

Jackson Farley

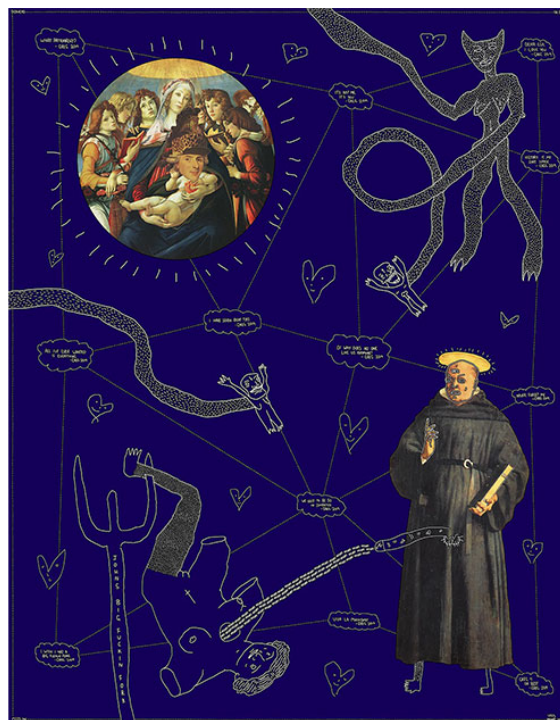
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By Jackson Farley

Issue 44's 'Discovery' artist Jackson Farley writes about his multidisciplinary practice, which spans printmaking, textiles, video and sculpture. Drawing from historical and personal experience, Farley creates satirical works that seek to splinter the staunchly hierarchical spine of contemporary masculinity.

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I am a multidisciplinary artist living and working in Sydney. My work focuses on contemporary, outmoded notions of masculinity, by exploring phallogentric histories and notions of 'genius art'.

Juxtaposing classical iconography with a rudimentary cartoon aesthetic, my practice proposes a more pluralistic approach to masculinity. My aim is to critique hierarchies associated with manhood, while simultaneously appealing to its toxic, or degenerative, side through crude dick jokes and what I think of as 'hectic dance bangers'. Blending collage, drawing, video, textile and print, my process intends to open up dialogues with what I term the 'toxic manhood alliance' in the hope to show men that there is a more diverse approach to masculinity – allowing for a revision of what it means to be a man.

I went to an all-boys Catholic school from years five through twelve. While I didn't necessarily gel with the archaic notion of manhood that they were trying to push, it did give me a chance to hone in on my craft. I would draw dicks, monsters and monster dicks

anywhere I could. I attempted to spread my unsolicited wisdom throughout peer's diaries and textbooks.

This would often end in very confused looks from teachers and year masters asking 'How are things going at home, Jackson?' Through the magic of 'Catholic Creative Suppression' my desire to draw dick monsters faded away and it wasn't until the end of art school that I remembered my calling. Now my work calls into question the societal notions of manhood that were used to repress my creative side.

Since finishing my honours degree at Sydney College of the Arts I have studied at the Maryland Institute of Contemporary Art, in Baltimore, USA. I also went on a China Cultural Centre Residency Program to Chengdu, Sichuan last year. There I studied under Chinese ink masters and learnt some Chinese woodblock print techniques. It was an amazing experience and it gave me the opportunity to really loosen my style, which has made the whole process of art-making a little more intuitive.

While my print and textile works focus on a greater masculinity, my video works are deeply personal and self-reflective. I approach them the same way as I would my collages but instead of going through disused art books to find material, I act out scenarios to very bad dance music I make.

My most recent video work *Dance of the Dicks – a Transcendental Dance Party* tells the tale of hyper-masculinity and suppressed spirituality. Referencing the story of Christ, the protagonist (a very insightful Jackson) is killed by 'da boys' (a pack of angry Jacksons). Following the death of one of their own, 'da boys' realise the error of their ways and unite to form a new understanding of manhood. This brings the insightful protagonist back to life and ends with a very fun dance scene with the universe as the backdrop.

A good place to say goodbye is this excerpt from the film:

This is a message for all the men out there.

Be proud of who you are,

be the best that you can be –

Just don't be a dickhead!

Maybe if we as men found inspiration

in Feminism's transdisciplinary approach,

then we will be free!

You are special! You are unique!

Love yourself! So you can love everyone else!

EXHIBITION

Jackson Farley | Self-conscious Kev and other friends

27th February – 23rd March 2019

Stanley Street Gallery, Sydney

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