

“Objective Confess”
Anthea Behm

29 April - 11 June, 2016
Opening: 29 April, 6-8 PM

Press Release:

Objective Confess

Objective Confess is adapted from two scripts: *Aesthetic Theory* (1970), Theodor Adorno’s posthumous magnum opus on the role of art and society, and *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off* (1986), John Hughes’ cult-classic film about three high school truants and their joyous day of hijinks in downtown Chicago.

Filmed on location in the public and gallery spaces of the Art Institute of Chicago—one of the sites visited by Bueller and friends—the looped video stages a dynamic encounter between the texts via a series of performances that present and merge the two scripts in perpetual motion. The juxtaposition of the two scripts upends assumptions about the relationship between philosophy and popular culture and, moreover, raises questions about the value systems by which we evaluate culture and ideas.

From one perspective, Bueller’s leisurely activities are a charismatic expression of individual autonomy, personal conviction, and celebration of free time, while Adorno’s text appears as an uncompromising critique of a ‘culture available to all’ and an elitist championing of a rarefied ‘high’ art. And yet, we may also see Adorno—with his call for social and aesthetic withdrawal—as the true and unrepentant champion of nonconformity, while Bueller—who spends his day in luxury and refinement only to return to the normalized world of school by the film’s close—may just be another instantiation of a privileged leisure class. Whether Adorno or Bueller emerges as the ‘liberating’ hero is no longer the question. Rather, it is: based on what values would we have made such a decision in the first place?

By dramatizing and destabilizing the categories that inform and delineate our conceptions of social, cultural and artistic production, the video formally manifests the contradictions embedded in such categorical divisions and the possible ways in which they are necessarily maintained or dissolved. The resulting critical intervention into the accepted ‘sense’ of each text is at once hostile and harmonious, confounding and clarifying.

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Room two:

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"Adorno/Bueller; Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, 1977, ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor, University of Minnesota Press, 1997, pp 243-244; *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, dir. John Hughes, 1986, minutes 4:36-5:47. Scott Cupper, Shariba Rivers, Ben Veatch, Shawn Pfautsch, Carolyn Defrin, Jason Economus, Jennifer Shin. Richard Hamilton, *Towards a Definitive Statement on the Coming Trends in Men's Wear and Accessories (c) Adonis in Y-Fronts*, 1962 © Artists Rights Society (ARS); Agnes Martin, *Untitled #12*, 1977 © ARS; Robert Rauschenberg, *Persimmon*, 1964 © Visual Artists and Galleries Association Inc. (VAGA); Roy Lichtenstein, *Mirror in Six Panels*, 1971 © Estate of Roy Lichtenstein; Roy Lichtenstein, *George Washington*, 1962 © Estate of Roy Lichtenstein; James Rosenquist, *Volunteer*, 1963-4 © VAGA; Alex Katz, Vincent and Tony, 1969 © VAGA; Ed Ruscha, *City*, 1968, Custom Blur: Surface Blur radius 100 + threshold 2, Surface Blur radius 10 + threshold 203, Surface Blur radius 20 + threshold 85, Guassian blur radius 16.5; Brice Marden, *Rodeo*, 1971 © ARS; Frank Stella, *De la nada vida a la nada muerte*, 1965 © ARS; Sam Francis, *In Lovely Blueness No. 2*, 1955-56 © ARS; Sol LeWitt, *Wall Drawing #111: Circle with broken bands of color*, 2003 ©ARS; Adolphe-Joseph-Thomas Monticelli, *Still Life with Fruit and Wine Jug*, 1874; Georges Seurat, *Oil Sketch for "La Grande Jatte"*, 1884; Georges Seurat, *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte – 1884*, 1884-86; Jitish Kallat, *Public Notice 3*, 2010, unilluminated, courtesy the artist; Jasper Johns, *Corpse and Mirror II*, 1974-75 © VAGA; Mark Rothko, *Untitled (Purple, White, and Red)*, 1953 © ARS; John Chamberlain, *Toy*, 1961 © ARS; Joan Mitchell, *City Landscape*, 1955 © Estate of Joan Mitchell; Willem de Kooning, *Excavation*, 1950 © ARS; Willem de Kooning, *Untitled*, 1948-49 © ARS; Jackson Pollock, *Greyed Rainbow*, 1953 © ARS; Robert Motherwell, *Wall Painting with Stripes*, 1944 © VAGA; David Smith, *Tanktotem I*, 1952 © VAGA; Lucio Fontana, *Concetto spaziale (Spatial Concept)*, 1962 © ARS; Willem de Kooning, *Untitled XI*, 1975 © ARS. The Art Institute of Chicago: Modern Wing, designed by Renzo Piano, 2009; Gallery 240, designed by Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, 1893; Grand Staircase, designed by Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, 1910. Steadicam, Director of Photography: Carl Wiedemann; Assistant Director: Danièle Wilmouth, Adebukola Bodunrin; Sound recording: Alan Strathmann, ChiaLin Hsu, Matt Griffin, Balta Pena; Steadicam Assistant: Tommy Heffron, Gonzalo Escobar, Anthony Rizzo; Production Assistant: Jessica Hyatt, C. Jacqueline Wood, Crispin Rosenkranz, Michael Milano, Jordan Scrivner, Caylin Colson, Jason Economus; Hair and Makeup: Mark Bazant; Still Photography: Jesse Avina, Jill Frank, Yasamin Ghanbari, Christopher Keener; Production Support: Staff and Security at Art Institute of Chicago, Faculty and Staff at School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Frédéric Moffet, Warren Cockerham, Yoni Goldstein, Tiffany Joy Ross, Susaan Jamshidi, Emjoy Gavino; Sound Mixing: Alan Strathmann; Color correction: JWJ Ferguson; Digital Compositing: Brock Jolet; Funding: Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, The Ian Potter Cultural Trust", 2011, single channel video, 13' 28" Edition 1/3+AP

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