

Artist's interview with Marrickville Art Post about 'From Dada to Gaga'

What was the reasoning behind you deciding to have an exhibition?

I've been creating my non-digital photomontage for the past 20 years and distributing it to friends and acquaintances as a humorous annual calling card. I thought it was timely to showcase all the work as a retrospective and give everyone the opportunity either to re-enjoy or catch up on the entire Madam L'Ashby series.

Is there a particular theme or message that you are wanting to communicate about your work?

The work contains elements at once real and imaginary, a metaphorical 'cutting up of society' and critique of the celebrity culture in which we live.

I also use images and references to Glomesh, the metal mesh used to make glamorous handbags, purses, cigarette holders, compacts, and other items as a recurring motif throughout the series. My intent is to convey absurdity and glamour at the same time, much as the 'cult of celebrity' does.

Tell us about the themes and techniques behind your work?

From Dada to Gaga is an installation featuring photo-montage artworks and Glomesh articles.

I create intricate photo montage utilising images and text hand cut from newspapers and magazines to depict the adventures of Madam L'Ashby, my subversive alter ego and passionate Glomesh collector.

I draw on the absurdist tradition of the Dadaist art movement by using scissors and glue, rather than Photoshop or paint, to express views of modern life through images presented by the mass media.

The work is a humorous political and social critique of contemporary news and the cult of celebrity, typified by royals, models, actors and pop stars like Lady Gaga.

A recurring motif throughout the work references Glomesh – the iconic Australian gold and silver metal mesh used to make glamorous handbags, purses, cigarette cases and so on in Marrickville in the 1960s and 1970's. I also use glomesh to make objects that don't exist in reality, for example, a pair of glomesh handcuffs.

The recent Experiences have most influenced you?

The absurdity of 'celebrity' never ceases to amaze me and its ongoing celebration across all forms of media. And of course, everyone is now a celebrity through their own social media channels. I both enjoy and ridicule the shallowness and silliness of it in equal measures.

What do you hope to be the outcome of your Marrickville Council exhibition at Chrissie Cotter Gallery? What's next?

I hope that lots of people – friends and strangers – will come to the exhibition and have a good laugh. I also hope that there will be a renewed appreciation of the glamour, beauty and versatility of glomesh.

Anything else you would like to mention

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