

Artist

JO MEISNER



The Lonely Crowd II, 2018, Digital Print on laser cut Perspex, 89cm x variable width.

Information from the artist

The ordinary scene of a crowd in transit is a repeated motif in my work, which is characterized by the representation of anonymous figures observed from the rear and side view. From the context of the crowd, individuals are isolated and replaced by mirrors, shadows and tactile reliefs; in this way the figure becomes a surrogate for psychological introspection and self-identification and my work could be read as a means of oblique self-portraiture.

Studying

Meisner's interdisciplinary practice includes sculptural assemblage, installation and photography. Her artwork examines identity, social isolation and changes in human interaction brought about by smart phone technology. Meisner highlights isolated figures in crowded urban landscapes, such as commuters on trains, walking to work or standing at bus stops.

- The work in this show was inspired by reading the collected essays 'Hold Everything Dear' by art historian John Berger. For Meisner, this meant questioning her most important values and memories. What do you think these are? Discover more by visiting her website; <https://jomeisner.com.au/>
- The cut-out silhouetted figure is utilised throughout Meisner's work. Read about this technique's short history; <http://www.silhouettesbyhand.com/history>
- Research contemporary artist Kara Walker who utilises silhouette to explore issues of race, gender and identity from a African-American perspective <https://www.moma.org/artists/7679>
- John Berger's book 'Ways of Seeing' examined the impact of photography on our appreciation of art from the past. It became a popular 4-part television series; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0pDE4VX_9Kk

Making

Create your own figure portrait using a cut-out silhouette. Download some figure stencils and interesting textures from the weblinks below. Place two sheets back to back and glue together. One dry cut out and arrange. To play with transparency, try printing onto acetate (clear plastic sheet) using the figure silhouettes as templates to cut around. Experiment with overlapping and layering the sheets to create the sense of a busy crowd. Display your work in a well-lit window.

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