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**CANDICE BREITZ**  
**TLDR**

# TLDR is a portrait of a community of sex workers who live and work in Cape Town.

The work grew out of a series of interviews (these are included in the two-room installation) and an intensive workshop with the featured participants, extending an ongoing conversation between Breitz and SWEAT (Sex Workers Education & Advocacy Taskforce), the non-profit organisation with which the sex workers are affiliated.

In the first room of the installation, a 12-year-old narrator occupies the central screen of a three-channel projection. He recounts a true story from the recent past, vividly evoking an ideological battle that pitted feminists against feminists, and human rights organisation Amnesty International against an awkward coalition of prominent Hollywood actresses and sex work abolitionists. Delivered with the disarming frankness of a child, the dramatic tale underscores the life-and-death stakes motivating the international struggle of sex workers for basic human rights.

A Greek chorus composed of eleven sex workers responds to the story as it unfolds, annotating and animating the boy's words from the screens to his left and right. The chorus offers commentary via dozens of protest posters bearing slogans drawn from the archives of sex work advocacy. Their commentary is set within a minimal choreography that features a range of props inspired by the opinion-saturated vernacular of social media. Costumed in a shade of orange that is the signature colour of SWEAT (but also of the uniforms worn by convicted offenders in South African prisons), the collective's calls for the decriminalisation and de-stigmatisation of their labour is articulated via synchronised gesture, 'white privilege masks,' over-sized emojis, hand-painted signage, a grim reaper figure and the power of protest song. The three-channel narrative is embedded in a soundtrack that bounces between improvisatory performances of a range of protest songs drawn from the portrayed community's shared repertoire (sung predominantly in Zulu and Xhosa), and bite-sized sound samples derived from popular hits that reference sex work (from Tina Turner to Rihanna, from Roy Orbison to Donna Summer). The three-channel installation has a duration of 60 minutes.

In the second room of *TLDR*, visitors are invited to spend time with a series of intimate documentary interviews, via which the first-person testimonies of the same sex workers can be heard. The interviewees offer frank comment on their labour, describe the socio-political conditions under which they found their way into sex work, and articulate their political goals as sex work activists. Collectively, these spoken testimonies add up to approximately eleven hours of viewing.

Very much a sequel to Breitz's *Love Story* (2016), *TLDR* invites reflection on the relationship between whiteness, privilege and visibility; and on the shrinkage of attention spans within an information economy that fetishizes celebrity and thrives on entertainment. Addressing the often-fraught relationship between art and activism, the work points a finger at itself to bluntly ask whether and how artists living privileged lives can succeed in amplifying calls for social justice and meaningfully representing marginalised communities.

*TLDR* features Zoe Black, Connie, Duduzile Dlamini, Emmah, Gabbi, Regina High, Jenny, Jowi, Buhle Nobuzana, Tenderlove, Nosipho 'Provocative' Vidima and is narrated by Xanny Stevens. The work was conceived and produced in dialogue with SWEAT (Sex Workers Education & Advocacy Taskforce), Cape Town, South Africa. In memory of Nokuphila Kumalo.

Commissioned by the B3 Biennial of the Moving Image, Frankfurt-am-Main.

More about SWEAT: [www.sweat.org.za](http://www.sweat.org.za)



## **TLDR, 2017**

13-Channel Installation / 13 Hard Drives

Projection Room: 3-Channel Projection, colour, sound

Duration: 60 minutes

Interview Room: 10 Suspended Monitors, colour, sound

Duration: Approximately 12 hours

Commissioned by the B3 Biennial of the Moving Image, Frankfurt

Edition of 6 + 2 AP

Featuring Zoe Black, Connie, Duduzile Dlamini, Emmah, Gabbi, Regina High, Jenny, Jowi, Buhle Nobuzana, Tenderlove, Nosipho 'Provocative' Vidima. Narrated by Xanny Stevens. Conceived and produced in dialogue with SWEAT (Sex Workers Education & Advocacy Taskforce), Cape Town, South Africa.



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KOW, Berlin 2018