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### **Napoleon Dynamite by Me** (Single Channel Film. 6")

A US soldier who claims he was bored one day, memorises and performs the dance from the cult film Napoleon Dynamite in a mess tent somewhere in Iraq during the war. 'Napoleon Dynamite by Me' is an artists intervention which explores themes of narcissism, masculinities and state controlled violence. The soldiers movements are both aggressive and playful as he parodies a caricatured effeminacy. His gestures may appear sexualised or threatening, or silly and even vulnerable within his dance sequence.

Black and white imagery of the dancing soldier is juxtaposed with broken images from a staged terrorism alert which took place in central London and was broadcast across news media in the UK. Female victims scream as they are supported by male paramedics. Terrorism it would appear is stereotypically gendered.

'Napoleon Dynamite by Me' has been exhibited in Birmingham and was reviewed as part of Digbeth First Friday:

"The dancing soldier in the tent reminded me of a peacock. He was cocky. The fact that it took place in a tent would suggest he is at war somewhere, which contrasted sharply to the frivolousness of his display. His buoyancy was in some ways hopeful, but there was something unpleasant about his control. He kept to a defined space in front of the camera, while at the same time remaining fluid. There was no room for anyone else and the 'all about me' narrative was completed with the film below of what looked like a women fellating a man. If she wasn't – she/ they looked like there was some form of sexual act being carried out for the benefit of one, rather than both. The positioning of the monitor (below) also placed female below male."

