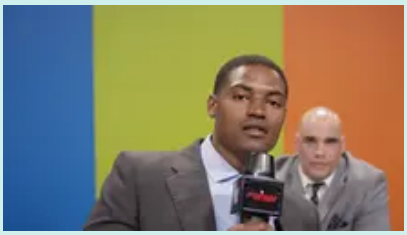
IF IT BLEEDS



DIRECTOR
Isabelle Pauwels

DURATION
43:46

YEAR
2018

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE
English

CATEGORY
Experimental
Installation

DESCRIPTION
Inspired by recent events in the world of Mixed Martial Arts, *If it Bleeds* can't -- or won't-- tell the difference between real fighting and fake fighting. Good actor or bad liar? Showman or sportsman? Bleeding, sweating, flopping, maybe crying, denying and/or testifying, winning or learning, faking, praying-- give me some bluff with that-- i_t_'s_ _j_u_s_t_ _another body ripening in the spotlight, sustained by the fiction that everything happens for a reason. Perfect? No. Undefeated? Yes!

TAGLINES
1) A touch of class-- and a close shave.

2) A workplace pageant.

Boring tagline for curators, critics, grant applications:

3) Inspired by recent events in the world of Mixed Martial Arts, If It Bleeds explores the grotesque and sublime spectacle that is everyday survival.

SOUND
5.1

FURTHER INFORMATION

If it Bleeds exists as a single-channel video (2018) and as a multi-channel video installation (2018/2021). The installation is a triple projection occupying two adjoining walls, spanning 40 x 7.5 feet.
About the installation:
"The installation version of *Bleeds* is a major re-edit and reconfiguring of the original single channel UHD video of the same name from 2018. Both versions of *Bleeds* explore the grotesque and sublime spectacle of everyday survival. Inspired by events in the world of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA), the narrative follows a dozen characters -- including the president of a mixed martial arts organization, his fighters, a pair of celebrity reporters, a Brazilian Jesus, and a trio of athletic commissioners-- as they battle through promotional tours, pressers, face offs and disciplinary hearings. These characters are portrayed by human actors, by props, and by text-to-speech voices. [For a much more engaging description of the themes in *Bleeds*, see the description for the original version further down the page].
If it *Bleeds* (2018/2021) is a single video file, 3840x 720p, split between 3 projectors. In my editing sequence, I put 3840x 2160 sized clips from the original *Bleeds* into a custom sequence of 5760 x 1080, which can be 3 times 1920x 1080, or 3840x 1080 plus 1920x 1080, or 1920x1080 plus black, and countless irregular subdivisions. I rescaled, reframed, re-ordered and discarded— bodies, body parts, heads tails and trunks of dialogue, tops & bottoms and lefts and rights of the set. As the projection is split, the narratives multiply: there can be two or three scenes running at the same time. While the characters now have more real estate to operate in, they have less room to be heard in as they compete for the viewer's attention. Who to follow, who to drop?

In the multiscreen, 24/7 landscape of sports-entertainment, there is always “too much” content, too many prizes, yet never enough time to consume it all. It seems there never enough winners! Maybe you can’t understand every action or decision the characters make, or keep up with every narrative development. Yet you’ll probably recognize that familiar engine of exploitation which drives this fictional (and the real) world. So who won the fight? Well, as they say in MMA, who would you rather be? Win or lose, as soon as the fight ends, the speculation on future matchups and potential comebacks begins…

The original version of *If it Bleeds* (2018) was commissioned by EMPAC/Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center, Troy NY., and was funded by the Canada Council for the Arts and the British Columbia Arts Council. **- Isabelle Pauwels**

KEYWORDS
Sports, sportsmen, reenactment, acting

THEMES
Identity