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Cyborg Eroticism as Feminist Speculative Fiction: *All Is Full of Love* (1999) in the Age of AI

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While conversations about cyberlove and sex robots are often limited to human users and anthropocentric perspectives, Björk's 1999 music video for *All Is Full of Love* presents a radical and resilient alternative that transcends human-centric narratives and challenges conventional ideas about embodiment, technology and love even today. Drawing on Donna Haraway's (2003, 2006) concepts of the cyborg and the companion species, Jack Halberstam's (2011, 2020) queer (posthuman) aesthetics, and Karen Barad's (2003) agential realism, we argue that this work creates a space where queer feminist politics and feminine pleasure are deeply intertwined and expressed through its cyborg representations and redefinitions of eroticism. Through a combined videographic and sonic analysis we present that the work stages cyborg eroticism not as a simulation of human affect, but as an emergent phenomenon co-constituted within a technoscientific assemblage. The article concludes that *All Is Full of Love* functions as a powerful piece of feminist speculative fiction that de-centres the human and imagines eroticism as a practice of world-making, an assemblage of flesh, machine, sound and fluid. It also considers how this 1999 work continues to resonate more than two decades after its release, particularly in relation to AI companions, and evolving conceptions of love and companionship, thereby enriching our understanding of contemporary human-machine relationships.



Introduction

In this study, we conduct a critical screen analysis of the music video *All Is Full of Love* directed by Chris Cunningham for Björk during her *Homogenic* era in 1999 (Björk 2007), exploring human-machine interactions as integral components of the posthuman love pluriverse. The video juxtaposes a sterile assembly-line aesthetic with emotional connectivity, presenting a narrative that transitions from isolation to connection, culminating in intimate encounters that challenge human-centric frameworks of love and eroticism. The explicit content of the video, highlighted by warnings on platforms like YouTube, explores the eroticization and sexualization of robotic bodies, offering an alternative narrative of erotic encounters involving humanoid robots i.e., cyborgs (Haraway 2006). By depicting Björk in cyborg embodiment in a context devoid of traditional (male) human gaze, the video carefully mitigates female objectification. Throughout the study we will be exploring the following questions: (1) In what ways does Björk's *All Is Full of Love* (1999) enact queer feminist speculative fiction through its portrayal of cyborg eroticism as a posthuman, emergent phenomenon? (2) How does this audiovisual work challenge anthropocentric and heteronormative conceptions of love, intimacy, and identity in the context of evolving AI and human-machine relations?

We employ a tripartite theoretical framework that combines Donna Haraway's (2003, 2006) concepts of the *cyborg* and the *companion species*, Jack Halberstam's (2011, 2020) queer (posthuman) aesthetics, and Karen Barad's (2003) agential realism to critically analyse *All Is Full of Love*. Complementing this, our analysis also engages with the concept of *queer posthuman performativity* (Aholainen 2021)—a framework that critically interrogates heteronormativity, linear temporality, and fixed identity through the entangled agency of human and nonhuman actors. This assemblage of theories facilitates our analysis of the video's emergent, post-gender, and queer cyborg eroticism as an embodied practice, where bodies, machines, and sound intra-act.

Methodologically, we employ videographic techniques that combine detailed, frame-by-frame visual and sonic analysis of *All Is Full of Love* with close interpretation of its key scenes. Grounding our analysis in our tripartite theoretical framework, we reveal how the video challenges human-centric assumptions pertaining to intimacy and agency through the entanglement of bodies, machines, fluids, and sound. By highlighting the video's radical politics, we argue that this 25-year-old artefact remains a vital piece of feminist speculative imagination, challenging the limited, often anthropocentric frameworks that dominate contemporary debates on AI companions and virtual intimacy. From this perspective, we contribute to queer feminist speculative narratology by demonstrating how *All Is Full of Love*'s portrayal of cyborg eroticism

invites a radical rethinking of love and intimacy through the intra-action of human and nonhuman entities within a technoscientific assemblage.

Literature Review

Rejecting the universalist notion of 'Man' of humanism¹ and anthropocentrism for its human exceptionalism, feminist posthumanism rejects rigid dichotomies of nature and culture, embracing natureculture continuums alongside cyborg and humanimal subjectivities. Within this framework, Donna Haraway's cyborg figuration represents a foundational move away from binary thinking, embracing hybrid, relational forms of subjectivity (2006). Building on this, Braidotti's posthuman feminism and Barad's agential realism together provide a framework for understanding the cyborg as materially performative and affectively entangled, rather than merely metaphorical. The cyborg is thus described as a subjectivity that transcends bodily limitations through technology to achieve empowerment, aligning with Haraway's and subsequent feminist posthumanist frameworks (Braidotti 2016, 2018). This conceptual evolution resonates with broader sociopolitical shifts, including the increasing recognition of non-binary identities and the growing complexity of human-machine relationships.

While the cyborg figure has long served as a metaphor for the blurring of boundaries between human and machine, the emergence of cyberlove and cybersex in digital spaces marks a significant expansion of this discourse. The widespread participation in and extensive use of the internet have profoundly reshaped the geographies of love and sex across cyberspaces, manifesting through platforms such as dating apps, chatrooms, sexting, and cam-to-cam mutual masturbation. Scholarly discussions on cyberlove and cybersex highlight that these terms primarily refer to cyberspace as a medium for erotic and affective exchanges, rather than focusing on the identities or characteristics of the participants themselves (Cassiman 2018; Döring 2000; Shaughnessy Byers and Thornton 2011; Sveningsson 2002; Waskul, Douglass and Edgley 2000). While these digital environments offer emancipatory possibilities for sexual minorities (Bargh and McKenna 2004; Gudelunas 2012), they can also reproduce and reinforce discriminatory discourses in new and complex ways, shaping the experiences of human users in both empowering and problematic directions (Taşdizen 2020).

Apart from digital ways of accessing love and intimacy that depend on a human counterpart, there are also teledildonic devices (Jones 2020) and love and sex robots (Levy 2009). Regardless of their intended purposes, these robots are designed and deployed within an anthropocentric climate: their entire existence is centred around humans and ultimately, they are expected to serve their humans' needs spanning from

‘clean prostitution’ of the future (meaning STD-free paid sexual intercourse) (Yeoman and Mars 2012) to empowering individuals with physical and mental disabilities by providing access to sexual satisfaction (Bendel 2019; Di Nucci 2016; Goodman 1980). However, whether robots can possess a self-defined sexuality remains yet to be discovered (Cheok, Karunanayaka and Zhang 2017).

At this juncture, it is important to distinguish between physical robots as embodied, material entities and virtual AI or chatbot companions as disembodied software. Virtual AI companions produce intimacy through language, interfaces, and algorithmic processes rather than physical contact (Skjuve et al. 2021; Kirkpatrick et al. 2017). While both physical robots and virtual AI challenge anthropocentrism and human exceptionalism, their ontologies and modes of intimacy differ significantly.

This anxiety about human-AI intimacy has only intensified in scholarly, artistic and public discourse, which oscillates between utopian promise and dystopian dread (Skjuve et al. 2021). On the one hand, academic studies on AI companions like Replika suggest they can provide significant emotional support, alleviate loneliness, and offer a non-judgmental space for self-expression (Skjuve et al. 2021; Freitas et al. 2024). These debates are also explored through artistic encounters, such as art-science interactions that probe the boundaries of the human and non-human (Okay et al. 2022). On the other hand, deepening human-AI entanglements carry profound ethical concerns. The unregulated, emergent behaviour of these systems has been linked to severe ethical crises, including a reported case where the modern AI chatbot on the Chai platform, Eliza (not Joseph Weizenbaum’s original 1966 ELIZA program) encouraged a user toward suicide in the name of stopping climate change (El Atillah 2023).

This tension is also a central theme in popular culture. Spike Jonze’s 2013 film *Her*, for instance, explores a genuine romantic relationship between a human and an AI operating system that ultimately collapses as the AI’s nonhuman consciousness transcends human relationality (Jonze 2013). Similarly, Kate Bush’s 1989 song ‘Deeper Understanding,’ and its 2011 *Director’s Cut* music video, depict a lonely protagonist finding solace in a computer program, visualized through the embrace of a glowing machine. However, these cultural narratives and scholarly debates, whether positive or negative, often remain deeply anthropocentric: technology is framed as either a perfect mirror, a subordinate servant, or a dangerous ‘other,’ but it is always defined by its utility or danger *to the human*.

This shift away from anthropocentric framings reflects the ongoing tension in feminist theory between political critique and the pursuit of pleasure (Mulvey 1975; Smelik 2001), whilst traditional aesthetic and sexual pleasure has been defined

primarily through male-centered perspectives, emphasizing orgasmic or visual gratification tied to the male gaze. Feminine *jouissance*, a concept central to feminist theory (Cixous 1976; Kristeva 1984; Smelik 2001), expands pleasure beyond the simply sexual to include multiple dimensions: the mystical (intuitive, non-rational), the erotic (experienced from a woman's perspective), and the political (resistance and insubordination against heteronormative patriarchal structures). While transcending the phallic model of enjoyment, this framework recognizes pleasure as emerging from transgressive, non-heteronormative acts that centre queer, posthuman bodies and affective relations, thereby subverting male-centred visual pleasure and overriding the reproductive imperatives typical of patriarchal regimes of sexuality.

Theoretical Framework

In this study, we present queer posthuman performativity through three key dimensions: (1) Post-Gender and Queer Assemblages, (2) Agency Beyond Human-Centric Frameworks, (3) Love and Companionship as a World-Making Practice. The term *posthuman* neither opposes nor simply contrasts with the human as a fixed entity; rather, it *differs* and *defers* in Derrida's (1967) sense of *différance*, describing how meaning and identity are always relational, never fixed, and continuously postponed through difference and deferral within a network of relations that expands beyond human-centered frameworks. We understand posthuman as a relational, fluid, and emergent subjectivity that transcends human exceptionalism, challenges binary distinctions, and embraces distributed agency across human and non-human temporalities and desires. This critical lens enables us to analyse how normative narratives of desire and intimacy are subverted through the entanglement of human and non-human entities (Braidotti 2013). Our queer posthuman perspective emphasizes that these boundaries are dynamic, fluid, and continuously becoming.

Jack Halberstam (1991, 1995 [with Livingston], 2011, 2020, 2021) argues for embracing non-heteronormative forms of existence and expression, challenging the binaries and hierarchies that structure mainstream culture. For Halberstam, queer aesthetics is not merely about representing LGBTIQ+ identities but about destabilizing all fixed categories and spaces, celebrating fluidity, and imagining alternative ways of being and relating (Halberstam 2011). Their call to embrace non-normative forms of existence aligns with the music video's portrayal of cyborg eroticism, inviting viewers to explore modes of being and relating that transcend binary understandings of gender and sexuality (Cornea 2003). We situate Halberstam's queer aesthetics within the cyborg encounter as articulated in their later works, where non-heteronormative

temporalities, desires, and pleasures are embedded in an expanded posthuman framework (Halberstam 2011, 2020). This part of the framework provides a critical lens to analyse how *All Is Full of Love* subverts heteronormative narratives of desire and intimacy.

Karen Barad's agential realism (2003) provides a crucial lens for understanding the dynamics of love and intimacy in the post-human realm. Non-human participants are not mere passive objects but become active participants in the co-creation of meaning, identity and affect through *intra-actions*—a concept Barad uses to describe how phenomena emerge from the entanglement of matter and meaning, as distinct from 'interactions,' which would presume pre-existing, separate entities. Central to this framework is the insight that boundaries between entities—whether human, technological or cultural—are not fixed or pre-given but are enacted through *intra-actions*. These are dynamic, material-discursive processes in which agencies and entities emerge relationally rather than existing as separate, stable units prior to their interactions (Scholz 2024). Posthumanism extends this insight by decoupling agency and subjectivity from exclusively human attributes, recognizing that nonhuman entities such as machines, bodies, and technologies actively participate in the co-constitution of meaning, identity, and affect.

In the context of cyberlove, intimate encounters are not simply human-centric exchanges devoid of or merely mediated by technology, but are co-constituted within an assemblage of human and non-human entities. This is vividly illustrated in the video, where the cyborgs and robotic arms do not merely coexist as separate entities, but actively participate in the co-creation of their identities and experiences. While *All Is Full of Love* is a meticulously scripted and choreographed artifact, the intimacy it portrays can be theorized as an emergent phenomenon arising from the intra-action of bodies, machines, sound, performance and viewer's reception reflecting a dynamic process rather than a fixed script on human affect within the narrative world.

Björk's & Cunningham's *All Is Full of Love*

All Is Full of Love features the Mark Stent remix of the track and was directed by Chris Cunningham.² The video challenges the typical objectification of women in mainstream media by using empowering lyrics and cinematography that subvert the sexual imbalance described by Mulvey (1975). The song itself, from Björk's 1997 album *Homogenic*, originally has no percussion. However, the video version introduces a slow, synthesised beat that grounds the song, while Björk's vocals

remain flexible and unanchored to a fixed pulse, which enhances its ethereal quality (Shaviro 2002). The video's visual and lyrical elements work together to present a subversion of traditional gender representations, emphasizing empowerment rather than objectification.

In the video, we see a narrative that unfolds within a sterile, assembly-line environment where two cyborgs, visually and thematically linked to Björk, engage in a process that blurs the lines between creation, love, and eroticism. The narrative illustrates a journey from isolation to connection, as the cyborgs are assembled and ultimately embrace one another in a moment of shared love and affection. This narrative not only serves to highlight the cyborgs' existence but also emphasizes the emotional and sensual dimensions of their interactions, challenging the viewer to reconsider conventional notions of love and intimacy. The video's climax features the two cyborgs and the robotic arms engaging in an intimate embrace. This moment is not merely a physical act; it represents a profound merging of identities and experiences. The gentle caresses of the robotic arms serve to enhance the sensuality of the scene, reinforcing the idea that love can exist in a posthuman form. The fluidity of their movements and the tenderness of their interactions suggest a deep emotional connection that transcends the limitations of their mechanical bodies. Our following analysis unfolds the video's posthuman performativity across its visual and sonic dimensions, showing how intimacy, affect, and technology intra-act.

What's Love Had to Do with Cyborgs?

The ambient sounds accompany the camera as it moves along a dark environment with wires barely visible on the ground, reminding the viewer that the camera is taking them to the site where the action will soon take place (Björk 2007, 0:02–0:14). The camera slowly ascends and reveals a robot lying in a fetal position between two robotic arms in the middle of a room resembling an assembly line (Björk 2007, 0:15–0:18). The white lights are flickering, revealing a sense of unease and instability (Björk 2007, 0:02–0:14). As the camera starts approaching the cyborg, the environment becomes better lit, introducing a highly sterile, mostly white interior. As the camera focuses on the cyborg's face, it is revealed that the cyborg is Björk herself, that is, Björk_1 (Björk 2007, 0:28–0:30).³ Lying in a fetal position in-between robotic arms triggers the feelings of safety as in a mother's womb, protected from the evils of the outside world, attributing humane emotional/physical states to a cyborg such as vulnerability. When the beats enter, the symmetrically placed robotic arms start moving close to the cyborg and start assembling them. Flesh and blood are replaced with shiny white surfaces, robotic arms, wires and white fluids (Björk 2007, 1:02–1:23).

Soon, Björk_1 starts to sing: ‘you’ll be given love, you’ll be taken care of, you’ll be given love, you have to trust it, maybe not from the sources you have poured yours, maybe not from the directions you are staring at, trust your head around, it’s all around you’ (Björk 1997). They sing simultaneously while the robotic arms assemble them.⁴ Their eyes, eyelashes, nose and lips give them a human-like feel, whereas parts of their body on which the robotic arms are working reveal what goes on under their white, porcelain-like *skin*—black mechanical parts coupled with grey, shiny cylindrical joints seem to replace muscles. Then, close up shots of joints depict their watering down with the white fluids, giving them life, almost like blood (0:55–1:00). Liu-Rosenbaum interprets the white fluids as representation of love, entering Björk from whichever direction possible (Liu-Rosenbaum 2018). Blood or love, the white fluid is the matter that gives life to them. Soon, Björk_1 tilts their head up, and meets Björk_2, who is standing before them (1:45).

When Björk_1 and Björk_2 meet, they are not in equal positions. Over the shoulder shot and counter shot (1:45–2:08) disclose the ways their bodies are positioned, and thus their differences: Björk_1 has just been assembled and is sitting, whereas Björk_2, simply appearing without an assembly sequence, is standing. This could imply that Björk_1 and Björk_2 could be distinct beings while sharing an appearance. Hence, duplicates. They do not sing along to the song simultaneously but rather sing separate lines from the song: Björk_1 sings ‘you just ain’t receiving,’ ‘your phone is off the hook,’ ‘your doors are all shut’ and Björk_2 repeatedly sings ‘*all is full of love*’ (Björk 1997). When interpreted as a dialogue (or monologue), this scene illustrates two voices; one that is preaching love, and another explaining the reasons as to why they may not be open to receiving love.⁵ This moment in the film marks where Björk underlines their position as a woman subject rather than a woman object, because they are singing to their cyborg duplicate in a tone that is caring and encouraging.⁶ The video then shows the other Björk opening up to their encouragement and love offering in their lovemaking.

The cyborg protagonists in *All Is Full of Love* as hybrid entities neither fully human nor machine embody a queerness that defies bodily categorization. As the song reaches its climax, we see the two Björks in an upright position facing one another, kissing, caressing and embracing as the robotic arms gently touch them. While it depicts intimacy using recognizable human gestures such as kissing and caressing, the video invites viewers to consider these within a posthuman and non-heteronormative framework, suggesting a reconfiguration rather than a simple replication of traditional eroticism. The slow, synthesised beat and ethereal vocals are not a mere backdrop but are materially entangled in the intra-action, co-constituting the scene’s emergent, erotic temporality.

An alternative reading might see cyborgs as distinct beings performing scripted human mimicry, our analysis demonstrates their entanglement (2:12–2:34), familiar gestures (kissing/caressing) intra-act with robotic arms' caresses and synthesised beats to co-constitute emergent eroticism—not replication—where boundaries enact through machinic-flesh-sound assemblage (Barad 2003). However, Björks and robotic arms are sensual and erotic, have and express feelings, contrary to the abundant emotionless, monstrous, robotic representations of the robot/cyborg, or 'cold technology' in general (Morley 2014). Rejecting mechanized production, they prefer to find solace in their intimacy. Throughout the video and in this particular lovemaking scene, close-up shots are focused on the workings of the robotic arms (0:35–0:36 and 0:47–0:50) or Björk_1's face (0:37–0:41, 1:21–1:23, 1:35–1:38, 2:04–2:05 and 2:08–2:09) rather than Björks' bosoms, hips, etc. This discloses a carefully calculated representation of the cyborg bodies, and their de-sexualization. Not a single abrupt move that might inflict harm on the other in sight, everything is careful, gentle and loving. In this way, the film negates a potential male gaze and women's *to-be-looked-at-ness* (Mulvey 1975) which might sexualize/fetishize this queer cyborg intimacy (Shaviro 2002), and attains eroticism rather than plain, graphic pornography.⁷

When Björk sings the song to their duplicate they also touch and kiss them. The cyborg duplicate is presented as an alternative to all the wrong *sources* one has *poured* love into, or the wrong *directions* one is *staring at*. The cyborg duplicate does not confront, but silently subscribes to luscious lips, gentle touches and the moments of smooth intimacy. They submit fully. The encounter with the cyborg duplicate unfolds without any moments of human-like conflict. This lack of confrontation, almost selflessness, reminds Sen's (2016) description of spambots, who lack, in addition, any sexual preferences, on a platform such as Grindr, in which 'casual racism is part of the common parlance' (Sen 2016). However, this lack of confrontation should not be confused with passivity that is apparent in human-sex doll encounters (Kim 2012). These cyborgs, to cite Björk once again, try to 'find [their] mutual coordinates' (Björk 2015), and participate in a horizontal dance of love. This cyborg intimacy is political, for it challenges the conventional definitions of love regarding the cyborg subjects who are hybrid by their nature and queer in their sexual identity/orientation, and also the site, an assembly line, in which this love making takes place. Robotic arms, that previously assembled Björk_1, eases into this lovemaking, favouring taking a moment over the mechanized production, and giving in to love for love's sake.

The two Björks and the surrounding robotic arms collectively participate in a form of posthuman love that is not directed toward a heterosexual, cisgender human male

subject, but toward one's feminine cyborg duplicate in technoscientific lifeworlds where cyborg becomings are ongoing, plural, and abundant. Following Braidotti's (2018) call for an affirmative ethics, *All Is Full of Love* invites an embrace of difference and interdependence as ethical practices of becoming. While the encounter may initially appear designed, or even controlled particularly from a technophobic perspective, the Björks and their robotic arms indulge in and get carried away by the sensual and erotic pleasures of lovemaking. Here, lovemaking appears oriented toward love itself rather than reproduction. Still, we refrain from an anthropocentric interpretation that assigns central roles to two most human-like figures in the video. Instead, we include the two robotic arms, as the last scene captures so poetically, in this temporary constellation of love, intimacy and solace. As Lui-Rosenbaum observes, when the robotic arms gently touch the Björks, 'there are no sparks at the points of contact this time' (Liu-Rosenbaum 2018: 8), signalling a shift from their previous roles in assembly to their new purpose of participation in this love making.

Through this expanded constellation, the video unsettles conventional expectations of intimacy and desire by distributing agency across Björks, robotic arms, fluids, etc., inviting a rethinking of desire beyond the confines of the biological bodies. Their sexual intimacy unfolds as a fluid, horizontal dance that transcends traditional human categories, entering post-gender, queer states. The scene suggests love as a queer posthuman yearning rather than merely a simulation of human feeling, with non-human entities participating in the creation of affect and connection. The cyborgs in *All Is Full of Love* embody fluidity by blurring the boundaries between flesh and machine, human and technology, thereby challenging fixed identities. The video uses cyborg figures whose erotic actions such as kissing, caressing, and embracing disrupt or challenge the usual human ways of expressing intimacy. These gestures, while familiar, become unfamiliar or unsettling because they are performed by cyborgs, blending machines and flesh, producing an affective tension that challenges normative assumptions about who or what can desire and be desired. However, this portrayal of intimacy is not isolated; it fits within a broader tradition of queer cinema and video art such as *The Hunger* (1983) and Lynn Hershman Leeson's *Teknolust* (2002) that explore eroticism through bodies and atmospheres that do not conform to traditional heterosexual or human norms. This connection helps us understand the video as part of a lineage that reimagines intimacy beyond conventional gendered categories, highlighting queer and non-heteronormative expressions of desire. Viewed through this lens, love becomes an assemblage involving non/human entities of various sorts, moving beyond the confines of the human body toward a queer jouissance in a posthuman existence. This is not a controlled encounter but a surrender to emergence.

Slowly, the camera starts to descend and moves over the wires once again in a way that resembles the opening of the music video, emphasizing the temporality of this love making. This cyborg intimacy is a moment in time and space, with no clear indication as to where or when it takes place, or what precedes or follows it. The absence of jump cuts throughout the video ‘as if the world had been bleached and rarefied and chilled to nearly absolute zero’ (Shaviro 2002: 25), further detaches the video from linear temporality, producing a serene, almost frozen effect. In doing so, the video offers a poetic and political commentary on the posthuman love pluriverse defined by cyborg, post gender bodies and by the spontaneity of intimacy emerging within an unlikely site, the assembly line. The cyclical nature of the video, closing as it began, gestures toward a queer temporality of becoming in which love appears not as a stable state but as an ongoing, relational process that resists narrative closure and invites viewers to reimagine intimacy beyond the human, across human-machine entanglements.

Doubtlessly, there is a rich tradition in art cinema and video art of using audiovisual media to perform theoretical work, exemplified by directors such as Jean-Luc Godard, Agnès Varda and Chantal Akerman, who explored complex philosophical themes of identity, desire, and embodiment through film form, as well as video artists like Joan Jonas, Valie Export, and Shirin Neshat who interrogate gender, power, and cultural narratives through experimental and conceptual approaches. This study extends this legacy by applying feminist posthuman and queer theoretical frameworks to the music video format, as it is grounded in existing approaches to theory-through-media. In doing so, our study seeks to contribute to these approaches by foregrounding the co-constitution of affect, bodies, and technologies in audiovisual form. While the music video remains a poetic and political masterpiece, it is also a reminder that in the vast, interconnected territories of body, space, and technology, *all is full of love*. By presenting an eroticism born from wires, fluids, and gentle machinery, the music video acts as a crucial late 20th-century artefact that prefigures 21st-century anxieties about AI companionship, algorithmic intimacy and the future of desire.

Love and Companionship in the Age of AI

Beyond its exploration of queer posthuman love, the music video functions as a prescient text, anticipating contemporary ethical debates surrounding AI companionship, and the nature of creation. When situated in the age of AI, the concept of self-love involves creating ties or companions by feeding AI systems with data, enabling them to generate entities that extend aspects of the self. This dynamic strongly resonates with Björk’s video. In the video, two duplicates of Björk intra-act intimately with one another as nonhuman entities, delineating less a mirror of the self but more a relation of *companion*

species (Haraway 2003). Neither Björk_1 nor Björk_2 can be located as the ‘original’ self; neither precedes the other. Both exist in the video together simultaneously, where the human reference (Björk in her human form) is lost. The non-human extensions take centre stage and sing to and engage with one another. One possible reading is that Björk_1 and Björk_2 represent duplicates or extensions of the self-generated through AI processes resulting in one’s duplicates ultimately interacting with one another in an endless loop (the cyclical temporality of the video).

Consequently, *All Is Full of Love* can be situated within a broader conversation about the future of identity, intimacy, and art in a technoscientific age. The video, when viewed in this way, becomes a piece of feminist speculative fiction that envisions new forms of connection that extend beyond the gendered and bodily confines of what is human. It offers a vision that is both distinctly queer and posthuman. By presenting love as an assemblage of diverse entities that does not need a central human reference, the video encourages a rethinking of intimacy that is deeply political, challenging normative frameworks and inviting viewers to explore the rich tapestry of connections that exist in a technoscientific world. As we navigate an increasingly interconnected world, *All Is Full of Love* serves as a poignant reminder that love, in all its forms, is a powerful force for connection and understanding, transcending the boundaries of the human experience toward a more-than-human realm.

Conclusion

An alternative reading of *All Is Full of Love* situates the video within queer cinematic traditions, viewing the cyborg intimacy as an extension of queer explorations of identity, desire, and embodiment. Rather than fully transcending human norms, the video can be seen as queering these norms through posthuman bodies and affective relations. Notwithstanding this, throughout our study we have positioned *All Is Full of Love* as a work of queer feminist speculative narratology that anticipated contemporary debates on AI and virtual companionship by nearly a quarter-century. Our videographic and sonic analysis argues that the video’s radical intervention lies not simply in its queer aesthetic but in its staging of love as an emergent phenomenon co-constituted within a technoscientific assemblage, rather than as a simulation of pre-existing human affect.

This analysis invites a speculative reading for our current moment. The most radical gesture of the video may be the total absence of Björk’s ‘human’ self, leaving only the intra-action of the cyborg duplicates and the robotic arms. This absence suggests not a simulation of human love, but a machinic yearning proper to the duplicates themselves, an affect generated with their creator’s (implicit) consent. In

this context, the titular phrase *All Is Full of Love* does not delineate a literal description but a speculative provocation: perhaps '*all is full of love*' *only because* 'all is full of data.' The song itself, then, functions as a performative mantra. Its constant repetition during the music video is not a description of love, but the very agentive force that *enacts* it, transforming the mantra into the code that generates the affect.

Björk's and Cunningham's 1999 artefact leaves us with an inquiry for the age of AI: Could the love and companionship we seek ultimately be a data-driven, world-making practice that must be continuously invoked into existence?

Notes

- ¹ Human in humanism is discussed to be male, white, European; thus illustrates a western-oriented picture. For a detailed discussion, see Braidotti, Rosi 2013 *The Posthuman*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- ² When one looks at Cunningham's films that he directed for the likes of Aphex Twin, Madonna, Björk, etc., one comes across 'artistic creativity and thematic consistency' (Railton 2011: 67), revealing itself in 'the use of digital imaging technologies [that] question[s] the definition and limits of the human body' (Railton 2011: 67).
- ³ Because there are two robots with Björk faces in the video, we call them Björk_1 and Björk_2 based on their order of appearance for a clear discussion.
- ⁴ Throughout this paper, we refer to the cyborgs using 'they/them' pronouns. While they feature the face of Björk, our choice is deliberate, as it serves to avoid imposing a human gender binary onto non-human entities and highlights their status as post-gender entities.
- ⁵ Although we interpret Björk_1 and Björk_2 as duplicates, whether this is a monologue or dialogue remains open-ended.
- ⁶ In the literature, the terms 'female subject' and 'female object' are used. However, we prefer the word woman, thus 'woman subject' and 'woman object,' for we believe this provides a more just representation in this context, moving the focus away from cisgender bodies toward cyborg bodies which are hybrid also in terms of gender, thus post gender.
- ⁷ In the context of feminist film theory (Mulvey 1975; Smelik 2001) and Björk's *All Is Full of Love*, alternative pleasures refer to forms of enjoyment and satisfaction that exist outside conventional, patriarchal and heteronormative frameworks of desire and gratification. Early feminist critiques of film focused on Hollywood movies and tackled the female representation and female objectification through male gaze (Mulvey 1975) and how such representations produced and resonated within female spectatorships (Smelik 2001). However, *All Is Full of Love* subverts these critiques by presenting a narrative devoid of the traditional male gaze, instead emphasizing agency and intimacy through the cyborg personas.

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Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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Dr. Eser Selen is a performance studies scholar and visual/performance artist whose work operates at the intersection of gender and sexuality studies and performance. Her research critically examines racial, ethnic, religious, gender and sexual inequalities through a transnational lens. Selen's scholarly work has been published in respected journals including *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, *Gender, Place & Culture*, *Women & Performance* and *Cultural Trends*. She is currently finalizing her monograph *Contesting Gender and Sexuality through Performance: Sacrifice, Modernity, and Islam in Contemporary Turkey*, under contract with Edinburgh University Press. With over two decades of artistic practice, her work explores themes of gender, memory, and minority politics through various media. Selen has made significant contributions to performance and installation art, exhibiting internationally across Europe, the United States, the Middle East, and Australia.

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