

Kiss off

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ENG Abstract: *Kiss off* is a collaborative videographic essay produced by a prompt from Ian Garwood's *Indy vinyl for the masses* project, which tasks makers with building short, sequential videos around a pop song. Our team approached the project through a collective inquiry into archives to examine their authority, fragility, and potential for resistance. Structured in five interrelated segments, *Kiss off* dramatises cinematic trespasses into archival spaces, layers personal ephemera with fictional imagery, stages collages of erasure and preservation, and reflects on the materiality of editing itself. Each contributor's intervention was guided by the shared question: what does it mean to behave badly in the archive? The final section turns to videographic practice itself as a form of glitch and archive, incorporating our own catalogues to expose both the vulnerability and reciprocity of collaboration. In this way, *Kiss off* positions playful experimentation as rigorous scholarly critique.

Keywords: archives; collaboration; feminism; video essays.

ESP Kiss off

Resumen: *Kiss off* es un videoensayo colaborativo producido a partir de un *prompt* del proyecto *Indy vinyl for the masses* de Ian Garwood, que reta a los creadores a elaborar vídeos breves y secuenciales en torno a una canción pop. Nuestro equipo abordó el proyecto mediante una indagación colectiva sobre los archivos, para examinar su autoridad, fragilidad y potencial de resistencia. Estructurado en cinco segmentos interrelacionados, *Kiss off* dramatiza transgresiones cinematográficas en espacios archivísticos, superpone efímeros personales con imágenes ficticias, monta collages de borrado y de preservación, y reflexiona sobre la materialidad de la edición. Cada intervención se guía por una pregunta: ¿qué significa comportarse mal en el archivo? La sección final se dirige a la práctica videográfica misma como modo de *glitch* y de archivo, incorporando nuestros propios catálogos para exponer la vulnerabilidad y la reciprocidad de la colaboración. *Kiss off* sitúa así la experimentación lúdica como crítica académica rigurosa.

Palabras clave: archivos; colaboración; feminismo; videoensayos.

Summary: 1. Written statement. 2. Data availability. 3. Authors' contribution statement. 4. Statement of LLM use. 5. Acknowledgements. 6. References

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1. Written statement

Kiss off is a collaborative videographic essay produced in response to Ian Garwood's *Indy vinyl for the masses* project, which invites teams of makers to construct a short video set to a pop song. The rules of Garwood's project are straightforward: each video begins with a clip from any screen media featuring a specific pop song that provides a soundtrack for up to five minutes. Contributors then add sequential clips of the same length to build the video collaboratively while at the same time responding to curator-assigned themes and keywords such as 'gestures', 'consumption', 'walking', and 'dreaming'. Our piece emerged from a collective inquiry into concepts and depictions of archives: their power, fragility, and roles as both sites of preservation and spaces of erasure. *Kiss off* is thus composed of five interrelated sections. The result is a work that gestures toward a mode of 'behaving badly', breaking from the clean lines of conventional scholarship and embracing fragmentation, opacity, and rupture as creative strategies.

In exploring what it means to challenge archival authority through both content and form, we shared a guiding question: what does it mean to behave badly in the archive? At the beginning of the video, Viktoria Paranyuk and Lucy Donaldson establish a foundation of cinematic depictions of archival trespass. These moments dramatise the archive as a site of power, where access and erasure are tightly controlled, yet also vulnerable to acts of subversion. Dayna McLeod's segment pushes this further by juxtaposing a violent cinematic gesture with images from her own personal archive of notebooks, Post-its, film reels, and ephemera. This layering of the personal with the fictional mirrors Legacy Russell's (2020) notion of 'glitch feminism', where glitch functions as an act of encryption and resistance. McLeod's sped-up, semi-transparent imagery both reveals and obscures, playing with legibility and illegibility as metaphors for what archives allow us to see and what they obscure. Daniel Pope's segment then responds to McLeod's experiment with collage and opacity in which the archive appears not as a static repository but as a site of contested narratives, where records are manipulated, memories erased, and personal histories overwritten. Pope stages a dialogue between preservation and obliteration, reflecting on how bodies are recorded, misread, or excluded by institutional archives. Finally, Colleen Laird's closing opens the video up to the *Indy vinyl* project and videographic practices themselves as mechanisms of glitch, collage, and archiving, making these explicit. Through analogue editing gestures of cutting, taping, and arranging physical media onscreen, she enacts a meta-commentary on the materiality of editing and the hidden labour of videographic scholarship. Her segment incorporates screen recordings of each participant's Vimeo catalogue, creating a self-reflexive moment in which the archive of our own works becomes part of the piece. This choice was both

celebratory and uneasy: it raised questions about consent, exposure, and the vulnerability of being visible as makers. Yet it also reminded us that our work exists within a networked ecology of videographic practice, one built on mutual trust and shared experimentation.

Thus, our video is both a scholarly exploration and a record of a collaborative process and labour. Passing the video file between us, each of us adding, layering, or reshaping content, required a level of trust and openness not always present in traditional scholarship. This extends to questions of citation and ethics. Videographic work often engages with other video essays in ways that are not strictly citational but still touch as acts of homage or dialogue. Our piece gestures to a lineage of videographic practice from makers working across institutional disciplines and platforms of visibility, such as Catherine Grant's experiments with supercut and remix, such as *The haunting of The headless woman* (2019), Kogonada's commissioned audiovisual essays, such as *The world according to Koreeda Hirokazu* (2013), and Kevin B. Lee's desktop documentaries, such as *Mourning with Minari* (2021), while also trying to carve out its own space of playful, critical engagement. We build on these established modes of practice to focus on embodiment: how do we, as makers, touch and feel the digital? Editing, even in a non-linear digital platform, is a material process. As famed film editor Walter Murch notes in Wendy Apple's documentary *The cutting edge: The magic of movie editing*, editors cut not only with their eyes but with their bodies, feeling the rhythm of a sequence (2004). Our own process was deeply embodied. We worked frame-by-frame, testing juxtapositions, re-timing clips, and adjusting opacity until the layers 'felt' right.

Paranyuk reflected on her own expertise in Eastern European and Soviet cinema, expanding a legible citational knowledge beyond geographical and historical boundaries, to select clips that resist neat classification and instead speak to a global, hybrid media history. Donaldson and Pope brought in tension between digital archives and physical archives: a scanned document is easily accessible, but it lacks the tactile memory of handling paper, turning pages, physical traces left by the cataloguer, or taking notes with a pencil. McLeod reintroduces a sense of touch as she sorts through boxes of ephemera, posing questions about the way we consume and embody the past, which is further articulated by the visibility of Laird's hands that manipulate materials on screen. These moments remind the viewer that videographic scholarship is not purely cerebral; it is also visceral, bodily, and affective.

That said, while our piece is rooted in critical inquiry, it is also infused with play. The parametric structure of the *Indy vinyl for the masses* project encouraged us to think about rhythm, repetition, and variation not only as formal principles but as modes of thought. The video's fragments set against a pop song speak to one another like instruments in a polyphonic composition, sometimes harmonizing,

sometimes clashing. This playfulness does not undermine its scholarly rigor; rather, it opens new pathways for thinking, allowing us to experiment with forms of expression such as humour, irony, and vulnerability that are often excluded from traditional academic writing. In this sense, *Kiss off* positions itself both within and against scholarly conventions. It is an essay, but not in print; a research output, but one that resists linear argumentation.

2. Data availability

The study data is also available on Vimeo at <https://vimeo.com/891556715>

3. Authors' contribution statement

Lucy Fife Donaldson: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review and Editing, Visualization.

Colleen Laird: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review and Editing, Visualization.

Dayna McLeod: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review and Editing, Visualization.

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Viktoria Paranyuk: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review and Editing, Visualization, Supervision.

Daniel Pope: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review and Editing, Visualization.

4. Statement of LLM use

This work has not used any text or images generated by an LLM (ChatGPT or other) in its production.

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