



MICHAEL TAYLOR

*How did you begin your career as an artist?*

In 2005, during the last year of my master's degree, an artist collective in Cape Town invited me to exhibit some of my 'Immediate Nonsense' drawings on their group show at Whatiftheworld Gallery. The response to the drawings was great, and I decided to continue showing work with Whatiftheworld. Today the gallery is my primary representation, and, even though the scale of the work has changed, my main interest is still drawing.

*Which artist/s have had an influence on you?*

The work of David Hockney and Edward Gorey always stand out above the many artists that I admire. Hockney's prolific output and concern with styles of representation interests me. And Gorey's storytelling and characterisation is just terribly attractive.

*What is your creative process like?*

Each work is developed to ultimately deliver a narrative idea. And the process involved to make a drawing takes place directly on the paper that the work is finished on. Characters develop as the drawing is made, group portraits transform in the process of making the work, and the narrative idea changes more than once as a result.

*Why did you choose your specific medium?*

I find drawing the most instinctive and direct way to describe ideas and narratives. It doesn't hide visual thoughts and can be very unforgiving when it comes to making mistakes. Every action can be traced in a drawing and I find its mediums challenging because they tend to have a life of their own. Printmaking, and water based processes in drawing - those are good examples of mediums that teach you to think on your feet.

*Does your work have an underlying theme or idea?*

Themes are a very important aspect of my work. They are the first descriptors of the narrative, after which the titles of the works play their role.

Repeatedly I turn to narrative ideas about selfhood, and reflective journeys of some kind. Suburbia. Gay culture. Personal mythologies. Vampire fantasies. These have all been themes I explore in my drawings.

*Does the audience play a large part in your art making practice or is it more a personal process?*

It's important to me that people relate quite easily with the themes and try identify with a part of themselves in the individual works and their characters. I want their interpretation to be a reflective process, in the same way as the process of making it is for me.

*How has your style/practice changed over the years? If so who/what has brought about the change?*

I think my work has reached a point where all the different styles and ways of representation are now informing each other quite strongly. Working in a variety of drawing mediums, particularly printmaking, has helped strengthened visual relations between the images and their narratives.

*What does a typical day at work in your studio entail?*

I work between two studios. Each set up to cater for different drawing processes. Depending on the body of work, I'll either be in the mess studio doing charcoal and ink works, or at my home studio working in gouache.

*How do you see your practice evolving in the future?*

I've recently started created ceramic works again. I'm hoping, at some point, that some of these ideas will become part of installation concepts or objects complimenting the different themes.

*What are your plans for the upcoming year?*

I'll be showing new work in Sydney, New York, and a solo show in Cape Town later in 2016.

