



**The Lies They Tell** @sarahstuartxx

30 Apr 20 • 32 tweets • [sarahstuartxx/status/1255825775472803840](https://twitter.com/sarahstuartxx/status/1255825775472803840)



This is my review of the film, with the catchy and unforgettable title, 'Prototypes I: Quantum Leaps in Trans Semiotics through Psycho-Analytical Snail Serum'.

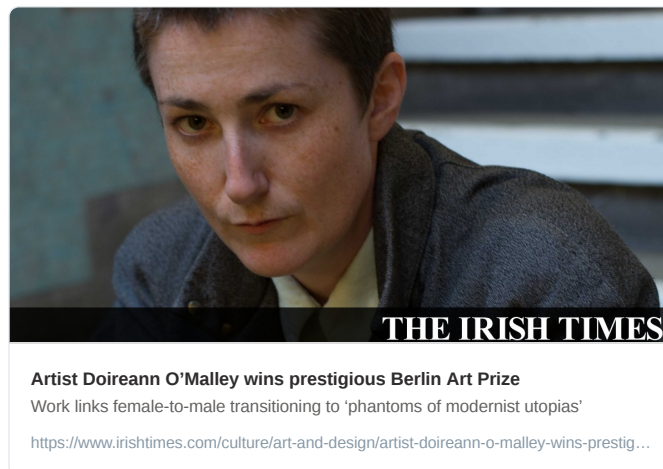
And yes, snails \*do\* make appearances.

<https://www.lightwork.org/archive/prototypes-special-event-with-doireann-omalley/>

The film is described in this online article as combining:

“glimpses of the future with (unfulfilled) promises of the past. The artist goes through an in-depth process of understanding female-to-male transitioning from psychiatric, linguistic, and medical perspectives.”

The article:



I was due to watch a Q&A webinar with O'Malley on 28 April, cancelled with no reason or notification given.

Perhaps someone at the Light Work gallery in New York came to their senses about the timing of the webinar?

(Over 18,000 people in NY have died of CV19.)

I felt duty bound to watch the film in preparation of the talk. It was shit. Obviously.

New vocabulary acquired:

- feminist technofuturism
- pharmacapornographic

Should come in handy.

Opens relaying untrue statistic about sex chromosome deviances, i.e. intersex variations are more than 1/1,000 🙄

Because we can't tell the sex of people online it means we are already post-human 🙄

The Interbau Hansviertal exhibition housing estate in Berlin is the location shot (millionaire pads which evoke proletariat misery \*and\* poncey post-modernist references) 🙄



Then obvious T-filled woman lies on couch having dreams psycho-analysed by another TIF, pretentiously channeling Freud.

Half naked lake swimming follows with musings on the Father as representation of the Law.

Fear of 'hybrid animals' (i.e. trans people) and losing boundaries is related to the Father. Apparently.

Image of snail crawling on the hand of a TIF receiving therapy as she lies on the couch (cos snails are hermaphrodites innit).



Testosterone enables a view into other worlds - like ayahuasca, but gives you stubble. It's transcendental and cool yeah if you're into 'new languages and architecture' - cue more pointless shots of Berlin's Interbau housing exhibition.

A big 'oh dear' moment arrives when a TIF boasts 'Now as a man and as a faggot' she has deeper understandings.

Then some flannel about quantum physics from balcony of tower block.

More therapy scenes and wooden acting from two women,

who have had enough T to deepen their voices, but not enough to grow facial hair it seems.

The younger one recounts a dream about waking up with a moist wet tongue in her hand, and we're straight into Penis Envy territory.

Also emulation of gay male sexuality with 'cottaging' vibe. The imagery is overlaid with electronic music and filters.



The next section is based inside a large open room. A disembodied voice talks about 'trans longing, masonic threats and infinite patterns' over a very long scene in which people are sat around, doing nothing.

It's perhaps the only scripted part of the film and a character called Leonard, a hologram, (who has to explain this because CGI is clearly out of budget) is the facilitator for the Institute for the Enrichment of computer-aided Gender prototypes.

You're being invited to join the prototype programme, he tells the transgender people, you're free to accept or refuse in an informed way in exchange for us studying you. You're all unique and fascinating people, he tells them. Doubts and affirmations will be studied.

'You are the prototypes' continues Leonard and that entrance onto the programme will provide access to a portal which goes into parallel multiverses, where you can meet yourself (at their own Institute) and travel back and forth between space and time.





Then they play a series of games to deconstruct gender - 'my gender is a cloud' says one.

Also shots of them assembling abstract artwork, not unlike



People lie on floors being talked through guided meditations whilst therapy sessions go on elsewhere.

In particular, there is a prolonged therapy session with what looks like the director herself, which sounds as if it's her own testimony,

given its sheer narcissism and lack of drama.

As a woman she wanted more female protagonists in films, but found that females have a limited scope of agency and opportunities.

Now that she is a Director herself ... but we don't learn the point because the dialogue is in German

and is only (deliberately) partially subtitled in English.

But I do know enough German to make out (I think) that she was kicked in the groin by a colleague in the theatre.

You know what these luvvies are like.



Then it moves to group therapy with amazing self-realisations like ‘the only constant in life is change’ and ‘I feel like I’m inhabiting my body’.

Group hugging.

(Basically it’s like a 101 of cultic practices.)



A TIF announces that having only two genders produces instability and only when we can attach ‘chaos, suffering, order and pleasure’ will stability come.

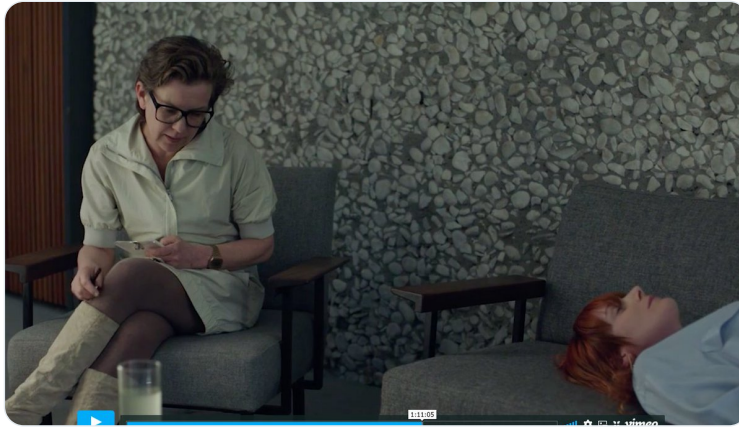
A TIM, for drama’s sake, disagrees responding, something like, ‘as a man I find that offensive’.

The look on the TIF’s face is off abject horror, which makes me think it was like a candid camera moment, because they certainly aren’t actors.

Said TIM is then whisked off for 1to1 re-education with a therapist.

It takes precisely a few seconds for him to recant and talk about how mirrors are integral to constructing identity (i.e. Judith Butler’s mirror theory).





A group 'looking in the mirror' exercise ensues.

Then there is another incredibly long scene in which another TIM relates his entirely prosaic past experiences. This culminates in what I guess is supposed to be a dramatic revelation about his thoughts on tennis playing,

and the options of playing either in male or female competitions ('two categories is very limiting and an artificial situation').

Okay.

The final part of the film is a bar scene which begins with three TIFs arriving looking like they are Kraftwerk.

You can hear a multitude of background conversations about personal development and woo woo about 'molecular structures'.



Snail shots are interspersed throughout the scene.

My favourite being the triptych of the Judith Butler (L to R) a mirror, the snail (hermaphrodite innit) and a piece of modern art expressing gender.



The very final scene is off a TIF standing in front of the mirror, performing gender and reflecting back at herself her created reality.

Subtle, it ain't.



This won a big award and funded by arts funding in both Ireland and Germany.

The final twist of the knife is that the film is dedicated to Alan Turing.

I just can't ....



[@threadreaderapp](#) please unroll

...