

**SARAH LÜDEMANN (BEAUHAM)**



**Sarah Lüdemann (Beauham), *Penny Lick* (2020), HD video loop, color, sound, 31'09"**

**Price: upon request**

In *Penny Lick*, Sarah Lüdemann (Beauham) isolates a gesture both banal and charged, turning the simple act of licking into a confrontation. The act is cyclical, endless, hypnotic - a ritual of consumption that oscillates between pleasure and discomfort, innocence and eroticism. Stripped from its original installation *Mortadella Statistics*, where it was one element in a larger meditation on meat, bodies, and commodified desire, the video becomes an autonomous image of appetite - of wanting, tasting, and being consumed in turn. Here the work is recontextualized as a meditation on the eroticism of looking, the commodification of intimacy, and the ambiguous pleasures of exposure and concealment.

The work's title refers to the small glass cups used for serving ice cream in 19th-century London - cheap, reusable vessels from which customers would lick their portion before returning the unwashed glass to be refilled for the next. The "penny lick" was eventually banned for spreading

disease, a history that lends Lüdemann's looping image a microbial intimacy. Pleasure and contamination, desire and disgust, circulate together in a scene that feels at once sweet and unsanitary. Lüdemann draws on this history of shared surfaces, contamination, and pleasure to explore the contagion of looking itself. The act of licking becomes a medium for transmission—of germs, desire, and meaning.

Contrary to the suggestive title of the work, the mouth we see in *Penny Lick* does not lick ice cream - it licks the very surface of the screen through which we watch it. This inversion collapses the distance between viewer and image, inside and outside, desire and display. The gesture, repetitive and intimate, feels both erotic and invasive: as though the body on screen were seeking contact with us, or perhaps consuming our gaze in return.

When presented through a peep-hole, the work's charged intimacy is compounded. The voyeuristic mode of encounter implicates the viewer's own body, transforming the act of seeing into an act of touching. What begins as a seemingly playful, sensual gesture becomes a study in discomfort - an exposure of how easily pleasure can slip into pathology, how the gaze itself can become tactile, invasive, and complicit - from innocent ingestion to perverse gloryhole.

Within the context of *Art from Elsewhere: DEEP THROAT*, *Penny Lick* functions as both metaphor and mirror. It reflects on how consumption - of food, of bodies, of images - structures our contemporary economies of attention and desire. The same gesture that signifies pleasure can, with a slight shift of framing, be rendered pornographic or obscene. Lüdemann exposes this slippage with disarming clarity: how the surface of the image, like the surface of the skin, is a site where meaning is constantly produced, eroticized, and devoured. Seen within the context of *DEEP THROAT*, *Penny Lick* becomes an emblematic work - one that articulates the exhibition's investigation of the mouth as both metaphor and threshold. Lüdemann's licking mouth embodies the point where consumption, communication, and desire intersect. By turning the screen into skin, she exposes the feedback loop of mediated intimacy in contemporary culture: how we touch with our eyes, devour with our devices, and blur the line between viewing and being viewed.

Visceral, uncanny, and darkly humorous, *Penny Lick* seduces only to unsettle. It reminds us that every surface - digital, corporeal, or symbolic - is a site of exchange, and that in the economies of desire and representation, nothing remains untouched. In its slow, sensuous repetition, *Penny Lick* reveals the mechanics of looking and the politics of desire. It invites viewers to linger uncomfortably in the space between hunger and shame, to confront the ease with which pleasure is aestheticized, sexualized, and sold. In doing so, Lüdemann's work resonates with the exhibition's exploration of the mouth—as organ, metaphor, and site of both speech and consumption—where every act of tasting is also an act of interpretation, and every image, a mouthful too much.

*"The tongue touches, explores the surface, and licks in a continuous loop. Like a snake that 'sees' that way. Penny lick also denotes a small glass for serving ice cream used in London (UK) in the 19th century. The video is one of various elements from the work Mortadella Statistics, a three-paneled partition, which evokes associations with meat consumption in the widest sense.*

*Here, meats and cures, as well as paid sex practices, are combined with a visualisation of quantitative research statistics. For Art from Elsewhere: DEEP THROAT the video has been singled out to tie in with other works."*

- Sarah Lüdemann (Beauham)

**ARTIST BIO:** [www.sarahluedemann.com](http://www.sarahluedemann.com)

**SARAH LÜDEMANN (BEAUHAM) (born in Cologne, Germany. Lives and works in Bremen, Germany.)**

Sarah Lüdemann (Beauham) (b. Cologne, Germany) is a visual artist, writer, and researcher whose work interrogates the entanglement between language, the body, and systems of mediation. Working across video, installation, sculpture, and text, she explores the performative structures of consumption, desire, and communication - examining how bodies are coded, disciplined, and abstracted within cultural and technological systems. Her practice often stages acts of repetition and ritualized touch, transforming ordinary or intimate gestures into critical tools for examining how identity, sexuality, and power are performed in contemporary culture. Her works often stage choreographies of intimacy and control, turning acts of exposure, repetition, and touch into conceptual and aesthetic strategies.

Lüdemann (Beauham) studied Linguistics, Psychology, and Fine Art at the University of Cologne (2001–2005), before teaching Academic Writing, Critical Thinking, and Art History in Norway, Italy, England, and the Netherlands. In 2010, she was awarded a residency at Fundación Marcelino Botín, Villa Iris, working alongside Mona Hatoum, and later received the South Square Trust Award to pursue her MFA in Fine Art at Central Saint Martins, London, graduating with distinction in 2011. She is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Bremen, where her dissertation, *Bodies That Speak Back: Postdigital Performativity, Queer Gesture, and the Politics of Spectatorship*, examines the performative feedback loops between digital imagery, embodied spectatorship, and systems of power.

Since 2017, Lüdemann has lectured in Contemporary Art and Mediation at both the University of Bremen and the University of the Arts Bremen, where she teaches and writes on media theory, feminist aesthetics, and performative methodologies. Her ongoing research bridges academic inquiry and artistic practice, continuing to explore how digital and embodied gestures speak within and against systems of control. She maintains her studio at Künstlerhaus Bremen.

Her work has been exhibited internationally at institutions and biennales including Printed Matter, New York (US); Museum Frieder Burda | Salon Berlin (DE); Goethe-Institut Cairo (EGY); Collegium Hungaricum, Berlin (DE); TRAFO Center for Contemporary Art, Szczecin (PL); HDLU, Zagreb (HR); October Salon | Belgrade Biennale (RS); Museum Villa Rot, Burgrieden (DE); La Lavoire Public | Lyon Biennale de la Danse (FR); Ventolin Art Space, Melbourne (AUS); and Hayaka Arti, Istanbul (TR).

Her works are held in public and private collections, including the New York Public Library (US), Städtische Galerie Bremen (DE), MOMENTUM Worldwide Video Collection (DE), and Piracy Book Collection, AND Publishing (UK).