



Alex Bag, *Untitled (The Van [Redux])* (detail), 2015, two-channel HD video, color, 28 minutes.

Alex Bag

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For Alex Bag's solo show, which opened in concert with Art Basel Miami Beach this past December, the art-establishment farceur reprised her 2001 mockumentary about the fictional pimp-cum-cultural entrepreneur Leroy LeLoup (played by the artist's brother, Damian Bag, in a skunky wig) some fifteen years after he debuted his "gallery" (housed in a souped-up white Dodge Ram) at the 2001 Armory Show in New York. *Untitled (The Van)*, 2001—a scabrous and still apt parody of the art world's simultaneous demand for critique and complicit consumerism—is screened inside the titular van, which was reinstalled in ICA Miami's atrium for the occasion. Above it were two large projections, one installed on the ICA's second floor and the other on the third, that jointly comprise *Untitled (The Van [Redux])*, 2015. Bag's newest work is an update on the inanities of the art world and a skewering of an ecosystem willingly exploited by speculators and dazzled and confounded by the output of digital natives.

In *Untitled (The Van)*, LeLoup is shown en route to the Armory with three emerging artists in tow, who he claims "make the coolest, sexiest, hippest pieces of art known to man; the best pieces of art by the best pieces of ass": Fox (a gregariously clueless video artist), Honey (a severe and spoiled photographer), and Fiona (Tracey Emin?). Each is played by Bag. The artists pout and roll their eyes dramatically while vying for prime real estate at the booth, jousting with jargon and predictions of their post-Armory successes—the Turner Prize! A seventy/thirty split! Product endorsements! The Mardens' home in Greece! The cover of *Artforum*! A baby!

A similar fugue of demands sounds in Bag's new videos, but at about two octaves higher: Bag's five-year-old son August plays, at turns, Giles Bukowski, a "zombie formalist" who paints with a light saber; Petal Ultright, a conceptual sculptor who makes poop bracelets; and Rocket Asberger, a "post-Internet" artist who rips off Petal's ideas. "I want you to like me, I want you to be nice to me! I wanna sleep, I'm so tired!" (The wunderkind follows this last plaint by dragging a long snot from his nose.) The kids are LeLoup's new crop. In the *Redux* video screened on the ICA's second floor, a camera crew follows the entrepreneur around the museum, in whose storage closets and bathrooms he has set up an artist residency for children plucked from the peripheries of playgrounds. (The white van takes on a new aspect here.) LeLoup incubates his young talent—true post-Fordist laborers—pushing sugar and screen time in order to foster the "crème de la crème of post-Internet art." He likes to think of himself as a majority shareholder in his investments, and he reminds us that that's a lot like fatherhood. We also learn that since we first met him, LeLoup has done time for extortion, racketeering, embezzlement, and tampering with a corpse; and that, critically, he made a connection with He Who Shall Not Be Named—the CEO of Blood Oath Holding Company LLC.

And we won't name him—but we will say that the allusive alliteration of the name Leroy LeLoup is but the first clue to the fact that Bag's new project is essentially a thinly veiled dramatization of Christopher Glazek's 2014 *Times* profile of the "The Art World's Patron Satan." And if you don't pick up on it, Bag clunks you over the head in the final moments of the video: Before a backdrop of the infamous *Times* image of the Los Angeles Simcor headquarters, LeLoup stands in his underwear, hustling on his phone, surrounded by his minions, as Petal, dressed in full *Frozen* attire, screams, "Let it GO!" and Giles slaps him in the junk with his lightsaber.

Where Bag has in past works appropriated children's television formulas to demonstrate the ways in which even childish play can be monetized, here she levels the machinations of art-world consultants and pop-culture-industry micromangers. On the third floor was *Untitled (Leroy LeLoup'sie)*, 2015, a fifteen-minute video "made" by Rocket: a hackneyed commercial for a Lalaloopsy Diaper Surprise toy (it's a real thing) chroma-keyed over the silhouette of a dancing LeLoup, with a background alternating between footage of elephants humping and a particularly violent game of *Grand Theft Auto*. This commercial is occasionally interlarded with dead blue screen accompanied by of-the-moment earworms by the barely legal erstwhile paramours Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez. It is here that Bag's signature self-reflexivity comes through: As the Biebs repents in "Sorry," it's hard not to think back to the final scene of Bag's breakout video *Untitled (Fall '95)*, in which Morrissey croons, "I'm so sorry," and Bag looks pleadingly at the camera, sobbing.