

THE GREEN GRASS AND I

Next to Regent's Canal, a few steps from Central Saint Martins in King's Cross, there is a terraced staircase covered in fake grass that looks a little too bright to be trusted. It glows with an almost deliberate cheerfulness, like it knows you don't believe it.

Most people there are on a break. They lie down, scroll endlessly, eat something beige, and look quietly pleased about being outdoors but not too outdoors.

The turf itself feels like a parody of leisure. It has that same kind of unconvincing optimism you find in the viral Jet2 Holidays commercial (Nothing beats a Jet2 holiday, 2024). Everyone looks happy in a way that seems rehearsed, the plastic grass can't be that good.

That artificial joy stuck with me, looping in my head with the Jet2 jingle. That is how **Snack Time** began, my parody ad film, as a way to make sense of something that looked staged but was completely real.

I started by watching the place as a whole: how the green turf met the still water of the canal, how people occupied each tier like pieces in a grid, and how shadows stretched across the plastic surface. Then I watched the people themselves: their gestures, postures, small habits, almost like quiet choreography. Finally, I started to see patterns. Friends and families looked like duplicates of each other. They wore similar clothes, leaned at the same angles, and even matched footsteps. Coffee emerged as the ultimate snack monarch, passed around like a ritual object that commanded attention. Sneakers dominated the landscape. Ugly comfort had become compulsory, replacing individuality with necessity.

My process and focus on repetition reminded me of Georges Perec's method of observation in *Species of Spaces* (1997). Perec speaks about detecting a rhythm, until the invisible structure becomes visible. His work gave me a framework: to look, then look again, until ordinary gestures start forming patterns. Perec treats repetition as revelation. My camera tried to do the same, tracing the unnoticed choreography of human movement, turning what seemed mundane into almost musical sequences of daily life.



Detect a rhythm:

Observe the street, from time to time, with some concern for system perhaps.
Apply yourself. Take your time.

The form of *Snack Time* borrowed from Agnès Varda's *The Gleaners and I* (2000). Varda's camera collects life in its rawest form. She lets real moments unfold and trusts their honesty. I could not interview anyone, but the footage carried truth on its own. People were their truest selves when no one asked them to perform. Their distracted, sleepy, coffee-sipping, sun-soaked selves became the narrative. There was no script, only small acts of being. Together they built a portrait of modern leisure that is slightly absurd, patterned, and utterly real.

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