What A Beautiful Day to Cancel Somebody

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Hosted by: Merel Dijkman (graduate HKU)

Project Information (EN)

How it started

In 2021, I made a documentary about events that took place at my high school, realizing the truth years later. Seeking a conversation, I was only able to meet with the principal who knew nothing about the story. Our discussion mainly revolved around evidence and facts, leading to some kind of a dead lock. I felt powerless, but later became determined to fight for my voice to be heard. Because a human-like conversation was not an option I devised a format for myself in which I could tell my story without accusing others; a documentary. Even though I felt vulnerable, I knew I had some kind of weapon in my hands. I wanted to remain reasonable, not come across as an overly emotional screamer and I didn’t want to cancel anyone either. It made me realize that making a documentary was a privileged position compared to others who express their voice through existing (social) media.

Medieval troubles

‘What a Beautiful Day to Cancel Somebody’ consists of a collection of stuffed toys that are inspired by both historical and contemporary instances of cancel culture. These cuddly creations are designed to critically examine the widely used red flag emoji, drawing comparison to medieval shame masks. The soft and seemingly harmless toys have a double edged message, reminding us that the red flag emoji is too small and general to simply cancel someone. The work encourages viewers to reflect on the implications of (online) cancel culture and the ways it is often expressed on social media.

History repeats

The idea for the plush toys originated from the fact that the red flag emoji has an innocent appearance compared to the harm it can cause. The plush toys have the same innocent and soft appearance on the outside, but they contain stones on the inside. These stones refer to medieval practices such as the public pillory and the shame masks, where the canceled person was pelted with stones. In the work, the boundary between two extremes is constantly pushed. Something as soft as a plush toy is combined with something as hard as stones. Additionally, the friendly internet imagery of emojis and memes is juxtaposed with dark medieval imagery. Multiple storylines and worlds intersect, provoking thought and contemplation.

Image List

Filename	Caption	Credit
werk-beeld-artist_1693809971.png	What A Beautiful Day to Cancel Somebody	

The images above are included in the ZIP under `/images`.