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### Behind Closet Doors: Horror and Dislocation in the Queer Closet

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Behind Closet Doors: Horror and Dislocation in the Queer Closet

by

Corey Cedric Allen

Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Fine Arts Studio Art, Hunter College  
The City University of New York

2018

Thesis Sponsor:

December 16, 2018  
Date

Thomas Weaver  
Signature

December 16, 2018  
Date

Michael Lobel  
Signature of Second Reader

## **DEDICATION**

*To Bianca, thank you for everything.*

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Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick devotes a full page of her theoretically canonized (yet still fairly radical) book, *The Epistemology of the Closet*, to a list of descriptions and examples for the word “closet” that expound upon its manifold definitions. Many of the definitions serve to establish the closet’s physical form and purpose as “a private room, an inner chamber” or “a hidden or secret place.” However, the ongoing prevalence of idiomatic phrases like a “skeleton in the closet” –which the book defines as “a private or concealed trouble in one’s house or circumstances, ever present, and ever liable to come into view” (Sedgwick 66)– reveal a more figurative space that complicates what the secrecy of a closet’s interior can represent. As such, the foregrounding of these definitions in Sedgwick’s book underlines a persistent psychological connotation, seemingly of intense anxiety, over the “ever present, and ever liable” chance that the private, hidden contents of one’s own closet should be uncovered.

The yoking together of this more generalized anxiety, where carefully hidden skeletons may be laid bare, and that of the specifically queer closet one would *come out* of (or, as the Oxford English Dictionary now defines it, “a state of concealment regarding one’s homosexuality or any other aspect of one’s sexual or gender identity” (“closet, n. and adj.”)) represents a central tenet of the *Epistemology of the Closet*. While the book focuses primarily on how binarisms imposed on definitions of sexuality and gender (particularly those for homosexual males) have had countless socio-political and cultural ramifications, its unique emphasis on thoroughly investigating the language in and around “the closet” pays innumerable dividends. Sedgwick is quick to dismantle the social presumption around the binary of one being *in* or *out* of the closet when regarding their sexuality, stating:

...like Wendy in Peter Pan, [gay] people find new walls springing up around them even as they drowse: every encounter with a new classful of students, to say nothing of a new boss, social worker, loan officer, landlord, doctor, erects new closets whose fraught and characteristic laws of optics and physics exact from at least gay people new surveys, new calculations, new draughts and requisitions of secrecy or disclosure. (Sedgwick 68)

With this quote, Sedgwick highlights the sheer oversimplification of *coming out* or *being in the closet* as a singular event in one's life, for this quote demonstrates how the space of the closet is not so easily reconciled with prevalent, normative assumptions; instead, it is a state of being that is constantly being negotiated in a seemingly endless chain of social interactions so as to compensate for the "deadly elasticity of heterosexist presumption" and potential dangers of being out of the closet (Sedgwick 68).

It is at this intersection, between the incessant negotiation of disclosing one's queerness in a heteronormative and cissexist world along with the rather obvious anxiety entailed in navigating such a precarious social position, that I feel the need to return in my own work to how both of the aforementioned idioms (viz. "skeletons in the closet" and "coming out of the closet") share a similar psychological model. Within this framework, the meanings of both idioms indicate actively suppressed secrets that protect some desired sense of normalcy, coupled with an underlying, imminently felt terror in the inevitable revealing of those secrets and the ruptures they will cause. This sense of dread is perhaps the most foundational element in my current body of artwork, which aims to mobilize the psychological horror of the queer closet by manipulating and reorienting the meaning of literal objects found in closets along with altered, appropriated depictions of closets in horror films. In my handling of so many objects characteristically used in marginal, closet-like spaces of the home, along with the extraction and modification of elements in horror films set within and outside of the

closet, I am driven by ever-present desires for invocations of the anxiety and the terror present within the ambiguity of the queer closet. In my statement, I will explore these desires through the lens of two specific video pieces from this body of work, titled “Sweetpea, Sweetheart” and “Boogeyman.” These two videos provide examples of how I handle these foundational cultural elements and their related critical discourse through my manipulation of mediums of popular film and fine art video. These interacting elements, with variations in mediation, are present in all my other artworks.

In Anthony Vidler’s *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely*, Vidler states that the “...contours, boundaries, and geographies [of space] are called upon to stand-in for all the contested realms of identity, from the national to the ethnic; its hollows and voids are occupied by bodies that replicate internally the external conditions of political and social struggle, and are likewise assumed to stand for, and identify, the sites of such struggle” (Vidler 167). Considering such a viewpoint presents some incredibly relevant implications for my work, as I seek to find sensory presentations that can elaborate the politics of queerness and heteronormativity. This politics and my work equally revolve around the optics and physical position of closets within the family home, and how the placement of closets in the periphery of rooms not only signals their physical marginality, but also proposes a figurative leap to how the closet can suggest a space in which marginalized/othered experiences and desires can be held. Thus, when Vidler later states that such a “space is assumed to hide, in its darkest recesses and forgotten margins, all the objects of fear and phobia that have returned with such insistency to haunt the imaginations of those who have tried to stake out spaces to protect their health and happiness” (Vidler 167), the closet’s obvious symbolic

connection to a displacement of queerness from a status of cultural normality begins to garner much more foreboding overtones that align quite easily with those of the horror genre.

In my current body of artwork, elements of films from horror cinema have been appropriated to displace their initial, manifest signification or symbolic orientation, and have instead been “queered.” I follow here writers such as David Halperin, who note that such queering techniques have “created certain enduring social institutions that make it possible for these particular moments from straight, mainstream culture to be selected, decontextualized, replayed, and recoded with queer meanings” (Halperin 174). Halperin’s scholarship around such areas has largely concerned itself with how humor and/or camp have been utilized to achieve such results, but “queering” as a process can be seen to deploy multiple strategies to which my work can be compared. While the variety of sculptures and time-based pieces included in my recent body of work are operating outside of camp modes of expression, much of the methodology used in these artworks remains beholden to a camp lineage (specifically, camp’s capacity to dislocate mainstream styles and identities through its transgressive/subversive interventions with related gender and sexual norms (O’Brien 105)). With this purpose foregrounded, a large portion of the work seeks to explore the “shadowy closets” of mainstream horror cinema, and how the “[emergence] from these proscribed places into the sunlit world, [can] cause panic and fear” (Benshoff 1).

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Early on in Steven Spielberg's 1982 horror film *Poltergeist*, Carol Anne –the ill-fated daughter of an inanely average upper-middle-class family with a household in Orange County, California– becomes the coveted possession to a host of paranormal entities seeking her “life force.” The setting offers us all the freshly-mown lawns, two-story Tudor houses, and four-door SUVs essential to the foundational vision of an idyllically heterosexual, white, and middle class American suburbia in the 1970s and 80s: a suburbia which propagates the sanitized cultural residue left over from the Baby Boomers as they proceeded to have children and make homes. As such, when the members of this family are exposed to a myriad of haunts and frights, as per any horror movie, the horror literally buried underneath their house (in a cemetery that had failed to be relocated with only the headstones removed) ruptures the graphically established homogeneity of their existence once spirits begin to manipulate the sentience and spatial relationships of objects and rooms in the house. Vidler notes a similar formula in his examination of haunted houses, where he finds uncanniness and horror within the “slow realization that [such things] were properties of the house, embedded in the very stones that possessed a fatality in themselves, that the house was itself an uncanny power, came unwillingly, against all reason, the more disquieting for the absolute normality of the setting, its veritable absence of overt terror” (Vidler 18).

Most notably, in *Poltergeist*, of all these rooms and spaces, the closet in Carol Anne's bedroom performs a definitive function as a portal or conduit between realms (mortal and spiritual). While most closet spaces in horror films maintain a passivity in their function to be both a place to hide in or be extracted from by an acting force/agent (e.g. a killer hunting their prey), the closet in *Poltergeist* peculiarly obtains a means of

subverting this precedent. The closet achieves this through its capacity to exert its own force upon another character when it essentially inhales Carol Anne into its fiendishly lit interior through a vortex of sorts.

My video piece “Sweetpea, Sweetheart” serves as a variation on this literalized depiction of a closet pulling in its subject. I have used this segment of the film as a “found object” and re-presented it, but whereas the scene from *Poltergeist* focuses on Carol Anne’s struggle against being sucked into the blinding light of her bedroom closet, all evidence of Carol Anne’s presence is cut out from “Sweetpea, Sweetheart.” In addition, I have morphed and reframed the visual cacophony of objects flying about in the original scene. I have positioned them to flank the rectangle of the closet door, which now sits dead-center in each frame, making it the main subject of “Sweetpea, Sweetheart.” The parameters of time and cinematic space are distorted in this digitized footage with five different clips of the now-animate closet from *Poltergeist* morphing in and out of each other, racing forward in alternating frames that can never maintain any singular form due to an algorithmic blending of pixels in each frame. In “Sweetpea, Sweetheart” my goal has been to create a new cultural site in which the lines between cinematic genre and digital flexibility, popular culture and video art are cross-wired, fragmenting their familiar temporalities and the accompanying binarist expectations. By complicating genre boundaries and reflexive responses, I seek to break down the cultural endowment of the queer closet as a space one is described as either in or out of.

Alternatively, my video-sculpture “Boogeyman” approaches similar themes, but primarily through the usage of obfuscation to alter its fairly recognizable source material, which I have drawn from John Carpenter’s classic, *Halloween*. I rotoscoped

each frame to camouflage and obscure its initial subjects through the technique of clone-stamping – a process that replicates pixels from one portion of an image and places them over another area. I selected a portion of the climactic confrontation in *Halloween* between the infamous Michael Myers and Laurie Strode, the scene of the skirmish between the two characters that occurs within the closet of a family home. In my video, I have concealed all evidence of the pair’s confrontation and replaced it with nebulous clouds of pixels that suggest the presence of the two figures yet completely denies the viewer access to such content. Instead, the viewer is only shown shots of the environment and actions occurring in the periphery of the visually-negated battle.

The presence, even when visually cloaked or entirely absent, of famous slasher Michael Myers in this video presents a seminal theme of my work that relates to Michael Myers as a cultural figure. As professor Pat Gill assesses in her essay “The Monstrous Years: Teens, Slasher Films, and the Family,” horror movies in the slasher genre of the 1970s and 80s (often inspired by *Halloween*) implemented a certain criticality towards dismantling the culture around the mid-twentieth century “white flight to gated communities, in particular the attempts of parents to shield their children from the dangerous influences represented by the city: wide-spread crime, easy access to drugs, unsupervised friendships” (Gill 16) through the act of a serial killer sweeping through a sleepy town and causing pandemonium and fear. However, there lies an equally relevant moment in such a cultural migration resulting in the “anti-urbanism, racist, and anti-homosexual projects of the federal, state, and local governments of the suburbanizing 1950s [going] hand-in-hand with increased urban in-migration of LGBTQ people” (Giesecking 14-6), and their continual displacement from such suburban spaces

as the cultural climate of the time “induced a re-norming of the heterosexual family which often made it necessary for LGBTQ people to move into cities and cluster” (Giesecking 14-7). This “re-norming” of the rigidly nuclear, heterosexual family unit in geographically removed suburbs, coupled with the concurrent othering of marginalized populations to urban settings, presents viewers with a foundational understanding of how a sense of terror is constructed in such slasher films as *Halloween* through the proposal of a binary where the suburban majority is posed in opposition to the invasive existence of an “other.” Thus, in my work, Myers becomes capable of representing a disruptor of not only suburban life, but of the heteronormative household in general.

As director John Carpenter states himself, “[Michael Myers] is like the wind, he’s out there. He’s going to get you. It’s what you don’t know about, what you can’t see” (“Horror Movie Master John Carpenter”). In other words, the creation of dread around Michael Myers stems largely from the silence and mystery that shroud the killer’s actions, making the ultimate fear revolve around the senselessness of his murderous acts and how his almost hyperbolic “otherness” removes even his humanity. As such, he ruptures the placidity of suburbia through his greater similarity to a force of nature than to that of a human, meaning he lacks any comprehensible premeditation or motives; he kills who he wants, and anyone could be a victim, even “you,” the audience member that is meant to self-identify with the suburban protagonists. In his book *Monsters in the Closet: Homosexuality and the Horror Film*, Henry M. Benshoff details horror critic Robin Wood’s formulation that there were particular components that supplied the horror genre with the following:

...[the] thematic core of the genre might be reduced to three interrelated variables: normality (as defined chiefly by a heterosexual patriarchal capitalism), the Other (embodied in the figure of the monster), and the relationship between the two. According to Wood's formulation, these monsters can often be understood as racial, ethnic, and/or political/ideological Others, while more frequently they are constructed primarily as sexual Others (women, bisexuals, and homosexuals). (Benshoff 4-5)

This simple spectrum (similar to that of majority versus minority binary presented earlier) that relates normality and "other" is vital to the piece "Boogeyman," for it underlies the complicated power relations involved between the characters in the scene while providing space to contemplate how the negation of these figures in a marginal space (namely, the closet) collides with the careful preservation of their proximal environment or "familiar ambience", and what symbolic alterations or "queerings" can be delivered at such a junction.

As previously established, the disruption of the suburban, heterosexual household is the common denominator between slasher films such as *Halloween*, and haunted house movies like *Poltergeist*. In other words, there is a "sustained and systematic destruction of the apparent fixity and solidity of small town life" (Tudor 177) within both types of films, with their constant endangerment of either a specific nuclear family in a household and/or teenagers and children of multiple households in a singular setting (e.g. a neighborhood, a local summer camp, etc.). The supposed innocuousness of the setting is frequently complemented by the almost banal overexposure of sexuality, specifically within slasher films. The disposal or punishment of characters who partake in such eroticism has largely been criticized, often in terms of misogyny. Following Laura Mulvey's coining of the "male gaze" in her 1975 essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," and the critical shift in feminist studies of

media thereafter, scholars like Gloria Cowan and Margaret O'Brien performed content analyses of such horror films that observed data about how members of the male/female gender binary were represented. In their 1990 study titled "*Migration into Art: Transcultural Identities and Art-Making in a Globalized World*", both Cowan and O'Brien assert:

In slasher films the message appears to be that sexual women get killed and only the pure women survive. This message that the good woman is asexual and that the bad (and therefore dead) woman is sexual may be almost as pernicious as the message conveyed in pornography that violence can be fun for women. Given the high level of exposure of young people to this message - those who are in sexually formative years, coupled with the sex-equals-death message surrounding AIDS - this message is particularly problematic. Slasher films reinforce the idea that female sexuality is costly... at least for females. (194-195)

While the grounds for denouncing misogyny within such films are not only well-documented but also justified—the persecution of feminine/femme expressions of sexuality once again provides an instance where we are presented with a division not only between assertions of sexuality in terms of gender expression, but also with regard to the implied moral judgments surrounding prurience versus purity/abstinence.

However, my video-sculptures aim to complicate this binary between the aforementioned immorality and punishment of feminine/femme sexuality in contrast to the acceptability of masculine sexuality, by instead shifting the conflict back to the othered, marginalized queer person having to contend with the oppressive normalcy of heteronormative, patriarchal existence. In this structure, slashers like Michael Myers become more complex agents who rupture the heteronormative landscape of suburban living. As Pat Gill states about *Halloween* in particular,

Protagonist Laurie's irresponsible but nonetheless good-hearted friends think of their babysitting jobs as opportunities to share drinks and beds with their boyfriends. One by one they are killed in droll macabre fashion by Michael

Myers, an asylum escapee who years ago at the age of six murdered his sister for preferring sex to taking care of him. (Gill 22)

This recalibration of Michael Myers' character offers an interpretation that redirects the narrative to a reading by which Myers could be considered a force who is not only destroying the supposed safety of straight living in suburbia, but also as a quite literal attack against a heterosexuality that he has existed outside of and ultimately rejected. Following this logic, the spiritual chaos that occurs within *Poltergeist* can be seen as a means for a queered existence to erupt from within the sanctity of a white, straight family's home; a reconquering and return of those who had been displaced by such a white flight culture at the onset.

In many ways, the methods of "queering" these appropriated sources (along with highlighting the uncanniness of their closet spaces) are generated from reinterpretations of content already present within the images, symbols, and plot mechanics of these mainstream horror films. As Sara Ahmed has written while regarding her notion of a queer phenomenology, "if the sexual involves the contingency of bodies coming into contact with other bodies, then sexual disorientation slides quickly into social disorientation, as a disorientation in how things are arranged. The effects are indeed uncanny: what is familiar, what is passed over in the veil of its familiarity, becomes rather strange" (Ahmed 565). I have appropriated these movies' visuals and dislodged them from their prevailing understandings in my two videos, "Sweetpea, Sweetheart" and "Boogeyman." In doing so, these alterations of the initial footage have been used to disorient the meaning behind their original content. In both pieces I added found sounds distorted beyond recognition into animalistic growls and groans, seeking to broaden the scope and immersiveness of these horror experiences to include that of a

more personalized terror regarding the uncertainty of existence in a world with an indeterminate number of closets interminably erecting themselves.

Given this specification of sexual otherness in my work, the pivotal scene of Laurie retrieving the knife (a phallic weapon) from Michael Myers (who had previously penetrated past victims with the weapon) in the closet, and using it to penetrate her aggressor becomes imbued with far more meaning. As previously stated, not only does the power relationship between predator and prey, killer and victim become reversed, but their relationship as two celibates within the film becomes problematized as Myers goes from being the penetrator to the penetrated. Harry Benshoff similarly notes, “in a number of recent mainstream horror films, phallic instruments of violence replace human body parts in a twisted rewriting of homosexual sex” (Benshoff 257-258). Ergo, when this entire interaction of oscillating sexual innuendo between the two becomes hidden and literally masked by elements from loaded images of the closet setting in “Boogeyman”, the piece becomes more than just residue from the film, instead being transformed into an entirely different exchange of outré figures –Laurie the non-sexual nerd and Michael Myers the non-sexual, ex-patient serial killer– being negated from an already queer environment of the closet and all its entrapments.

The reference to *Halloween* as a film within my piece “Boogeyman”, and to Michael Myers as a means of heteronormative rupture, becomes quite obscure without its iconic heroine and killer being legibly present within the final scene from the movie. However, the masking I performed on the culturally pervasive figures of Myers and Strode (particularly through their subsumption into the oft-ignored background of their final scene), serves to further accentuate the prevalent acts of concealment and hiding



that occur in the movie. For example, when Myers descends upon Laurie Strode and her friends, their interactions are almost always contingent upon a relationship of prey being ambushed by predator, with Laurie being the only character to be able to evade Myers through acts of running and hiding. Additionally, the majority of Myers' acts of killing seem to hinge on his disguised/masked persona permitting him to engage with these characters in a manner that seems to most truly reflect his desires. As Gill states, "jealousy and incestuous desire may well contribute to Michael's actions, but rage at failed family care seems to provide the more compelling motive" (Gill 23).

As such, it is important to note that Myers –a character hidden away from his suburban nuclear family for countless years in a mental institution and who continues to hide behind a mask– has his most fatal and tense interaction with Strode, a character who hides her own teenage sexuality from herself and others, in the space of a closet, a cultural cache for secrets. It is here that my digital masking of these characters, and their interaction in general, serves to double-down on the concealment in question. In many ways, I am the most curious about the symbolic possibilities that present themselves when the viewer witnesses figuratively invisible characters made literally invisible, and that their concealed forms are composed of a closet (and all of its symbolic weight as a cultural space). Consistent with this film's narrative emphasis on the hidden, my act of figural negation for the subjects essentially makes the context of the scene's origin less important, as this camouflaging further stretches the motif of hiding to somewhat of an extreme where even the video's source becomes relatively concealed.

It is here that it is fruitful to return to Sedgwick's *Epistemology of the Closet* as a resource for navigating the closet and the mechanisms with which this body of work

seeks to invoke its enigmatic presence as a space of incertitude and anxiety. At the beginning of her book, Sedgwick states how *Epistemology of the Closet* will explore the “relations of the closet—the relations of the known and the unknown, the explicit and the inexplicit around homo/heterosexual definition” and, in particular, how “‘closetedness’ itself is a performance initiated as such by the speech act of a silence” (Sedgwick 3). With this theme, she has emphasized perhaps the greatest intersection in her work with Sigmund Freud’s (and by extension, Anthony Vidler’s) concepts of how fear may be constituted by the uncertainty of spaces, forming a parallel to silence and the known/unknown. As Freud would delineate in his iconic essay “The ‘Uncanny’” in 1919, the “influences of silence, darkness and solitude” play a pivotal role “in the aetiology of what is uncanny, notwithstanding that they are also the most frequent accompaniment of the expression of fear” (Freud 16). That the notion of “silence”, specifically, should overlap in these two writings bolsters the conceptual drive in my interest in the queering of closet spaces in horror films, but also in the closet (both literal and figurative) as a mutable, elusive area that can be fear-invoking in its uncertainty. While my work seeks more to propagate such worries and anxieties rather than resolve them, there is an ever-present desire to make both video works as conceptually, visually, and physiologically enveloping as possible so as to permit such marginalized spaces and personal histories, even in content with which we may be visually familiar, to be accessed and experienced through a more complex means of understanding.

Such an act of direct erasure leading to a displacement of symbols and identity has an artistic precedent in the works of artists such as Danh Vo and Paul Pfeiffer, both

of whom have had an indelible influence on my practice. In Paul Pfeiffer's video works, such as *John 3:16* (2000) (fig. 1) or *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (12)* (2004) (fig. 2), he digitally implements the action of erasure on mainstream sports footage as a means to "address the question of historical visibility or invisibility, emphasizing the power of image culture to confer the status of the 'real' onto the past or onto human bodies in the present" (Gonzalez 22). Whether it is the ways in which he reframes a basketball as a venerable religious icon, or his camouflaging of logos and text on basketball uniforms, his means of subtly shifting the viewer's focus to the periphery or background of an image serves to recontextualize the found footage as a grounds in which to explore identity in a post-colonial world where a "special relationship exists between black bodies and spectacle" (Gonzalez 22). Additionally, as noted in an interview with the artist, there is a marked sense of "alienation, being outside and not centered in your own body" (Gonzalez 22) that he seeks to explore.

This sense of alienation in Pfeiffer's work mirrors much of the conceptual labor spent in Danh Vo's work regarding intersectional identities. As Anne Ring Petersen highlights in her book *Migration into Art: Transcultural Identities and Art-Making in a Globalized World*, Vo "uses historical and personal one-of-a-kind artifacts, which he transforms into ready-mades or assemblages as a means to explore, and expose, the role of artifacts as social objects and as constituents and signifiers of identifications" (Petersen 179). Danh Vo implements this critical strategy of exploring the identity and sociality of objects at various levels in his work, though the most significant intersection between his work, Pfeiffer's work, and, ultimately, my own work arrives through his

means of symbolic reorientation through the erasure of an object's initial context and replacement with another.

This mode of investigation can be expressed in the mere title of a work, like *Your Mother Sucks Cocks in Hell* (2015) (fig. 4), which derives its loaded, homoerotic title from a quote in *The Exorcist* (1973), or in a more physically rendered form as in his piece *Christmas (Rome)* (2012) (fig. 3), which displays the sun-bleached outline of Christian iconographic objects on curtains from the Vatican, but without the actual objects present. While components of these works gain new meaning once accompanied by wall-text or other written materials that expound upon their origins, the appropriated materials that Danh Vo engages with manifest their own identities and new power relations through their new recontextualization within his body of work as a queer, immigrant of color. This methodology and outlook manifests many of the concepts that José Esteban Muñoz expanded upon in his understanding of this kind of alienation, or “disidentification.” Muñoz states:

Disidentification is about recycling and rethinking encoded meaning. The process of disidentification scrambles and reconstructs the encoded message of a cultural text in a fashion that both exposes the encoded message's universalizing and exclusionary machinations and recircuits its workings to account for, include, and empower minority identities and identifications. Thus, disidentification is a step further than cracking open the code of the majority; it proceeds to use this code as raw material for representing a disempowered politics or positionality that has been rendered unthinkable by the dominant culture. (Muñoz 31)

While the concept of disidentification discussed here is not only relatable to the works of Danh Vo (and Paul Pfeiffer as well), it also suggests an important methodological parallel to the way in which camp can “dislocate mainstream styles” as previously stated. The yoking together of the methodologies of camp and disidentification –which displace presiding symbols in popular media– with horror and its ruptures within normalcy and

tranquility, seem to foreground the area of inquiry that connects the pieces “Sweetpea, Sweetheart” and “Boogeyman” together as parasitic works that extract symbols from a dominant mode of understanding cultural objects and identities, and recalibrate them to empower more marginal viewpoints.

Ultimately, the primary objective of refocusing the closet in my artworks is to create symbolic overlap between the theoretical lenses of scholars such as Sedgwick, Vidler, and Freud in order to complexify the experiences that can exist within such normative, highly recognized cultural objects as these films. As an artist, creating such a flux in symbolic meaning is a vital component to my own work, for it conveys similarly felt dissociations and ambiguity within my overall self-image whilst grappling with a seemingly never-ending trove of repressed anxieties regarding my own queer identity. By relocating such internalized disquietudes from my own psyche and giving them form elsewhere, perhaps digitally, physically, or both, my work aims to position the viewer in a similar realm of anxiety to that of the characters in the films that I have manipulated, and to that of displaced queer perspectives and experiences that lurk in the margins of normative media.

## Image List for Installed Works

- i. *Boogeyman*, 2018, video on analog television and powdered cement on found carpet, dimensions vary
- ii. *Sweetpea, Sweetheart*, 2018, video on analog television and powdered cement on found carpet, dimensions vary
- iii. *Piggy*, 2018, hand dyed cement on found cotton shirts with spray paint and powdered cement, pink light gels, dimensions vary
- iv. *Other Voices (The Attic Door)*, 2018, white paint on board and plywood with metal hardware, sound exciters and amplifier, 3' x 4' x 2'
- v. *screencap\_0106*, 2018, Cast lard, paraffin wax, synthetic rubber, aluminum box, spray paint, LED light strips, 6" x 12" x 6"
- vi. *Screengrab\_1418*, 2018, Cast lard, paraffin wax, synthetic rubber, aluminum box, spray paint, LED light strips, 6" x 12" x 6"
- vii. *Screencapture\_9789*, 2018, Cast lard, paraffin wax, synthetic rubber, aluminum box, spray paint, LED light strips, 6" x 12" x 6"
- viii. Installation view
- ix. Installation view
- x. Installation view
- xi. Installation view

## Installation View



- i. *Boogeyman*, 2018, video on analog television and powdered cement on found carpet,  
dimensions vary



- ii. *Sweetpea, Sweetheart*, 2018, video on analog television and powdered cement on  
found carpet, dimensions vary



iii. *Piggy*, 2018, hand dyed cement on found cotton shirts with spray paint and powdered cement, pink light gels, dimensions vary



iv. *Other Voices (The Attic Door)*, 2018, white paint on board and plywood with metal hardware, sound exciters and amplifier, 3' x 4' x 2'





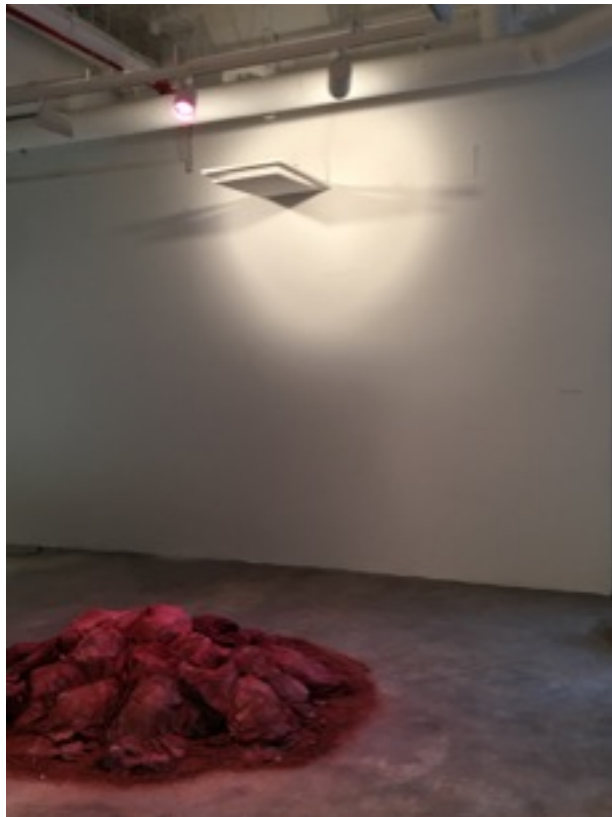
- v. *screencap\_0106*, 2018, Cast lard, paraffin wax, synthetic rubber, aluminum box, spray paint, LED light strips, 6" x 12" x 6"



- vi. *Screengrab\_1418*, 2018, Cast lard, paraffin wax, synthetic rubber, aluminum box, spray paint, LED light strips, 6" x 12" x 6"



*vii. Screenshot\_9789, 2018, Cast lard, paraffin wax, synthetic rubber, aluminum box, spray paint, LED light strips, 6" x 12" x 6"*



*viii.*

Installation view



*ix.*

Installation view



*x.*

Installation view



*xi.*

Installation view

## Images Cited



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