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Artist in Focus

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ARTIST IN FOCUS: MICHAEL PYBUS

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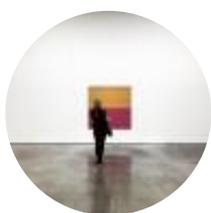
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**Jenny
Ludova**

Michael Pybus, what is your practice?

When people think of my practice I guess they think of me as a painter primarily, which is fair enough. For years I worked away making all kinds of stuff but it was only when I introduced painting into my practice that I think people began to start taking me seriously as an

JACOVA
October 12, 2015
Artist in Focus

artist, but I also make collages, videos, drawings, installations, zines, websites, ceramics, I write and curate too. I'm happy for people to think of me as a painter. In an expanded sense I feel everything I do relates to painting. I'm interested in the surface of things whether that be shiny new products, glowing touch screens, the mask of celebrity – basically the sheen of modern life. Our fantasies and nightmares projected onto a world of products and images that we can't stop consuming then getting bored of and throwing away.



Michael Pybus, Hubcap Smiley, installation view Evelyn Yard, 2015

What is your background?

I was raised in a little village in North East England. The countryside is a nice place to grow up, surrounded by nature and animals but culturally I found it lacking and with little opportunity to develop creatively in the direction I felt I wanted to follow. So when I was 19 I moved to London to study. I love this city which is why I'm still here now, although I do wish I had a garden. Being a country boy I'm really good at growing things. Years ago when I lived in SE London I had a barren concrete yard which I transformed into a jungle, everything grown from seed that was great... OK I'm going a little off topic now...





Michael Pybus, Hubcap Smiley, installation view Evelyn Yard, 2015

What are you currently working on now?

I've just completed a new series of fluorescent paintings for a solo presentation at Chicago Expo in September with Evelyn Yard. It's the first time I've used neon and the paintings feature day-glo dinosaurs, doctors and nurses. I'm pretty excited about these works. I'm also working on my next exhibition which will be opening at Johannes Vogt Gallery in NYC mid October. It will be my biggest installation to date incorporating painting and a new line of digitally printed clothing, taking reference from my collages and drawings, made in collaboration with my sister Joanna Pybus who's a fashion designer.



Michael Pybus, Hubcap Smiley, installation view Evelyn Yard, 2015

Why are you an artist?

It was never a choice for me so I can't really answer that. Since I was a child I've had an obsessive compulsion to make things and images and that compulsion never wanes or goes away. My mum told me when I was a toddler I didn't speak properly and

mis-pronounced words so badly that she had to be a translator for me so others could understand what I was trying to say. She was worried there may be something wrong with my development so she took me to a doctor. As we sat in the waiting room I began to draw. When we were called in to see the doctor, he asked who did the drawings to which my mum said Michael did them. This surprised him as they were of a level typically beyond my age group. He asked me to draw some more and it turned out in the assessment I was naturally more visually driven which meant I focused on what I saw, paying less attention to verbal and audio cues around me thus lowering my verbal development. He said there was nothing to worry about and my speaking would catch up, which thankfully it did. Although I think it's safe to say there are people who would say I talk way too much now...



Michael Pybus, Hubcap Smiley, installation view Evelyn Yard, 2015

What is your favourite art book? And why?

I don't have a favourite art book in particular but I do love my collection of Michel Majerus monographs, his work blows me away. He was post-internet in a pre-internet time, but not in the ironic self satisfied tone that a lot of that work today manifests. He wasn't about style for styles sake. He twisted design and branding to reveal the scaffolding that operates around it – the excitement of the new – a celebration of abundance but also the grotesqueness of over consumption and loneliness that living in a world that is always 'on' always 'connected' can create. He questioned what it

meant to be a painter in a time where society was about to be enveloped in a fog of technology that encouraged addiction to virtual reality and ever changing streaming media. Those paintings with PAINKILLER, POP IS TERROR, BLOOD ALLOVER, BURNED OUT plastered all over them are just fucking amazing!



Michael Pybus, Hubcap Smiley, installation view Evelyn Yard, 2015

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About **Jenny Judova**

Jenny Judova specialises in the primary art market. After studying art history (MA & MPhil) in Glasgow she moved to London where she set up Art Map London. Her job now is to help artists pursue and develop their careers in art. She is available for writing and speaking gigs.

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