



February 2020

Former Cult Member Hears Music For the First Time

William L. Blizek

University of Nebraska at Omaha, wblizek@unomaha.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf>



Part of the [Film and Media Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Blizek, William L. (2020) "Former Cult Member Hears Music For the First Time," *Journal of Religion & Film*: Vol. 24 : Iss. 1 , Article 40.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol24/iss1/40>

This Sundance Film Festival Review is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Religion & Film by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.

Former Cult Member Hears Music For the First Time

Abstract

This is a film review of *Former Cult Member Hears Music For the First Time* (2019), directed by Kristoffer Borgli.

Author Notes

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is also the editor of the Continuum Companion to Religion and Film (2009).



Former Cult Member Hears Music For the First Time (2019), dir. Kristoffer Borgli

Kate is a former member of a cult to which her parents belonged. In the cult, music was a bad thing and thus forbidden. A film crew and a journalist are now going to document the moment when Kate first hears music. The project is to provide a platform for marginalized people like Kate.

Kate sits on a sofa with a glass covered coffee table in front of her. A piano begins to play. Kate seems to experience joy as she listens to the music. We see tears forming in her eyes. And then her head and arms suddenly flop down on the glass tabletop. She begins to bleed. She becomes unconscious and immovable. The filmmakers try to move her, but they can't. She is stuck with her head on the table, unresponsive.

The film crew now panics. They cannot call 911 for fear that they will be accused of harming Kate. But they don't know what to do. Finally, they call the big boss, Shane. Shane arrives shortly. The crew again tries to move Kate, but without success. Then Shane announces that he has a solution.

In a comedic twist we next see Kate on her knees with her head still attached to the table on a sidewalk. Shane and the crew have left her there, on the sidewalk, which is lined with a variety of street performers. Kate has become one of the street performers.