

CELEBRITY: A WORK OF PERFORMANCE ART

SETTING: Technically anywhere, but preferably a gallery.

TIME: Technically anytime, but preferably the evening.

ACTORS: 15-30.

CHARACTERS

THE CELEBRITY. One actor. Wanders the room and tries to blend in.

THE PAPARAZZI. About 15 actors. In the exhibit's center, they stand in a frenetic circle and presumably around the celebrity. The paparazzi take photos and shout questions and for pictures. The paparazzi should leave enough room for a guest to enter their circle, but in the circle's center is nothing.

THE FANS. Several actors. Walk around the room either rehearsing dialogue between themselves or to guests.

THE ENTRY

You walk into the exhibit—along the walls: photographs of The Celebrity—who masks his or her face with a magazine or tabloid or newspaper that shows (1) his or her face or (2) another magazine, tabloid, etc. that masks his or her face, or (3) that reads “WHO IS THE REAL”—as he or she walks quickly down the street.

When you look ahead, you see a crowd of Paparazzi, encircling what appears to be the celebrity. As you walk around the room, you overhear Fans who recite any of the following dialogue:

DIALOGUE 1

1

I heard that they were picked up by a huge agent in a line for coffee.

2

Yeah.

1

And that they were, like, so nervous when the agent asked them to sing on the spot.

2

Yeah.

1

They say that the agent wanted them to sing something short but they went with the whole U2 album instead.

2
Yeah.

1
Anyway, when the agent heard them, the agent was like, “You have the voice of a generation. Let me, like, sign you right away.

2
Yeah. Hey do you want to get a sandwich or something?

1
Yeah, I guess.

DIALOGUE 2

1
I saw them drinking in a club and with my roommate once.

2
Did it seem like a thing?

1
It seemed like a thing. I mean, their hands were touching. That’s how you know it’s a thing, right?

2
Well, it could’ve been dark. Did your roommate get their number?

1
I don’t know. I don’t think so. My roommate would’ve bragged about it forever if so.

2
Maybe they’re keeping it quiet because then your roommate would be on the front of every tabloid.

1
Maybe. Maybe they wanted to shield my roommate from the crazy lifestyle of a big celebrity.

2
Yeah. I mean, you never know with these things.

1
Yeah.

DIALOGUE 3

1

I love their new stuff. I mean, I love their old stuff, too, but their new stuff seems written by a different person.

2

I mean, it probably is a different person.

1

What do you mean?

2

You can't expect them to write their own stuff. Their management probably thought it was time for a new look and hired a new person to write their stuff.

1

I think that they write their stuff.

2

Everything is focus-group tested, heard by professionals and professionals and professionals, until the industry says it's right—

1

Their name is in the credits—

2

Everything is edited until it becomes unrecognizable—

1

They said it was all them—

2

There is no 'them.' There is only image.

A Fan approaches guests, not listening to these dialogues, and says enthusiastically: "I'm your biggest fan," and then immediately approaches another guest.

When the guest reaches the paparazzi in the center of the room, the guest should feel welcome to enter the paparazzi's circle, either because of a space that invitingly trails through the paparazzi's circle, or with encouragement from one of the paparazzi. As the guest walks closer and closer to the circle's center, the shouting of questions and picture requests becomes more intense. However, when the guest reaches the circle's center, the guest finds nothing.

The guest may notice The Celebrity wandering the room. In this case, The Celebrity nods toward the guest and then walks away from the guest.