Good Face," *Counterpunch*, 7 August 2007, available at https://www.counterpunch. org/2007/08/07/giving-good-face/ (last accessed on 15 August 2017). Emphases in Darling's performance.

to simply look back at those who look at them. Darling's silence as the slides are projected against their body performs this relationship for the audience, as they become an object in the audience' eyes who has likewise lost the capacity of response. This is partly to demonstrate the link between the model of surveillance to communication on the web, as Darling performs their commentary through quoted blocks of text, like real-time Tweets or posts on a message board, but it also plays close attention to the gender dimensions of contemporary critical art production, in which auto-theorisation along the lines that Darling performs (quotes from *e-flux journal*, references to Foucault and Althusser) are the norm: in this case, these are a sequence of male theorists who are literally speaking for the mute Darling. An earlier version of the performance stressed the violent undertones of these projected words or their capacity to create Darling as their subject: "Hey, you!" one slide read, repeating Althusser's famous demonstration of interpellation. "Your gaze hits the side of my face," another read, quoting Barbara Kruger.

Crucially, Darling's account of social-media labour also hinges on the character of images that circulate online: specifically that they are mimetic (they show pictures of women) and that they are only images (these women are disembodied). In response to this, even within the scope of a first-person performance, *Habeas Corpus Ad Subjiciendum* aims to position itself as a non-mimetic rendering of a subject's performance, contesting the norms of anthropocentric behaviour—a subject happily working, naturalistically stylised—specifically in order to contest the co-option of the work as anything other than a critical assessment of social-media labour and gender norms online. (In keeping with the extreme self-reflexivity of this work, it also augurs its failure: "Every attempt at subversion is recuperated back into visual culture.") The performance breaks down Darling's ostensibly autobiographical expression into words and physical form, pointing to the mismatch between the subject on show—which never attains its "right to look"—and the words that speak for it. The denaturalisation of labour here severs Darling's body from her own voice, and, further, body. As the title implies, with its play on the word "corpus," the body is shown to be an undesirable or uncontrollable element within the cognitive economy—something to be detained. Social media labour requires a non-corporal entity: one iteration of the performance suggests the awkwardness that would happen if Darling were actually in the room with them—which, of course, they are. The imagined move away from an embodied and embedded subjectivity evokes a kind of transhumanism, where Darling only exists through the circulation of her written thoughts on the internet, but—importantly—one in which the mediation by technology results in a subject whose freedom is radically curtailed. If Darling achieves a transhumanist subjectivity, her visual likeness and inability to talk back will result in oppression rather than transcendence: the labour of the social media avatar is inevitably exploitation, hinged on the image of a girl.

In arguing that online images reflect the biases of the apprehending viewer rather than the intentions of the image-maker, Darling's critique of the relation between images and power echoes the growing body of work that positions technology, and specifically surveillance, as tools of racial subjugation. This is elaborated via a number of tacks. In contrast to the idea that a reduction to information translates into a flattening out of biological distinctions, for example, Patricia T. Clough suggests that technological advances in bio-genetics and surveillance enables racial divisions. Drawing on Brian Massumi and Foucault, Clough links the digital means of coding information to a new basis for the biomedical determination of race: "the biomediated body gives racism its informatic existence … the biomediated body allows the raced body to be apprehended as information" (Clough 19). She argues that digital media's "improvements" upon genetic and surveillance capacities provide a newfound legitimation to distinguish one race from another and to determine healthy biological traits within them. Similarly, in *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Race*, Simone Browne knits together the discourses of surveillance and race, and specifically the archive of the transatlantic slave trade, to show how biometric information is used not only to suppress people of colour but also to ratify and strengthen racial hierarchies, informing the very technologies: "race," she argues, "continues to structure surveillance practices" (Browne 11). Not by chance but by design: surveillance has been developed in order to replicate identifying biases.

This is significant to the code of anthropocentric activity, as it underlines the way that mimeticism and image-making implicitly take as their subjects high-cultural, able, and cis-gendered subjects who are at work contributing to the economy: such as Fuku-chan with her pale Noh mask and short skirt, the shapely

form in her gleaming kitchen who ingests Seroquel, or the image of "girl" that Darling "worked for money" and who haunts *Habeas Corpus Ad Subjiciendum*. When one talks about image production, these are the images produced. In a project subsequent to "SECOND SEX WAR," Hansen elaborated the racial dimensions of technology and underlined the way that apprehending technologies determine what is apprehended. She developed *Over* (2017), a facial recognition app that mimics Uber both in title and brand stylisation. The user, having downloaded or transferred Over to their phone, scans a painted mask, which the app is unable to identify, imitating the way that facial recognition software is unable to pick up black faces.

In a variety of ways, then, contemporary art discourse seeks to ground an understanding of humanness in a variety of distinctions: not only in regards to animals, but in the placement of the character of human along a geographical, class, and gender spectrum. The denaturalising effects of capitalist labour are read as repeatedly producing subjects on the verge of humanness—they in some way fall or seek to fall away from a prototypical human subject—while at the same time these works show how Western art production's emergent code of human representation is also responsible for replicating the biases that liberal theory attempts to challenge: the heightened importance of economic productivity, as performed by an attractive female subject. By moving a step away from this human ideal, these works interrogate not only the code of anthropomorphic activity, but the way in which artists' own labour—as image-makers, participants in the Western cultural tradition, players in the art market, and subjects on social media—implicates them in a certain understanding of what it means to be human, for better or mostly for worse.

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