



City SALTS: Cabane (see exhibition map)

Opening Saturday, 4 November 2024, 6 PM  
Exhibition until 28 February 2025  
City SALTS, Hauptstrasse 12, 4127 Birsfelden/Basel

## **DUMMIES – Paul Fritz**

Curated by Benedikt Wyss

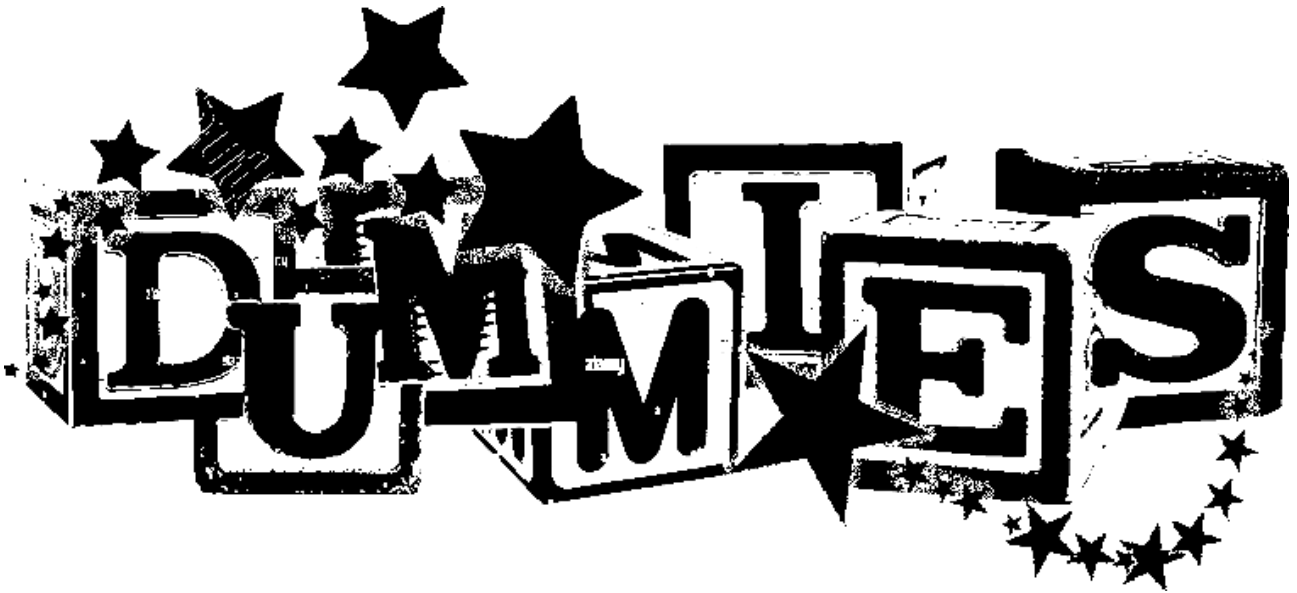
*Audition Tape I* (Paul), 2024, video loop  
*Audition Tape II* (Antoine), 2024, video loop

By blending techniques that range from computer-generated images to traditional hand-drawn animation, stop motion, and even live-action footage, Lausanne-based artist Paul Fritz explores genres and layers of narration to craft illusory stories, where reality and fiction dance hand in hand. «Dummies» is showing the casting tapes' outtake of two CGI (Computer-generated imagery) characters auditioning to play the role of the artist and his brother when they were six and four years old. The videos are inspired by original child star casting tapes, such as the one from Henry Thomas auditioning to play Elliott in *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*.

*Durch die Kombination von Techniken, die von computer-generierten Bildern bis hin zu traditioneller Handanimation, Stop-Motion und Live-Action-Material reichen, erforscht der in Lausanne ansässige Künstler Paul Fritz Genres und Erzählschichten, um illusorische Geschichten zu schaffen, in denen Realität und Fiktion Hand in Hand gehen. «Dummies» zeigt die Outtakes von Casting-Bändern zweier CGI-Charaktere (Computer Generated Imagery/3-D-Computergrafik), die sich um die Rollen des Künstlers und seines Bruders im Alter von sechs und vier Jahren bewerben. Die Videos sind inspiriert von Original-Casting-Bändern, wie dem von Henry Thomas, der sich für die Rolle des Elliott in E.T. – Der Außerirdische bewarb.*

**The exhibition *Dummies* is made possible through the generous support of the Abteilung Kulturförderung Kanton Baselland and the ART-EN-JEU Foundation. The artist would like to thank Shahryar Nashat, Lorenz Wernli, Adèle Anstett, and Virginie Sistik.**

**Paul Fritz** (b. 1999) lives and works in the Lausanne region. He is currently a student in the Master of Visual Arts program at ECAL. Coming from a background in animation, he maintains both an artistic and a filmmaker's practice, with a fluid boundary between the two. His work is primarily video-based, often incorporating elements of sculpture, installation, and/or performance. His work was featured in group shows at For Space in Basel in collaboration with Virginie Sistik (2024), POP GUN in New York (2024), Basecamp in Locarno (2023), and HEK in Basel (2023). His films were shown at the LUFF in Lausanne (2024) as well as UFM in Lucerne (2023 & 2024).



"Go ahead, we're listening." Is this an audition room or an interrogation room? In the end, it's all the same. The adult, awaiting the testimony, the words, the statement—feigned or sincere—starts the recording and observes the acting.

From *Home Alone* to the Kardashians, babies on screen are laid bare, crushed under the weight of a voyeuristic industry. The money-printing machine presses down on the plump young bodies.

Squeeze, squeeze the little orange.

The lustful eye of cinema, through the camera lens, captures and drains the child of emotions, of vitality. With its gears and streamlined processes, it digests the imagination of the private, the vulnerability of those meant to escape the rigid structure of the professional frame.

Then, cinema expels from its belly a product it can sell, distribute, broadcast, for others to see.

The juice is bottled.

To prevent the chain from wearing out, new Pinocchios are created—digital stand-ins sacrificed in a crash for the camera's demands. In *Dummies*, two synthetic, three-dimensional beings are inspected and perform their humanity as best they can to play the role of two brothers.

To serve the project of reconstructing an autobiographical memory of Paul Fritz, cinema's tools dismantle and exploit this fragment. Perhaps this is an experience that compels the private self into a rationalized and commercialized production process.

Or, how to put a bit of ourselves through the Hollywood machine.

Text written by Adèle Anstett, translated from French