

continues as the camera lingers on his lifeless expression.

FADE TO: BLACK

INT. ART GALLERY - DAY

An enormous, hangar-like white space, very brightly but evenly lit. In the center of the gallery a small FILM CREW is shooting an interview already underway between a middle-aged male ARTIST and a stylishly dressed JOURNALIST, who are both seated in leather and chrome chairs. Around them are several STUDIO LIGHTS. On the walls and floor of the gallery behind them are sparse arrangements of what appear to be ordinary objects.

JOURNALIST

...so your comment just now about narrative is maybe a good lead-in to this most recent project, which I understand has an unusual story behind it. Can you talk a little bit about how it came together?

The Artist smiles disarmingly at the Journalist, but there is something slightly rote and artificial about his response.

ARTIST

Well, back in late 2015, I think, I was approached by a production designer working on a movie that had several main characters who were artists. The film was called [REDACTED] and while I never read the script--I'm not entirely sure one existed--the impression I got was that it was going to be a slick psychological/paranormal thriller, with a lot of pointed artworld/one-percenter satire mixed in--think *American Psycho* meets Art Basel, with maybe a bit of *The Hunger* added for good measure--sort of trashy but high-concept, you know? There were a couple of key scenes that were supposed to be set in "edgy" contemporary galleries, and so the production team had the idea of getting some real artists to stage the exhibitions that would be on display. This practice is actually not uncommon--there have been a lot of film productions in which a real artist was hired to produce the work of a fictional one--but it's always struck me as sort of funny.

Anyway, the designer had seen some of my recent work somewhere and thought I might be a good candidate for the project. I was told that they wanted a chilly, contemporary look, with an emphasis on found or

appropriated objects—the director had apparently been looking at the work of artists like [REDACTED], [REDACTED], etc—sort of spare and inscrutable, bland but at the same time a little ominous. The idea intrigued me; I've always been interested in the ways that art gets portrayed in film, and there was a little money involved, so I agreed to put together a proposal for a collection of "works" that would appear in one of the gallery scenes.

The Artist takes a sip from a BOTTLE OF WATER; we see he is wearing a BANDAGE on his left hand.

ARTIST (CONT.)

...Since the work was supposed to be appropriation-based, I had thought it might be interesting to create an "exhibition" out of actual movie props—objects that had been used in existing films, but that would also give the appearance of a certain type of readymade. I was trying to find a way to fold the process back into itself, I suppose. . .of course, the proposal was turned down; the designer told me they appreciated my approach, but felt that it was maybe a little too conceptual...their concern, ironically, was that none of it would look enough like art onscreen—that it wouldn't really register visually. The director decided they needed things that were bigger, slicker—basically, more expensive looking. I think they eventually decided to use some big creepy sculptures by an artist in LA, possibly [REDACTED] or someone like that. Of course, in the end the whole project slid off into one of those weird limbos that seem reserved for film productions, and I never heard anything about it again (LAUGHS). But the idea stayed with me; I kept thinking about how maybe all artworks are really just props in a certain way--

CUT TO: CAMERA OPERATOR. The CAMERA is framed in the exact center of the shot and we see the red, unblinking light of the recording indicator. We slowly ZOOM IN until the red light fills the entire screen. Initially the shot is totally SILENT, but as we zoom in a LOW, BUZZING WHINE begins that steadily grows in intensity.

CUT TO: BLACK

The whine continues, reaching a sustained pitch that continues for several beats. Very gradually, an image begins to FADE IN: we see