

Toronto Queer Film Festival, 2025

Deirdre Logue: Very Selected Works 2005 – 2022

Installation Notes by Ash Barbu

Here is an installation of three video works from artist Deirdre Logue. Spanning 17 years they feature no dialogue, save for the quiet of non-human vibrations or the odd whisper of worry.

Here are scenes of animacy, incident and control that call into question a dependence upon oneself and other beings. At stake in each situation is a sense of uncertainty at best.

In these works is also an intimacy with something that is not like how we usually understand knowing or identity.

The three works, presented here, operate outside the logic of means and ends. Instead, they breathe deeply into the risks of open-ended space, before words name and “fix” the world.

They ask us what it means to begin again and again, and then again, again. They are intentionally unresolved – compositions yes – but mostly just tests, try-outs and best guesses.

The actions in each work lend their frames and their fate to careful composition and a collapsing rather than a producing. This is what Deirdre and I like to think of as resilient mistake making, born from the art of trying—trying to unfix the subjects we have been taught to be, under such routine and violent conditions of living.

What first drew me to Deirdre’s work was the moving image catalogue of somebody that is always acting alone. In 2019, we worked together on the group exhibition Empty History.[1] At the time, I thought of myself as a promising young solo curator. Soon after the exhibition, my life fell apart, personally, professionally, and otherwise.

Deirdre and I found each other again during the pandemic, and shared several intimate phone and zoom conversations, soundings in the slippage between art and life. Some of these dialogues were recorded and published.[2] Others were transient, held across bad connections, walking through fields, and sitting on the roofs of cars.

We wondered about living in the time of recess and flirted with the idea of checking out of the art scene. We learned about our shared love of giving up on all the right things.

Sometimes, we are lucky enough to hear one another in a world that is designed not to have us. Sometimes, this luck protects itself in the skin of a common project, a reason to keep working.

For me, Deirdres' works seem like they are about being alone and, within that, the possibilities of meeting another. But they are not. In fact, it is Deirdre that is the others, 'other'.

Moving towards mutual commitment and relational accountability, these 3 works counter the ways in which our lives are pressed within the rectangular margins of the PRESS release or history textbook.

I am writing this in the basement in January 2025 and my words feel empty. I have learned that in our dialogues we are not finding ourselves but creating spaces for each other to grow out of certain shapes.

We try to walk past the grain of the grid, the neoliberal resolution, asking if there are others of us out there. This is a matter of trust, resistance, and care as we un-work, un-resolve, and un-become ourselves.

I look at Deirdre's work and I feel a strange reassurance. It reminds me of the need for reciprocity and the fiction of the happy end.

The Happy End.

Ash Barbu, January 25/25

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