

Tea Service

7 min, *digital video*, 2013

In “Tea Service” the semblance of scripted normalcy is strictly upheld by the mythologized female—the provider of a proper cup of tea. Video capture of a tedious durational ‘feminine’ action—the serving of tea set in a rustic romantic landscape—is rendered confused through a ‘masculine’ intervention.

Women are rarely allowed to author their own fate in cinematic space. They are carried along by a familiar plotline and are caught in a web of mythology that defines their every move. In my performance-for-video work (filmed, performed and edited unaccompanied), I too am directed by social and cultural expectations, but there is an underlying ambiguity that situates the work in a liminal site between beauty, terror, the sublime and languid sadness. My video work questions, but also pays homage to, our expectations of the representations of woman and her relationship to her own image and the big screen. She both resists and accepts the sticky tropes that cling to her every move. In stoically—yet somewhat reluctantly—acting them out and through inclusion of physical or conceptual interventions, our heroine reveals what lies beneath the surface of performed femininity. She arrives at a conclusion that is gendered, problematic, and more essentially human.