

The Second Shift (2023)

Two-screen video, 15:47 minutes, color + sound



The Second Shift examines the centrality of women's work in our alleged age of automation. Using found footage, the two-screen video juxtaposes two phenomena not usually seen as connected—the rise of hyperreal reborn dolls, marketed mostly towards women, and the parallel rise of hyperreal sex dolls, marketed mostly towards men. Reborn dolls are hyperreal infant dolls that are mostly purchased by middle-aged women, they come with adoption papers and are cared for by these women as though they were real infants. Although not widely reported in the media, reborners (as they call themselves) are a passionate and worldwide community, with monthly magazines, conventions and an online following numbering in the millions. Reborners are women who voluntarily choose to increase their care work. Tasks include diaper changing, dressing, bathing, feeding (including midnight feedings), outings in a car seat or stroller, and more. To be a reborner requires a substantial time commitment. Many already have children. In the case of sex dolls, my emphasis is not on the (mostly male) end users of sex dolls but instead on the women producing their own replacements on assembly lines under grueling conditions and low wages – in short the workers rather than the consumers.

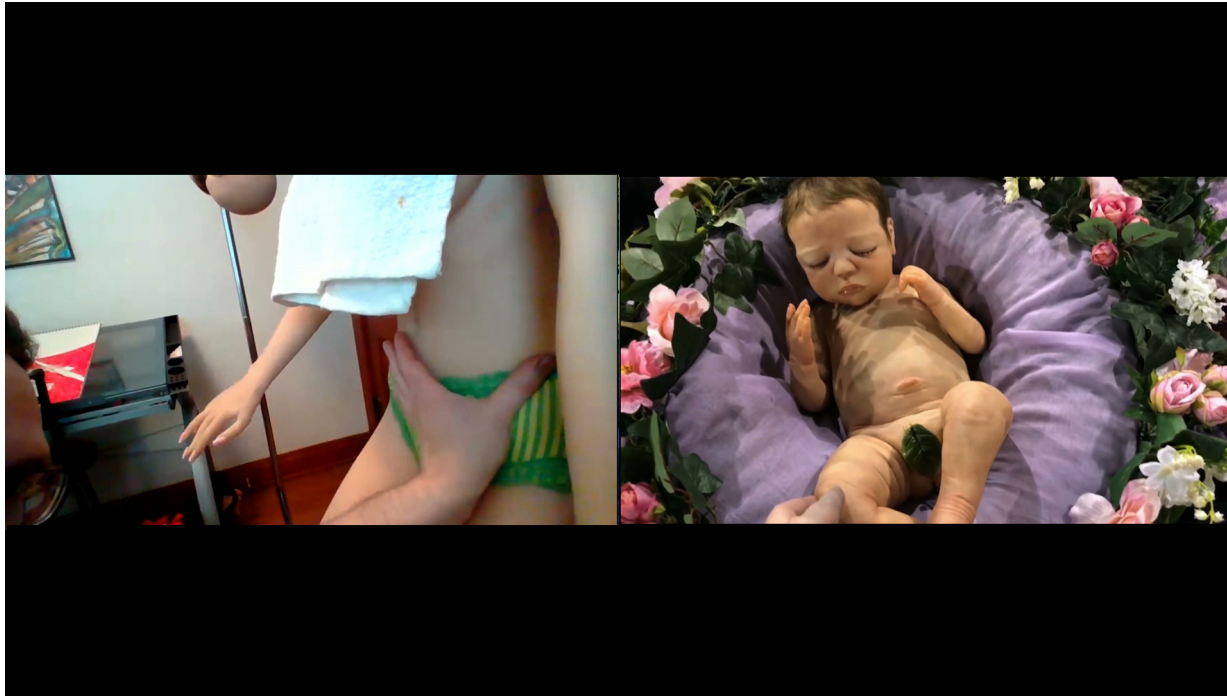
Video link (single screen preview of two-screen installation)

<https://vimeo.com/873997034?share=copy>

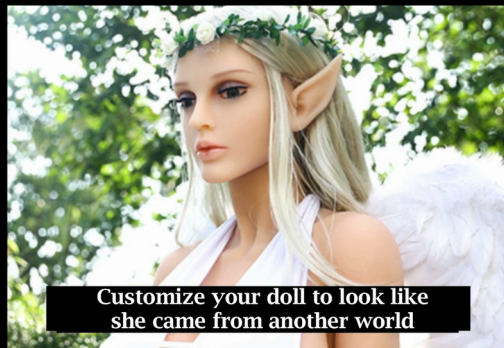
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Video stills, The Second Shift (2023)



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