

“install_DESKTOPTREASURE.exe”

By Joshua Smith

Staring us dead in the eye, Harajuku girl Hirari Ikeda crams another French fry in her mouth. She’s wearing a jumpsuit collage of brand logos, pop culture icons and arbitrary words—“Adderall”, etc. We are invited to witness the performance of an identity aligned with contemporary consumer culture. An identity that can be altered, reformed and moulded to fit any shape demanded of it (at least for a while): “Because I have the internet, I can feel that I am a writer, a critic, a photographer, a model and a video artist. I feel I can do anything. But...” This “but” precedes failed attempts to login to an old blog. A memory lapse frustrates her performed self.

Denial of access to an external, dialogical self (I as a writer, I as a photographer) marks a disintegration of the digital world in *Desktop Treasure* as our protagonist regresses to analogue forms and introspective behaviour. The innate desire to diarise remains present as a means of self-expression. This is manifest through audio recordings on cassette tape, oral performances in the streets of Tokyo (reminiscent of *chindonya* Shinjuku performers seen in *Diary of a Shinjuku Thief*) and finally, putting to pen and paper.

Like Oshima, UMMMI. blurs fact and fiction through performance, personal spaces and the literary world (referencing Simone Weil, Susan Sontag) to reflect on her own practises, youth culture in ‘modern’ Japan and identity politics. In *Desktop Treasure* she reveals the destructive aspects of the digital world on young, creative minds whilst offering an alternative means of expression. She invites us to challenge the way content is consumed and created. The call is no longer “throw away your books, rally in the streets” but “forget your password, scream in the streets.”