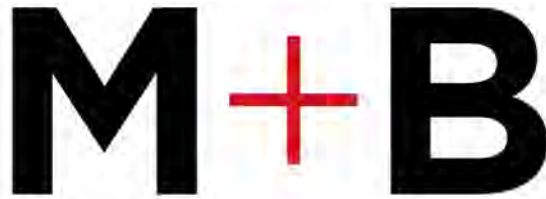


NATHANIEL MARY QUINN

Press Pack



NATHANIEL MARY QUINN

BORN

1977, Chicago
Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY

EDUCATION

2002 M.F.A. New York University, New York NY

2000 B.A. Wabash College, Crawfordsville, IN

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2016 M+B, Los Angeles, CA

2015 *Back and Forth*, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, IL

2014 *Past/Present*, Pace London Gallery, London, United Kingdom
Nathaniel Mary Quinn: Species, Bunker 259 Gallery, Greenpoint, Brooklyn

2013 *The MoCADA Windows*, Museum of Contemporary and African Diasporan Arts
(MoCADA), Brooklyn, NY
Artist Salon, Private art gathering and opening, Brooklyn, NY

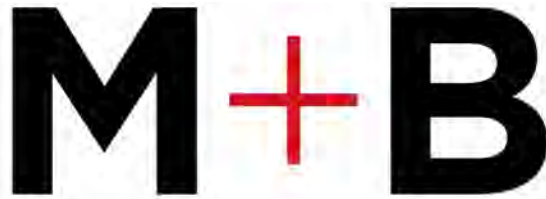
2011 *Glamour and Doom*, Synergy Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

2008 *Deception, Animals, Blood, Pain*, Harriet's Alter Ego Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

2007 *The Majic Stick*, Rush Arts Gallery, Curator Derrick Adams, New York, NY
The Boomerang Series, Colored Illustrations/One Person Exhibition: "The Sharing Secret" Children's Book, written by author LaShell Wooten, The Children's Museum of the Arts, New York, NY

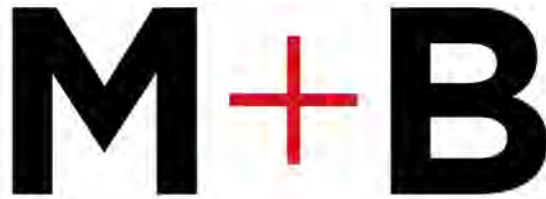
2006 *Urban Portraits/Exalt Fundraiser Benefit*, Rush Arts Gallery, New York, NY
Couture-Hustle, Steele Life Gallery, Chicago, IL

2004 *The Great Lovely: From the Ghetto to the Sunshine*, Five Myles Gallery, Curator Hanne Tierney, New York, NY



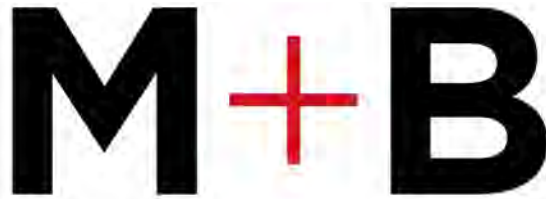
GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2015 *Unrealism*, organized by Jeffrey Deitch and Larry Gagosian, Miami, FL
Russian Doll, M+B, Los Angeles, CA
5 x 5: Other Voices, Litvak Gallery, Tel Aviv, Israel
M+B, Los Angeles, CA
American Survey Pt: I, Papillon Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
Here He Come: Black Jesus, Rawson Projects, Brooklyn, NY
Driscoll Babcock Gallery, New York, NY
- 2014 Ballroom Marfa Benefit Gala, Prince George Ballroom, November 10, New York, NY.
Frieze London Art Fair, Pace London Gallery, London, United Kingdom.
Whitney Museum of American Art | Art Auction Party, Highline Stages, New York, NY
Look At Me: Portraits from Manet to the Present, Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY
- 2013 *American Beauty*, Susan-Inglett Gallery, New York, NY
Corpus Americus, Driscoll Babcock Gallery, New York, NY
Doin' It In The Park, Rush Arts Gallery, New York, NY
- 2012 *SITE Project*, The Humanities Gallery; Long Island University; Brooklyn Campus, Brooklyn, NY
- 2011 *Alumni Group Exhibition*, Wabash College Contemporary Art Gallery, Crawfordsville, IN
- 2010 *Gold Rush Awards Benefit Auction*, Rush Arts Gallery, New York, NY
- 2009 *Children's Museum of the Arts Art Auction*, Children's Museum of the Arts, New York, NY
Luck of the Draw, Rush Arts Gallery, New York, NY
- 2008 *Macro-Micro*, Gallery Satori, New York, NY
The Mythic Female, Gallery Satori, New York, NY
- 2007 *Rush For Life Benefit Exhibition*, Rush Arts Gallery; Rush Philanthropic & Arts Foundation, New York, NY
- BOMB's Magazine 26th Anniversary Gala* honoring Kara Walker & Irving Sandler; Silent Art Auction; Livet Reichard | The Park, New York, NY
- 2006 *Fragmentations of the Self: Smearred, Smudged, Marked, Drawn*, Rush Arts Gallery, New York, NY
- 2004 *Phat Farm Show*, Rush Arts Gallery, New York, NY
- The National African American Arts Exhibition*, Rush Arts Gallery, New York, NY
- Exhibition of Recent Charcoal Drawings; The Wooster Arts Space, New York, NY
AIM 23, Artist-in-the-Marketplace; The Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, NY



SELECTED PRESS

- 2015 "Nathaniel Mary Quinn's portraits recreate the grotesque specters of the Robert Taylor Homes," [Chicago Reader](#); October 13, 2015
- 2014 "Nathaniel Mary Quinn: Past/Present at Pace London," [Arts & Culture](#); Arts Observed; London, September 20, 2014
Clark, Nick. "Nathaniel Mary Quinn: Artist Who Grew Up in Chicago Poverty Chooses London for First Show," Arts & Entertainment, [The Independent](#); London, September 12, 2014
Frank, Priscilla, "Nathaniel Mary Quinn's Disfigured Portraits Would Make Even Francis Bacon Shudder," Arts & Culture, [Huffington Post](#), September 9, 2014
"Nathaniel Mary Quinn: Past/Present," Arts & Culture; One-Person Exhibition at Pace London; [TimeOut London](#), September 8, 2014
"An Unusual Artist: Nathaniel Mary Quinn," [Another Magazine](#); London, September 7
Jean, Ella. "Being Past/Present: An Interview with Nathaniel Mary Quinn," Arts & Culture, [Loose Lips Magazine](#); London, September 6, 2014
Van Spall, India. "The Blood of Violence and Academia Clash in this New Show," Arts & Culture, [Dazed and Confused Magazine](#); London, September 4, 2014
"Nathaniel Mary Quinn: Past/Present," Arts & Culture; [London Evening Standard](#); One-Person Exhibition at Pace London, September, 2014.
"D.C. Art Collector Rebuilds a Bolder Collection After a Fire," Interview of Peggy Cooper Cafritz, one of the country's leading collectors of African-American Contemporary Art; author Diane Brady; [Bloomberg Businessweek](#), New York, NY, March 19
Bunyard, Jesc. "The Interview: Nathaniel Mary Quinn," Arts & Culture, [Hunger TV](#); London, August 27, 2014
Kealoha, Ami and Sheena Sood. "Nathaniel M. Quinn: 'Deception, Animals, Blood, and Pain,'" one-person exhibition, Harriet's Alter Ego Gallery, [Cool Hunting Online Newspaper](#), February 28, 2008
Wimberly, Dexter. "Nathaniel Mary Quinn: "King Kong Ain't Got Nothing On Me," art review + interview, New York, NY; February 21, 2014
Cotter, Holland. "American Beauty," art review of group exhibition at Susan-Inglett Gallery, [The New York Times](#), January 23, 2014
- 2010 Womack, Ytasha. "Post Black: How a New Generation is Redefining African-American Identity," excerpt/comment from artist on contemporary black culture and fine art, published by Lawrence Hill Books, Chicago, IL, 2010
- 2007 The Magik Stick Brochure, One-Person Exhibition, Rush Arts Gallery, September 2007
- 2004 "Suit Shoes," Illustrations for Children's Book, The McClendon Report Publishing Company, Hammond, Indiana Press, 2004
Review of AIM 23/Bronx Museum of the Arts, [Time Out New York Magazine](#), April 2004
[The Hampton News](#), Review of Group Exhibition/The Wooster Arts Space, Arts & Leisure, November 2004
[The New York Times](#) in Westchester, Review of AIM 23/Bronx Museum of the Arts, Arts



& Leisure, April 2004

The Daily News, 2004, full page article written on one-person show at Five Myles Gallery, New York

2002 The Chicago Reader, 2002, full-page article written on body of work and art exhibitions

ARTIST TALKS & LECTURES

- 2008 The College of New Rochelle, Brooklyn Campus, Brooklyn, NY, October 2008; Lecture on History of 20th Century African American Art accompanied by social influences of Alain Locke.
- 2007 The College of New Rochelle, Brooklyn Campus, Brooklyn, NY, October 2007; Lecture on the relationship between the History of Art and Contemporary Painters.
- 2005 The College of New Rochelle, Brooklyn Campus, Brooklyn, NY, October 2005; Lecture on the relationship between the History of Art and Contemporary Art.
The College of New Rochelle, Brooklyn Campus, Brooklyn, NY, October 2005; Lecture on Contemporary African American Art & Identity.
- 2004 The College of New Rochelle, Brooklyn Campus, Brooklyn, NY, January 2004; Lecture on Inner-City Urban Class, Poverty, & Public Tenement Housing Complexes.
Brooklyn College, Africana Studies Department, Brooklyn, New York, January 2004; lecture on Hip Hop Culture in America + transnational impact of Hip Hop culture on Contemporary Art.

AWARDS, GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS

Center for the Book Arts Prize Nominee, New York, 2008

Joan Mitchell Painting and Sculpture Foundation Fellowship Nominee, New York, 2005

Five Myles Gallery Artist's Grant Award, New York, 2004

Bronx Museum of the Arts, AIM (Artist-in-the-Marketplace) artist-in-residence prize winner; New York, 2004

Freedom School Award, Chicago, IL, 2002

President's Service Awards, Resident Assistant, New York University, 2002

Nia Award Winner; Lorraine Hansberry Artistic/Performance/Fine Arts Award, New York University, 2002

National Arts Club Prize Winner, New York City, 2002

National Arts Club First Prize Winner, New York City, 2001

OASIS ISM-Project Grant, New York University, 2001

Opportunity Fellowship, New York University, 2000-2002

Phi Beta Kappa Prize, Wabash College, 2000

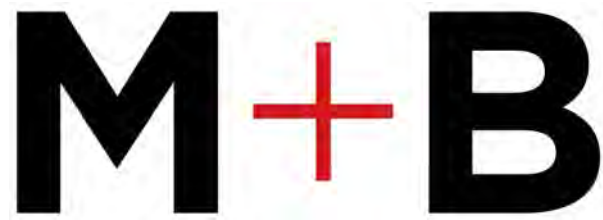
Paul J. Husting Award in Art, Wabash College, 2000

Malcolm X Institute Award, Malcolm X Institute of Black Studies, Wabash College, 2000



NATHANIEL MARY QUINN

Nathaniel M. Quinn (b. 1977, Chicago) received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Wabash College and his Master of Fine Arts from New York University. Quinn's work was first introduced to the public in a group exhibition with Artists Space Gallery in 2002 and through the Bronx Museum of the Arts in 2004. He is the recipient of the Lorraine Hansberry Artistic, Performance, and Fine Arts Award and a two-time winner of the National Arts Club Prize. His work has been exhibited in a number of one-person and group exhibitions: One-person exhibitions include "Nathaniel Mary Quinn: Species" at Bunker 259 Gallery, Brooklyn, which was accompanied with a hardback catalogue inclusive of a critical essay and high-resolution images regarding his work and studio art practice. One-person exhibitions also include "Past/Presnt" at Pace Gallery, London, England, "Hybrids: The Windows Exhibit" at the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA), Brooklyn, New York, and "The Magik Stick" at Rush Arts Gallery, New York. Group exhibitions include "The Mythic Female" and "Macro-Micro" at Satori Gallery, New York, "American Beauty" at Susan-Inglett Gallery, New York, and "Corpus Americus" at Driscoll Babcock Gallery, New York. His work has been reviewed in a number of publications, including the New York Times, The Independent (London), AFROPUNK, the Chicago Reader, The Daily News, The New York Times-Westchester, Cool Hunting, Huffington Post, and Time Out New York. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.



NATHANIEL MARY QUINN

Selected Portfolio

M+B



Nathaniel Mary Quinn
Installation view of *Russian Doll*, group show at M+B, Los Angeles
July 11 – August 29, 2015

M+B



Nathaniel Mary Quinn

Bang, 2015

black charcoal, soft pastel, gouache, oil pastel, oil paint, paint stick, acrylic silver on vellum

28 x 35-¼ inches (71.1 x 89.5 cm)

(NQ.15.003.28)

M+B



Nathaniel Mary Quinn

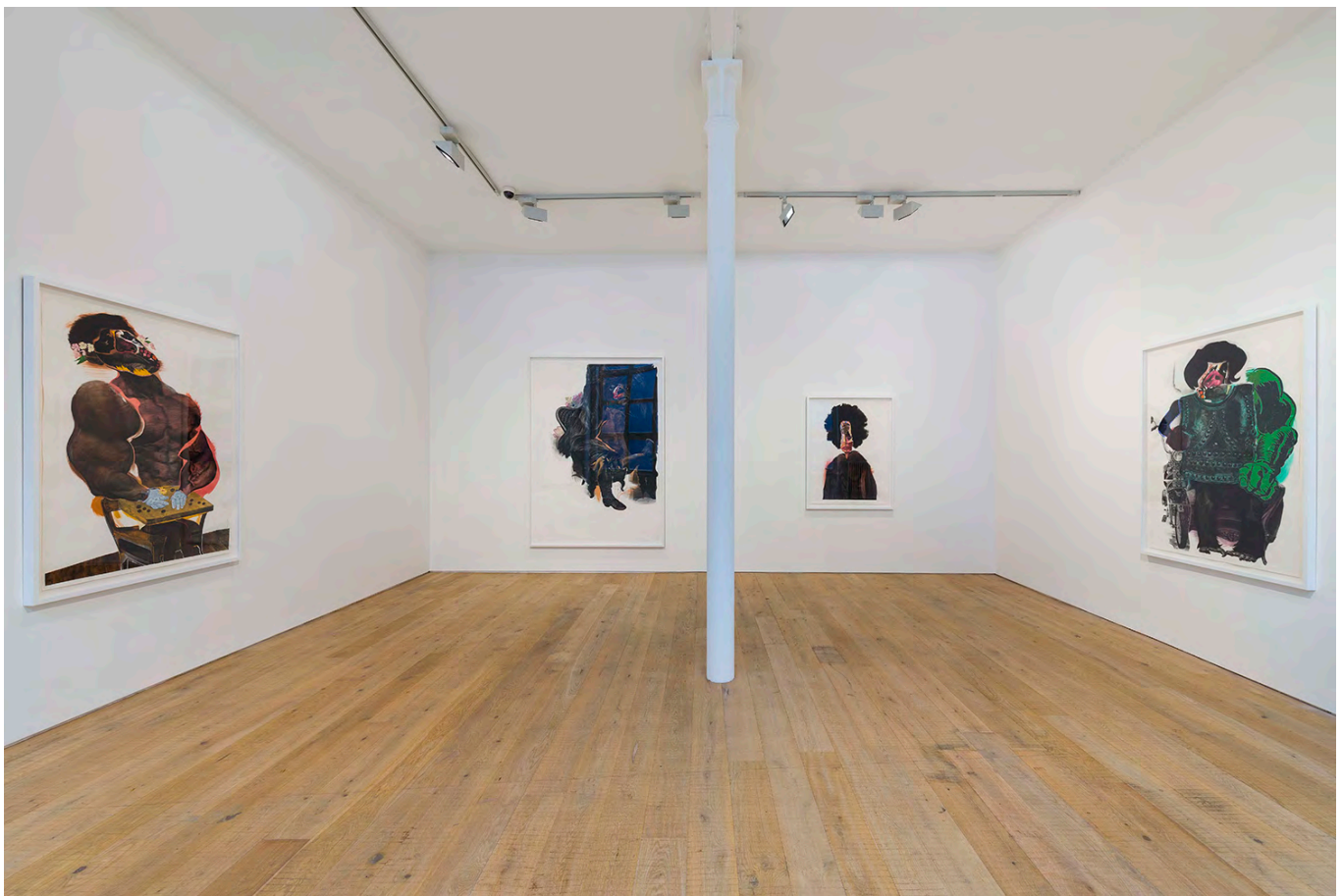
Ruby, 2015

black charcoal, gouache, soft pastel, oil pastel,
oil paint, paint stick, acrylic gold leaf on vellum

27-½ x 27-½ inches (69.9 x 69.9 cm)

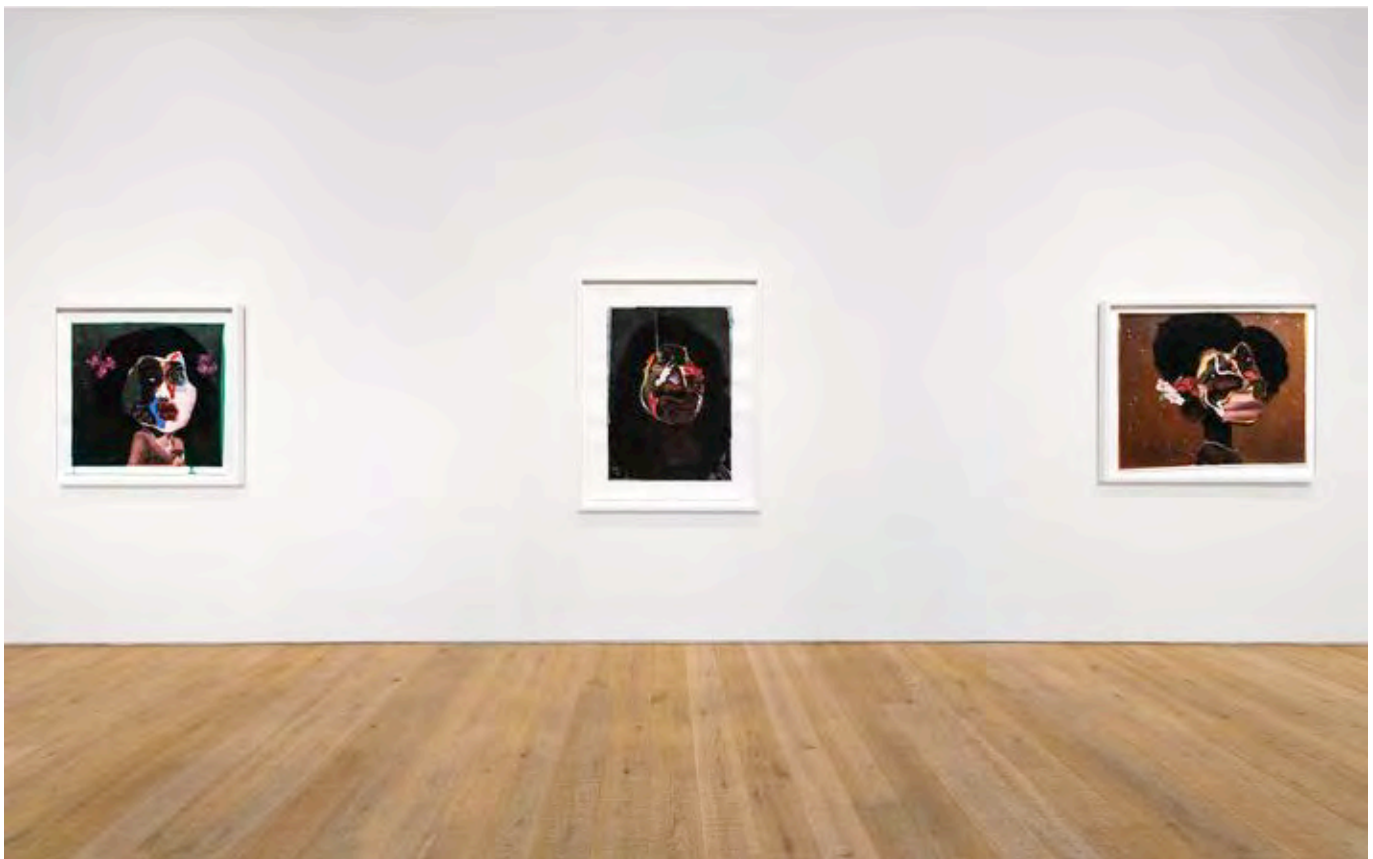
(NQ.15.004.27)

M+B



Nathaniel Mary Quinn
Installation View of *Past/Present*, solo show at Pace London
September 5 – October 4, 2014

M+B



Nathaniel Mary Quinn
Installation View of *Past/Present*, solo show at Pace London
September 5 – October 4, 2014

M+B



Nathaniel Mary Quinn

Diane, 2014

black charcoal, oil-pastel, oil-paint, paint-stick, gouache on Lenox Paper

37 x 37 inches (94 x 94 cm)

unique

(NQ.14.001.37)

M+B



Nathaniel Mary Quinn

Monique, 2014

black charcoal, oil-pastel, oil-paint, paint-stick, gouache on Lenox Paper

36 x 43 inches (91.4 x 109.2 cm)

unique

(NQ.14.003.36)

M+B



Nathaniel Mary Quinn

Lala, 2014

black charcoal, oil-pastel, oil-paint, paint-stick, gouache on Lenox Paper

60 x 44 inches (152.4 x 111.8 cm)

unique

(NQ.14.002.60)

M+B



Nathaniel Mary Quinn

Slim, 2014

black charcoal, oil-pastel, oil-paint, paint-stick, gouache on Lenox Paper

50 x 38 inches (127 x 96.5 cm)

unique

(NQ.14.004.50)

M+B



Nathaniel Mary Quinn

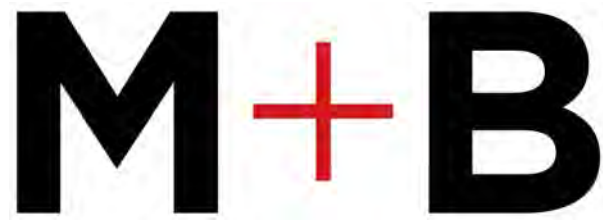
Motorcycle Pig, 2014

black charcoal, oil-pastel, oil-paint, paint-stick, gouache on Lenox Paper

60 x 44 inches (152.4 x 111.8 cm)

unique

(NQ.14.005.60)



NATHANIEL MARY QUINN

Press and Press Releases

M + B

CHICAGO READER

Nathaniel Mary Quinn's portraits recreate the grotesque specters of the Robert Taylor Homes A series of large-scale abstracts bring the past vividly to life.

By Annette Elliot
October 13, 2015

Nathaniel Mary Quinn remembers drawing the fluid black outline of a cowboy on the drab walls of the apartment in the Robert Taylor Homes where he lived as a child. In the concrete public housing high-rise, adventures came to life, carefully copied from the pages of his favorite comic books. His father, an illiterate gambler from Mississippi, taught him how to draw on brown paper bags from the neighborhood grocery store.

"He would tell me to draw from my shoulder," Quinn recalls. "He would take the erasers off the pencils and tell me never to erase. Every mark has meaning. If you make a mistake, make use of that mistake and turn it into something that can work for you."

In a series of large-scale abstract portraits currently on view at Rhona Hoffman Gallery, the artist captures grotesque specters from his past in black charcoal, oil pastel, gouache and acrylic gold leaf. Disfigured and distorted faces stare mournfully out at the viewer. Cursed by unsettling metamorphoses, whether a prominent pig snout or the flaring nostrils of an enraged bull, the characters simultaneously repel and attract.

Memories from the artist's past continue to haunt him. "Walking down the street, I get a vision. I never write them down because I never forget them. My visions are often memories I continue to hold on to, the manifestation of an indelible mark made on me by certain experiences."

Quinn was the youngest of five boys. His mother, crippled after suffering two strokes, managed to support her family with disability checks from the government. He remembers the constant struggle to pay the bills. "I imagine the rent was maybe 50 dollars a month, and the people who lived in the projects struggled to pull together 50 dollars each month." In the winter, the family would often turn on the oven to heat the apartment to avoid paying the electric bill.

Quinn paints figments of memory, both real and unreal. Like a surgeon, he meticulously constructs the fractured geometry of the face with charcoal, construction paper, tape and an X-Acto knife. "We are all trying to keep it together. We fight to convince spectators of what appears to be a seamless existence, but inside is tension, rupture and things that don't quite fit. That is the raw you. I want to paint that."

In Ms. Lykes, a portrait of one of Quinn's grammar school teachers, a sour-looking woman sits with her hands demurely crossed in her lap. She wears a delicate satin blouse embroidered with crimson flowers. Her face is ripped open by a large snout, her eyes cast askew. Quinn has not forgotten Ms. Lykes or the hurt she inflicted when she discouraged him from applying to Culver Academies, a private boarding school in Indiana.

"I recall Ms. Lykes, in particular, remarking 'You jus' gonna go to DuSable High School like the rest of dem niggahs.' DuSable High School was never considered a particularly good high school—or even a safe one for that matter. It was seen as the school for the 'project kids,' the poor kids who did not have a future. Ms. Lykes certainly could not see, or refused to envision, that I might be admitted into a fancy boarding school for rich kids."

Today he lives in Brooklyn, in a small two-bedroom apartment in Bedford Stuyvesant. Brown paper covers the walls on which he draws a delicate outline of a face. He often paints for 48 hours without sleep to keep up with the demand for his work. In his paintings he returns to his childhood apartment, or what he remembers of it, the articles of clothing scattered on the floor, a half-eaten loaf of bread, and a two-liter Royal Crown Cola.



Ms. Lykes, 2015
COURTESY OF RHONA HOFFMAN
GALLERY AND THE ARTIST

PACE LONDON

PRESS RELEASE

Nathaniel Mary Quinn

Past/Present

6-10 Lexington Street
London W1F 0LB

5 September – 4 October 2014

Opening: Thursday 4 September, 6-8 pm.



Pace London is delighted to present *Past/Present*, an exhibition of new works by Brooklyn-based artist Nathaniel Mary Quinn from 5 September to 4 October 2014 at 6-10 Lexington Street.

Quinn's vivid, large-scale paper works are an assemblage of facial features which can be read as abstract-figurative works. The pieces deal with the complex construction of identity, inevitably influenced by past memories and present experiences, but executed in the moment.

"My work arrives somewhere between abstraction and figuration; the cuts and breaks

in the image seem to have an independent life within each work. Not simply the happenstance of a meeting place, the gap or break is a type of functional geometry, opening up spaces within and between imagery. My work is the result of a highly instinctual and visceral activity, without the guidance of a plan." Nathaniel Mary Quinn, July, 2014.

The artist takes great interest in mixing media, subverting the traditional use of black charcoal, oil-paint, paint-stick, gouache, oil pastel and cardboard onto the same surface. Although reminiscent of Synthetic Cubism, Quinn's works function outside of these historical references and reveal themselves as autobiographical, narrative and representational. The 'hybrid creatures' that appear in these distinctive compositions are formed from a mixture of family portraits, popular articles, and advertisements.

The artist's personal history has a tremendous influence on his work. Reflecting on his difficult upbringing and the challenges he faced in his young life—losing his mother at a very young age and later being abandoned by his father and brothers—every work is a conscious endeavour to free his mind from excessive introspection. Quinn aims to explore his own human identity and life experiences, which have formed and continue to shape his character.

Highlights of the exhibition include *Diane*, a small piece that features an assembled portrait presenting both geometry and softness, yet robustly exaggerated by contorted and flattened surface manipulations. A fleshy mouth and a necklace would call to mind an archetypical female character, yet the viewer is left disorientated without clear, immediate gender identification.

PACE LONDON

The constant fracture between faces and the body correlate to Quinn's past and present experience; a cathartic and personal practice through which he gives life back to his subjects.

The unique interplay of subject, form and medium that can be seen in Quinn's work conveys the artist's own sense of artistic freedom. The work sits in tension on the boundary of what can be seen as purposely grotesque or aesthetically pleasing, presenting both beauty and melancholy.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Nathaniel Mary Quinn was born in 1977 in Chicago, US. Having received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Wabash College, Quinn obtained his Master of Fine Arts from New York University. Quinn's work was first introduced to the public in a group exhibition at Artists Space in 2002 and through The Bronx Museum of the Arts in 2004. He is the recipient of the Lorraine Hansberry Artistic, Performance, and Fine Arts Award and a two-time winner of the National Arts Club Prize. His work has been exhibited in a number of one-person and group exhibitions: one-person exhibitions include *Hybrids: The Windows Exhibit* at the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA), Brooklyn, *The Magic Stick* at Rush Arts Gallery, New York and most recently, *Species* at Bunker 259, Brooklyn. Group exhibitions include *The Mythic Female* and *Macro-Micro* at Satori Gallery, New York, *American Beauty* at Susan-Inglett Gallery, New York, *Corpus Americus* at Driscoll Babcock Gallery, New York, "Look At Me: Portraits from Manet to the Present," at the Leila Heller Gallery. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

PACE

Pace is a leading contemporary art gallery representing many of the most significant international artists and estates of the 20th and 21st centuries. Founded by Arne Glimcher in Boston in 1960 and led by Marc Glimcher, Pace has been a constant, vital force in the art world and has introduced many renowned artists' work to the public for the first time. Pace has mounted more than 800 exhibitions, including scholarly exhibitions that have subsequently travelled to museums, and published nearly 450 exhibition catalogues. Today Pace has ten locations worldwide: four in New York; two in London; one in Beijing, one in Hong Kong and two temporary spaces in Menlo Park, California and Zuoz, Switzerland. Pace London inaugurated its flagship gallery at 6 Burlington Gardens with the exhibition *Rothko/Sugimoto: Dark Paintings and Seascapes*, in 2012.

Pace London at 6-10 Lexington Street is open to the public from Tuesday to Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. www.pacegallery.com/

For press inquiries, please contact:

London: Nicolas Smirnoff, nicolas@pacegallery.com / +44 203 206 7613

NY: Madeline Lieberberg, mlieberberg@pacegallery.com / +1 212 421 8987

Follow Pace on Facebook (facebook.com/pacegallery), Twitter (twitter.com/pacegallery), and Instagram (instagram.com/pacegallery)

Image: Nathaniel Mary Quinn, *Diane*, black charcoal, oil-pastel, oil-paint, paint-stick, gouache on Lenox Paper 94 cm x 94 cm (37" x 37"), 2014. Copyright Nathaniel Mary Quinn, Courtesy Pace London.

M+B

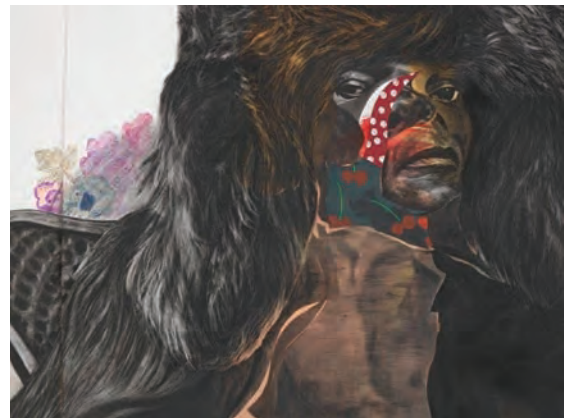
HUFFPOST ARTS & CULTURE

Nathaniel Mary Quinn's Disfigured Portraits Would Make Even Francis Bacon Shudder

September 9, 2014

Gazing upon a series of Nathaniel Mary Quinn's paintings feels like staring into a Ripley's-esque hall of medical oddities and botched surgeries, situated alongside the black sheep and circus performers themselves who'd banded into a cast of outcasts. And yet the multimedia hybrids feel above all truthful. The portraits -- bulging, distorted and ripped to shreds -- capture something real about our bruised senses of self. Something we often look away from.

Quinn's series "Past/Present" features large scale works combining black charcoal, oil-paint, paint-stick, gouache, oil pastel and cardboard. Somewhere between Wangechi Mutu and Francis Bacon, the works are as intoxicating as they are repulsive, like a stranger you're eager to know though already frightened by. Quinn's images possess a perpetual sense of now-ness, as if capturing a person at a particular moment, tangled up in all the moods, memories and whatever else happens to be lingering in the air.



(Detail) King Kong Ain't Got Nothing On Me, 2013,
black charcoal, gouache, oil pastel on Coventry
vellum paper

When did you first start creating art and how did it affect other aspects of your life?

As a child, my mother allowed me to draw on the walls of our apartment. She would just clean the walls and let me draw again, repeatedly. My work seems to investigate my childhood upbringing, my past experiences, and my humanity.

Since 2002, soon after earning my MFA from New York University, I embarked on an artistic pursuit of creating work predicated on black identity, racial and gender politics, or a critique of mainstream culture. I presumed that such was the correct path for me. Two years ago, I disengaged from that path. My conviction for such issues lacked the potency necessary for sustaining my studio art practice. Moreover, I had come to accept that I was unhappy with my art practice. There was something more that I wanted to explore, although I had no scathing idea as to what such a conviction looked or felt like. Then, I began making work based on my visions, absent of any knowledge as to what these visions meant. I simply had a visceral response to these visions. For the first time in more than ten years, I was consumed by a confident sense of happiness and completeness. I felt like a child in a magnificent playground.

M + B

By this time, I had stopped making preliminary sketches. The visions were so explicitly clear, that making pre-sketches was unnecessary. After completing my first body of work, it had dawned on me that instead of composing a theory upon which my work would be based, my work would reveal to me what I, on some known or unknown level, continue to endure. My work would function as a sound reflection of my identity and human experience. My work reveals unresolved issues as related to my family, my childhood experiences, and the link between such experiences and my current disposition. My work allows me to explore the power of being present, while bringing to surface buried memories culled from my childhood experiences and upbringing in Chicago. In this journey, I acknowledge the pain and sorrow that I continue to endure, the sense of progress that I enjoy, and the sense of deliverance upon which I stand.

My work is also influenced by my upbringing in the Robert Taylor Homes of Chicago, which were, for many years, one of the most infamous and dangerous tenement housing complexes in the nation. I was the youngest of five boys. By the time I was fifteen years old, my other brothers were already young adults, along with being high school dropouts, drug addicts, and alcoholics. My parents were illiterate. My mother, Mary Quinn, was crippled due to having two strokes. My father, Joe, frequented pool halls for the sake of gambling in order to feed our family.

By my eighth grade year, I won an academic scholarship to attend Culver Academies, a private boarding high school in Indiana. Soon after the start of the school year, my mother passed away. The following month, upon arriving home for Thanksgiving break, I found an empty apartment. My family was gone, and I have not seen them since.

I wondered why I had such an obsession with creating jagged, fragmented, discontinuous portraits and figures. Now, I am beginning to understand: the dilemma of unresolved abandonment, separation, and attachment issues prevalent in my identity and sub-consciousness. Yet, there is something redemptive within this context, of separate, seemingly unrelated, parts mending themselves together, managing, somehow, to achieve a sense of cohesion and solidarity. Such was compounded with relationships I found between my work and Cubism, as well as the works of artists like Francis Bacon and Neo Rauch. The works of Francis Bacon are especially powerful for me, where his expressive and graphic approach creates a relationship between the grotesque and the beautiful.



Clown, 2014, black charcoal, oil-pastel, oil-paint, paint-stick, gouache on Lenox Paper

What information goes into these portraits and how do you translate this information into image?

My portraits and figures tend to be based on people that I knew during my childhood. In some cases, they represent people that I currently know. However, it is a bit more complicated than that. People do not exist without that which creates them, without that which influences their behavior, their belief-systems, their conditioned thought patterns. I am more interested in what is underneath. I want to convey all that is hidden.

And, of course, all of my portraits and figures are extensions of my identity. Perhaps I would not be who I am without these people. The real dilemma rests in understanding the link between my experiences with these people and my current disposition as a human being. Hence, my studio practice is inundated with exacting my focus on being as free as possible from all conditioned thought patterns and belief-systems. This requires the removal of excessive thinking, for it is our "thought-mind" that happens to be poisoned with illusions that are not true, but appears to be true due to the amount of emotional energy that we invest in such illusions. For example, in my work, I explore the reasoning behind what may appear to be feelings of worthlessness. By all means, I was, in fact, abandoned by my family when I was fifteen years old. Therefore, logically speaking, as a fifteen year old, the bridge is not that wide between being deserted by the only people who proclaimed and demonstrated their unwavering love for you and the notion of not being worthy of authentic love and compassion: "If your own family doesn't want you, then who will?" But, is this true?

M + B

As an adult, I now realize the existence of other explanations behind their sudden and abrupt departure: severe lack of money, poverty, being evicted, forthcoming violence. However, it is nearly impossible to understand this as a child. Before you know it, and against your will, your mind develops a belief-system that impedes upon your ability to function happily. For years, I ruined all of my significant relationships and friendships on the promise of this belief system: "How can I be sure that you won't abandon me if my own family deserted me?" And I feel this everyday and put it into my work, to create what I feel, within the context of being present, of embracing my state of being, in order to get underneath it all, to explore it, to uncover, as much as possible, the inner-workings of my identity. This is a highly grotesque process; yet, it is very beautiful because of the power of self-acceptance, even against a collective perception that works relentlessly to convince you to believe in the benefits of hiding your scars and bruises.

Your works also toy with gender in interesting ways. Can you explain what argument you're making in this respect, if any?

I am not making an argument in my work as it relates to gender. I employ any visual reference necessary for the creation of my work. I presume gender comes into play as a result of my mother. In some way, I am always painting and drawing my mother, especially being that I lost her when I was fifteen years old. Many people can relate to this. That sort of pain never leaves you. You can only turn down the volume of the pain, but the sound never goes off. I continue to yearn for her, so perhaps she is coming through my work, somehow, presenting herself in various ways.

This show reminded me of Mickalene Thomas' recent exhibition "Tete de Femme," which similarly explored the fractured geometry of the face. What similarities and differences do you think apply?

Mickalene Thomas' work carries a significant amount of weight. Her paintings seem to explore the historical means by which beauty is articulated on canvas. Her collage-like paintings place black women within a narrative from which black women were traditionally excluded. Her 2012 exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum, "The Origin of the Universe," highlighted the prowess in Mickalene's artistic career; in some cases, porcelain skin and blonde curls – as evident in the works of Gustav Courbet, for example, were replaced with beautiful black women, bringing to surface the malleable and expressive nature of femininity. It is wonderful that such beauty is being delivered through the subject of black women, and Mickalene is masterful at this.

This past June, her recent exhibition, "Tete de Femme," at Lehmann Maupin Gallery, presents a relatively fresh and courageous direction for Mickalene — not a departure; instead, a development from her previous work — and such may have been developed in her studio practice, particularly as this growth seems to be related to her work with models, make-up, various photo sessions, and experimentation with collages. The persistence in Mickalene's acute interest in creating correlations between art history and the present moment remains to be relevant.

Although, visually speaking, there are similarities between my work and that of Mickalene Thomas' in "Tete de Femme," there are, indeed, differences worth noting.

"Tete de Femme" appears to be the first public exhibition of such a development in Mickalene's work, and while various correlations can be made between her work and mine, the exploration in my work stems from a different place, and the development with my particular body of work began three years ago — before "Tete de Femme" publicly existed.



Monique, 2014 black charcoal, oil-pastel, oil-paint, paint-stick, gouache on Lenox Paper

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Clearly, my work carries influences from Cubism; however, my aim is to explore my humanity and to become more aware of the link between various past experiences and my current disposition. In this effect, there exists no primary interest in positioning black men or women within an exclusive narrative. My work is not governed by the exploration of Cubism and contemporary subject matter. My work is governed by the exploration of my present human existence and the personal history by which it has been informed.

Where do you find inspiration outside of the art world?

I find inspiration in music and film. In particular, I watch many Youtube videos of hip-hop producers working in the studio as they make beats for new rap songs. I especially enjoy this one video clip of Kanye West working in the studio. He seems incredibly free, working in the moment, feeling the energy of the music that he is creating, being completely liberated by the sound and the bass. This also seems to be true of various musicians, such as D'Angelo, Stevie Wonder, and Raphael Saadiq. When you listen to their music, you sense the existence of effortless energy, where excessive thought is not, or was not, a part of the equation.

And I have an obsession with watching films where the protagonist is seemingly outgunned, or intellectually challenged, or diminutive in a certain fashion. Films that come to mind are "Forrest Gump" and "Shawshank Redemption," for example.

My parents were illiterate. As a result, along with other reasons, I have struggled, throughout my life, with feelings of inferiority as they relate to my level of academic intelligence, and I know what it feels like to so eagerly want to escape a place that did not seem rightfully suited for you, a place in which you felt trapped with no means of escape. However, like in the films, redemption, somehow, is achieved, and hard work has a great deal to do with it.

If you could compare your artistic process to another activity -- making spaghetti, performing surgery, riding a bicycle -- what would you say and why?

I always say that my studio art practice is equivalent to surgery because there are so many intricate and highly important processes necessary for making one of my pieces. I spend long, arduous hours to perform at optimal levels in order to achieve a perfection that is suitable for me, and, like any surgeon, mediocrity is not an option. And I have an obsessive compulsion for order and organization. I am addicted to processes being clean and sharp, absent of mishaps and mistakes. For the body of work at Pace London, I arrived to a point where I worked every single day, Monday through Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 4 a.m. -- for three and a half months, non-stop.



Fig, 2014, black charcoal, oil-pastel, oil-paint, paint-stick, gouache on Lenox Paper

Quinn's "Past/Present" runs from September 5 until October 4, 2014 at Pace Gallery in London. See more work from the exhibition below.

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Nathaniel Mary Quinn: Past/Present

September 8, 2014



The large paper works of Nathaniel Mary Quinn are driven by past personal experiences

Akin to grotesquely beautiful manifestations of profound inner visions, the large paper works of Nathaniel Mary Quinn are driven by past personal experiences, from losing his mother as a child to being abruptly abandoned by his father and brothers. Using whatever means necessary to express his visions, he brings together images from photographs, advertisements, as well as combining numerous types of media such as black charcoal, oil paint, gouache, and more. The key piece on display is *Diane*, an assembled portrait with fragmented facial features not unlike works of Synthetic Cubism, and inspired by the memory of the woman who informed him of his family's departure.

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The INDEPENDENT

Nathaniel Mary Quinn: Artist who grew up in Chicago poverty chooses London for first show

By Nick Clark
September 4, 2014

When Nathaniel Mary Quinn was growing up in one of Chicago's poorest housing projects he would be regularly woken by gunshots fired by warring gangs outside.

Three decades on, he has shaken off a troubled upbringing – abandoned by his family at the age of 15 – to become a “rising star” of the New York art scene. And his gallery has chosen London to make his big debut.

Mr Quinn's exhibition Past/Present opened in Pace London, the UK arm of one of New York's most prestigious galleries, on Friday.

“It's exciting and scary,” he told The Independent. “It's the American dream, I'm very excited. I wasn't on the radar for a long time. People seeing my stuff this year was seeing it for the first time. Now they're raving about it.”

The show runs for a month and includes new work in oil and charcoal from the Brooklyn-based artist which come to terms with his troubled upbringing.

He said: “The gallery was thinking about how to mobilise my career and thought London was the best place to start. The art world here embraces artists in my position more.”

While he is almost completely unknown in London, there is a lot of buzz around Mr Quinn in New York especially after Pace chose to represent him in May.

Dexter Wimberly, who came across the artist's work in his role as an independent curator in New York, said: “Nathaniel is a rising star; he's beginning to get the recognition he deserves for his work. As a young artist he has a huge future ahead of him. Coming to the attention to Pace Gallery is an amazing step forward for his career.”

Mr Wimberly, who is now director of strategic planning at Independent Curators International, said buzz had begun a year ago at two shows featuring Mr Quinn's work, which had key people from the art world attending. These included a trustee of the Whitney Museum of American Art and a powerful gallerist who had collaborated with Jeff Koons.



Quinn arrives in London, 20 years after escaping gunfire and gangs

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Yet the New York art scene is a world away from where Mr Quinn, 37, grew up. He was raised in the poverty-stricken projects, the equivalent of UK housing estates, on the south side of Chicago, buildings which have subsequently been torn down.

“Where I lived was populated by gang violence, I grew up seeing shootings and killings. Everyone living there was a witness to poverty and crime. You knew at a young age you could be killed,” he said.

Growing up, conditions were hard, with the lights constantly being disconnected, and his family turning on the oven to heat the apartment.

He managed to avoid joining a gang, although most of his friends did. He was known instead for his art, something he had done since a small child.

“I’ve been making art my entire life,” Mr Quinn said. He learnt to draw by copying comic books and he became known as an artist in the neighbourhood.

“I’ve always wanted to be an artist; there was never any question about that in my life. All my friends knew me as an artist. I was challenged to art duels by other kids.”

He secured a scholarship to a prestigious private college Culver Military Academy in Indiana at the age of 15, which would prove his way out of the projects. “I woke up there and heard birds singing, and I knew I was in a different land altogether; I was accustomed to waking up to gunshots.”

Yet his mother died a month after he joined Culver, and then weeks after that he returned home to find his father and four brothers had left. He has not seen them in the 22 years since. “My life since that was not good. I was drinking a lot and in constant distress and pain,” he said.

After high school, college and then graduate school he worked as a substitute teacher and then taught at-risk youth in the criminal justice system.

Less than a year ago his art career took an “upward swing,” when he started painting about issues from his upbringing and his family history and he could give up his day job. “I find making art now thrilling. It used to feel like a job, but now it feels fun and challenging.”

He added: “The whole thing about the buzz is surreal. It feels like I’m getting a gain in my life that is equivalent to all I have lost in my life. I’ve lost my entire family, my sense of belonging. Now I feel God is giving it to me back tenfold.”



'Diane, 2014' by Nathaniel Mary Quinn
(Damian Griffiths)

Past/Present opened in Pace London, the UK arm of one of New York's most prestigious galleries, on Friday.

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AnOther Magazine

An Unusual Artist: Nathaniel Mary Quinn

We take a look at Nathaniel Mary Quinn's new exhibition *Past/Present* at Pace London

By Max Fletcher
September 4, 2014

Who? Nathaniel Mary Quinn is a Brooklyn-based artist who has become known for his work in collage and mixed media. Born in 1977 in Chicago, Quinn's childhood was very difficult – his mother died when he was young, and he was later abandoned by his father and brother. His desire to explore issues relating to his fraught personal history informs much of his art. As a consequence, his work can be quite shocking, but it retains a sense of grace and aesthetic accomplishment, which, Quinn says, is the result of his efforts to avoid excessive introspection.

"Quinn's work can be quite shocking, but it retains a sense of grace and aesthetic accomplishment...the result of his efforts to avoid excessive introspection"

What? Pace London are exhibiting a new collection of Quinn's work in his solo exhibition *Past/Present*. These new works see Quinn working in a manner not dissimilar to synthetic cubism, combining images from multiple sources (ranging from family photographs to cuttings from articles and advertisements) in order to create large-scale images of grotesque figures, which he refers to as 'hybrid creatures'.



Why? In this exhibition, Quinn furthers his exploration of issues relating to contemporary identity. Although his works are very personal, they are also deeply in touch with trends in public life and are especially concerned, in their use of pop cultural imagery, with changes in the modern media landscape. His creation of fragmented and often schizophrenic feeling collages is in part a reflection of a culture at odds with itself, unable to assemble the noise and confusion of its media into any kind of unity. But despite the deep sense of anxiety that informs them, Quinn stays level headed enough to render the images with astonishing technical skill and dexterity.

Past/Present is at Pace London from September 5 to October 4.

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HUNGER TV

The Interview: Nathaniel Mary Quinn

By Jesc Bunyard
August 27, 2014

Nathaniel Mary Quinn is known for producing large-scale paper works, which explore the construction of identity through complex assemblages and collages. Situated somewhere between abstraction and figuration, Quinn's practice is influenced by memory and an urge to work. The figures are often a mixture between the grotesque, often due to the collage process, and the serene. We meet Nathaniel Mary Quinn to find out more about his practice and his upcoming exhibition at PACE London.

You describe your subjects as 'hybrid creatures'; can you explain a little more about this?

My subjects are just an amalgamation of images that I cull from various resources, memories, and visions. In the most uncertain way, I put them together – the images, photographs, memories, visions – and they appear to be "hybrid creatures" representing much of what I experienced during my upbringing in Chicago as well as what I experience today.



You have a lot of different influences within your work, not all of them happy. How do you use these memories within your work?

Well, I don't exactly use my memories in a way that is intentional; I believe that making an intentional use of such memories would be rather pretentious and dishonest. One is not usually certain of one's memories because one's memory tends to be rather inaccurate; this is so because most people employ an unconscious means by which to illuminate their memories. My process is predicated on random "visions" or feelings that I receive and feel. I never know the meaning of such visions; I never know the premise of my feelings; I always know, without any ounce of hesitation, that I possess a visceral response to my visions and must create them. I never make preliminary sketches; I do not excessively plan in preparation for making the work. I just find images that come close to reconciling the components of my visions and, from start to finish, use the images as a collective resource for completing the pieces, making all of my marks and edits on the surface of the paper. The path from start to finish is never clear, but my faith in the end result is relentlessly clear. Nonetheless, during the process of creating, the work begins to reveal to me what I continue to endure and withstand. Fractured and cohesive memories from my childhood and early years in Chicago – matters I have not thought about in years – begin to collect in my mind, and it becomes relentlessly clear what the work is about. More accurately speaking, it becomes clear that the work is a direct reflection of the pain, loss, happiness, and happiness that I continue to endure, negotiate, and enjoy.

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Is your work completely taken from personal memories, or do you work from other sources as well?

I work from photographs a great deal, but my work is a reflection of my personal memories. I do not think of a memory and decide to make a work about it. I receive a vision that initially possesses no immediate meaning or understanding; yet, I am overcome with this insatiable urge to make a work that reflects the vision, to actually draw and paint the vision. The visions are not crystal clear, but the emotional resonance between the vision and I is extremely palpable. I begin the process of making the work; I use photographs as source material for making the work; the process of making the work reveals that I am re-creating a memory based on real life experiences. For example, the work in the show, "Diane," began as a vision. For some reason, I saw this vision of a woman with big, black hair and luscious red lips, holding a rose in her hand, along with having flowers in her hair. While I did not know the meaning of this vision – I could not understand my sincere, unwarranted commitment to this vision – I, without doubt, had to make a piece to reflect it.

You mix a lot of media, such as charcoal and gouache. Can you explain a little about your process?

I use black charcoal – and many different grains of black charcoal to achieve a certain effect – gouache, paint-stick, oil paint, and oil pastel on paper. My process is similar to sculpture; I construct my subjects; I use many materials because such is necessary for the construction of my subjects. Basically, I use whatever necessary to create my work. An incredible amount of work goes into creating my pieces because I have a high level of integrity about my work and I never compromise anything. Never. I work from 10:00am until 3:00am or 4:00am every day. A short day for me is working from 10:00am until 12:30am or 1:00am. I take three to four short breaks – fifteen minutes or so per break – then, back to work.

Your works recall the photcollage pieces by John Stezaker, is this a conscious influence?

I love John Stezaker's work, but his work is not a conscious influence. There appears to be a formal underpinning to his process; my process of the breaking and splitting and re-structuring of the faces and the figure is directly related to my experience of being abandoned by my family, which required a great deal of re-structuring in my life. I am much better these days. The volume of my pain in relation to losing my family is extremely low, but the pain is still there, and it expresses itself in many different ways. I never felt as though I had a great deal of stability in my life in regards to my relationships with people. It is difficult for me to form secure connections with people; I do not know what it is like to be a member of a family; I yearn for acceptance by other people; I am quite insecure at times; I am completely comfortable in being alone because I feel the safest when I am alone. My work is influenced by much of this, which is realistically related to my humanity.

You blur the lines between abstract and figurative, which recalls the paintings of Francis Bacon. There is also a shared element of the grotesque. Has Bacon been an influence in your practice?

Francis Bacon has always been an influence in my work. His paintings are free and liberating; it appears that his work is not bound to the conventions of painting. Rather, it appears that Bacon was investigating his personal identity and humanity, his existence and emotional bandwidth. So, it appears that the grotesque is quite beautiful; yet, most people invest a great deal of energy in avoiding the grotesque, especially that which rests within themselves. The so-called grotesque nature in the loss of my family now functions as the fuel of my artistic production. The grotesque disposition of poverty, gang shootings, drug trafficking, and my direct and indirect affiliation with such conditions now function as a subconscious gateway into worlds that provide the visions for my work. My humanity is the result of the grotesque, along with experiences of happiness, achievement, and progress. As a human being, I am beautiful because of such experiences, both the grotesque and the aesthetically pleasing and acceptable. So, I possess the courage to embrace it, to share it with the world. I believe that Francis Bacon did this as well, along with Lucien Freud, and artists like Adrian Ghenie, Li Songsong, and Neo Rauch also, I believe, operate in this similar vain, which is why I find an incredible amount of freedom in their work.

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Your works are beautifully grotesque. Do you consciously aim to blur the boundaries between aesthetically pleasing and the surreal?

I do not consciously blur the lines between the grotesque and the beautiful. I try to be conscious about making work that is a reflection of me, and since I am a combination of all that is grotesque and beautiful, my work would reflect such, but an incredible amount of courage is required for such an outcome. It would be more accurate to state that I aim to embrace the truth of my shortcomings, beauty, downfalls, achievement, and everything else that contributes to my existence as a human being. To embrace the contractual agreement of life – during the unconscious moment of being born into the world and signing the contractual agreement of your imminent death with your first gasp of air – is a courageous effort, and I maintain to adhere to such courageous effort throughout my career as an artist. Therefore, I embrace with pride and joy the synthesis of my good and my bad. I don't exactly attempt to make something that is aesthetically pleasing; I don't know what may be aesthetically pleasing to the eye of another. I just attempt to make work that is honest. Being honest is being aesthetically pleasing; it may hurt and cause some sense of jarring, but it's authentic.

One of my favourite works in the exhibition is 'Diane'. Can you explain more about this work?

"Diane," like all of my work, began as a vision. For some reason, I saw this vision of a woman with big, black hair and luscious red lips, holding a rose in her hand, along with having flowers in her hair. While I did not know the meaning of this vision – I could not understand my sincere, unwarranted commitment to it – I, without hesitation, had to make a piece to reflect it. As I was making the work, it all made sense to me: upon coming home for Thanksgiving break and finding my apartment empty and my family gone, never to see them again, my next door neighbor, after asking her for further details, informed me that my family had made their departure two weeks prior to my arrival. She was stunned that nobody updated me about this matter. I now remember her having big, black hair; she kept fake roses and other flowers in her apartment, which always had a dim light, like an urban cave; she always wore a pink or light blue house robe. More importantly, her public personae was harsh; however, in her private life – sometimes, she would come to our family's apartment to give us food, like bread, sugar, and butter; the extension of generosity was common practice amongst families in the Robert Taylor Homes, the tenement housing projects where I grew up – she was quite open about her vulnerable disposition, her severe lack of money and resources, her sadness, her exhaustion. Even as a child, I knew that she was filled with trouble. And she was as gentle as conceivably possible in the face of my abandonment, although she could not help me; she had to bear witness to my journey into a troubling darkness due to her severe inability to provide resources for my temporary survival. Yet, she was a rose during one of my darkest hours. Her name was Diane.

What other works are you showing at PACE London?

I am exhibiting thirteen works in the show; the show is a one-person exhibition, my first show with the gallery. Some of the highlights in the show are "King Kong Ain't Got Nothing On Me," "Ms. Chairs," "Chainsaw Master," "LaLa," "Slim," "Motorcycle Pig," "Monique," and, of course, "Diane."

What's next for you?

I anticipate having works in the Frieze London Art Fair with Pace Gallery this upcoming October.

Nathaniel Mary Quinn: Past/Present will run from 5th September till October 4th at Pace London, Lexington Street

