

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

Erotic positions for two consenting males *Considerations for a gay painting practise*

An exegesis presented with exhibition as fulfillment of the requirements for thesis: Master of Fine Arts at Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand

> Robbie Handcock 2016

Abstract

This exegesis is an exploration into painting and gay visual culture, and investigates what might constitute a "gay painting practise". It discusses my focus on the work of American photographer Bob Mizer and *Physique Pictorial* as source material for painting and the questions it raises regarding queer histories, gay sexuality and camp sensibilities. It considers the idea of queer utopian memory as a framework of looking back to moments of "sexual possibility" in order to transmit and receive utopian visions across intergenerational divides. It also considers gay sexuality, its ability to reimagine and restructure notions of intimacy, and its role in resisting gay assimilationist narratives.

Drawing on the writings of various queer theorists, this exegesis considers how colour, form and content may contribute to a queer aesthetic. Making the argument for camp as a style of relating to things, I aim to situate my painting practise as a "gay painting practise" through a network of gay associations, affiliations and references.

Contents

Abstract	3
Contents	5
Illustrations	7
Introduction	9
On Queer and Gay	10
Queer Spirits Turn History on its Head	11
Queer Utopian Memory	11
Queer Time	15
All About Balls	19
Cruising and Radical Gay Sexuality	19
Intimacy and Assimilation	23
Erotic Positions for Two Consenting Males	27
From the Source	27
On Colour and Form	31
How to do Gay Painting	33
Conclusion	39
Notes	41
Bibliography	45

Illustrations

Fig. 1, AA Bronson and Ryan Brewer, Red, 2011,	13
duratrans transparency in lightbox	
Fig. 2, Ryan Trecartin, I-Be Area (film still), 2007	15
Fig. 3, Author, Parallel Play (installation view), 2015	17
Fig. 4, Bob Mizer, Billy Boy (film still), 1971	17
Fig. 5, Author, Cruise Lounge (installation view), 2016	20
Fig. 6, Author, Cruise Lounge (installation view), 2016	20
Fig. 7, Author, Sometimes I'm Just Too Fucked Up To Care, 2016,	22
oil on canvas	
Fig. 8, Bjarne Melgaard, Baton Sinister (installation view), 2011	26
Fig. 9, Author, Untitled, 2015, oil on canvas	28
Fig. 10, Author, Untitled, 2015, oil on canvas	28
Fig. 11, Author, Physique Pictorial, 2016, oil on canvas	29
Fig. 12, Author, Fritz, 2016, oil on canvas	29
Fig. 13, Luc Tuymans, Die Architekt, 1997, oil on canvas	30
Fig. 14, Author, Monte, 2016, oil on canvas	32
Fig. 15, Author, Untitled, 2106, oil on canvas	32
Fig. 16, Keith Boadwee and AA Bronson, PLAID (installation view), 2016	33
Fig. 17, Author, Ed and Cliff, 2016, oil on canvas	37