

JOSEPHINE PRYDE

*Taylor Swift's "Lover" + The Gastric Flu*

April 3 – May 8, 2022

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What am I asking you to see?

I am asking you to see something I couldn't see myself. The experience is not exclusive.

I lay on my back on the floor and chewed on a plastic-free gum. I chewed at a pace and a rhythm that corresponded to songs by Taylor Swift from her 2019 album, 'Lover', songs of which I had recall in my mind. I chewed along as best I could to what words I could think to remember, and to what tunes I could just about hold. I chewed silently, in my head. One gum, one song.

When I had chewed as far as I could each time, I carefully removed the gum from my mouth and stuck it onto pieces of driftwood from the Pacific Ocean, or onto small pieces of rock that I had sitting on the window shelf. I took these new objects to a foundry, where they were cast in bronze.

This was an exercise in re-modelling. Or in imitation of a previous state.

What am I asking you to see? Which language will you hear to see it?

The gum assumed a form I may call analogous to the compressed resolution of a song, transferred via the jaw from tracks held in the memory. Little polished patinas, caught in a crux of the brain, squat in a fold of grey matter.

What is the order of things?

I caught a bug where I had to be sick compulsively. All day. The physical emptiness that resulted remains important to my recall of how the songs of Taylor Swift were lodged in caverns of my mind by the time I could be sick no more. Her songs repeated in me. It was the year of the album's release.

I sing the songs and the songs are songs of love, and hurt me wildly.

No. The songs are songs of love, and every day.

The songs are songs of love, and in a list. In a list and in a line.

I build the line again. In the studio, nearly a year later. Not a song line. The line of the tiled shelf that runs the length of my bathroom, past which I dashed each time I needed to be sick. I did not look at the shelf on the way. I look at it now, but I look at it distilled. Squinting. I remove from it one clear Perspex cosmetic tray and one glass candle holder, both from the Drugstore Market, and take them and their contents to the studio to install in my little set. I have one camera, one tripod, and I

screw them together into one new object and move the new object along the rigged-up line, with its white tiles taped to a box and the bathroom accessories sitting on a sheet of glass. I make the camera imitate my own progress down the length of the shelf back in the bathroom, except we move slower and the camera does not have groaning eyes, half shut and facing forward. No. The camera's one glass eye is held firm by the tripod and by me, to stare directly at the stand-in shelf. I am turning the camera and using it to record in an irregular rhythm. I am not required to parcel time out evenly here, as if to demonstrate, for example, its effect on motion. Rather, it's elastic. When you see these photographs in the exhibition, they will be hung in a line that stretches far longer than either my bathroom or the studio-set ever did, yet what is depicted in the photographs is an image of the latter meant to stand in for the former. It is there to be seen in photographs for an art exhibition, displayed in juxtaposition with small bronzes, which are songs. There is a short film nearby which projects their titles.

Josephine Pryde (b. 1967, Alnwick, UK) has presented solo exhibitions at Gandt, New York, 2021; CCA Wattis Institute of Contemporary Arts, San Francisco, CA & Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, PA, 2015; Kultur Stadt Bern; Germany, 2012; Kunstverein Düsseldorf, Germany, 2012 and Arnolfini, Bristol, 2014. Selected group exhibitions include The Wig, Kunstverein Bonner, 2022; Objects Recognized in Flashes, Mumok, Vienna, 2019 and New Photography 2013, Museum of Modern Art, New York. Josephine Pryde will present a solo exhibition at The Art Institute of Chicago in the fall of 2022. She is Professor of Contemporary Art and Photography at the University of the Arts in Berlin where she lives and works.