

PAUL STOLPER

MARCUS HARVEY

HALF NELSON

Private View: 10 May 6pm – 8pm

Exhibition: 11 May – 16 June 2018

Paul Stolper is pleased to announce 'Half Nelson', an exhibition of eleven life-size ceramic busts by Marcus Harvey.

A group of 10 is unified through the use of the death masks of Napoleon Bonaparte and Horatio Nelson, which form the kernel of these imagined historical portraits/sculptures. Somewhere in between sculptures and statues, but neither ceremonial nor reverential the group highlights the pomp and ceremony associated with war and reward, the figures festooned with medals and epaulettes. A closer look reveals how Harvey pricks this pomposity; medals are moulded pineapples and hand grenades; epaulettes the imprint of a boot stamp, or a Crucifixion. Curtains of clay become high collars, overcoats and hats, which cocoon faces at once very familiar and eerily similar in look; both the Napoleon and Nelson almost angelic in death, high cheekbones and serene closed eyes. But it is these absurd accoutrements that shore up and hold the delicate faces in place, assembled as they are from a DIY dressing-up box of everyday and locally sourced material, Nelson's 'Blue Peter' stamped shield, or the vulture that seamlessly merges with Napoleon's coat for example which when viewed in their entirety are utterly convincing.

The body of each work, punctured by deep finger marks, which physically glue the figure into a solid mass becomes an armature for collage, and there is an obvious joy to collating and fabricating these substitutes. One piece 'Tommy' is a portrait of an imagined British World War I soldier; the slabbed, collaged features echoing Henry Tonks drawings of the sutured faces of men horrifically disfigured in the trenches.

Marcus Harvey is a British painter and sculptor, publisher and art educator associated with the YBA group of artists who came to prominence in the 1990's and is best known for his iconic work Myra which provoked huge controversy when exhibited in Sensation at the Royal Academy in 1997. He studied at Goldsmiths College 1982 – 86 and has exhibited widely throughout the UK and Europe and is represented in collections worldwide.

Harvey has continued to explore themes of British identity through heavily manipulated, often controversial iconography. He co-founded 'Turps Banana' painting magazine in 2005 and 'Turps Banana Art school' in 2012.

For further information, prices, and images, please contact rachel@paulstolper.com

Open

Mon – Fri 10am – 6pm
Sat 12pm – 6pm