



Wet Lettuce

Semblance

Like Sydney born artist Tony Schwensen, an artist he refers to as influencing his work, TJ Phillipson switches to find the best medium to express his ideas. In *Semblance* we see TJ Phillipson's photo media work, but also evidence of his interest in performance.

Phillipson puts himself in the frame in *Semblance*, less obviously than in some of his earlier work but unmistakably as a confused man (is it the drink?) with a lettuce head (*Wet Lettuce*), a man beset by pressure to achieve and make money (*Executive*) or the conflicted man with too much on his mind (*Versus*). I'm sure there will be many other interpretations; Phillipson seems to take great pleasure in creating multiple layers of meaning.

TJ Phillipson was selected for an Emerging Artist Support Scheme (EASS) residency at PhotoAccess from last year's ANU School of Art graduating year. EASS residents are selected on the quality and impact of their work in the end of year show. TJ's work stood out because of its astonishing visual impact and his full on commitment to making provocative and challenging images. It is pleasing to see that this commitment has not diminished in his year away from art school.

A questioning nature can produce great art or give rise to confusing, incoherent and unengaging work. Phillipson's musings on the nature and shape of masculinity have given rise to serious images, but also images like *Calm Waters* and *Fruity Arm* that engage and amuse us with references that are predictable but juxtaposed in unexpected and clearly ironic ways. Then he drags us back to grim reality with the obvious despair of *Disparaged* and *Caved In*. It's a confusing world, but Phillipson gives us a coherent and engaging meditation on it in *Semblance*.

A heavy workload producing images for several exhibitions, a short film and honouring commitments as an artist in residence at PhotoAccess and Canberra Contemporary Art Space might have resulted in a less interesting and challenging body of work. It says a lot about TJ Phillipson's maturity as an artist that *Semblance* is a strong and intriguing exhibition. PhotoAccess is very pleased to share his work with visitors to the HUW DAVIES GALLERY at the Manuka Arts Centre.

David Chalker

Artist statement

My practice examines and questions technological future and past in relation to the human body, emotion, sexuality and identity. There is a complex and absurd relationship between people and technology. The Internet, advertising and popular culture spread falsehoods and stereotypes about our own lives and society.

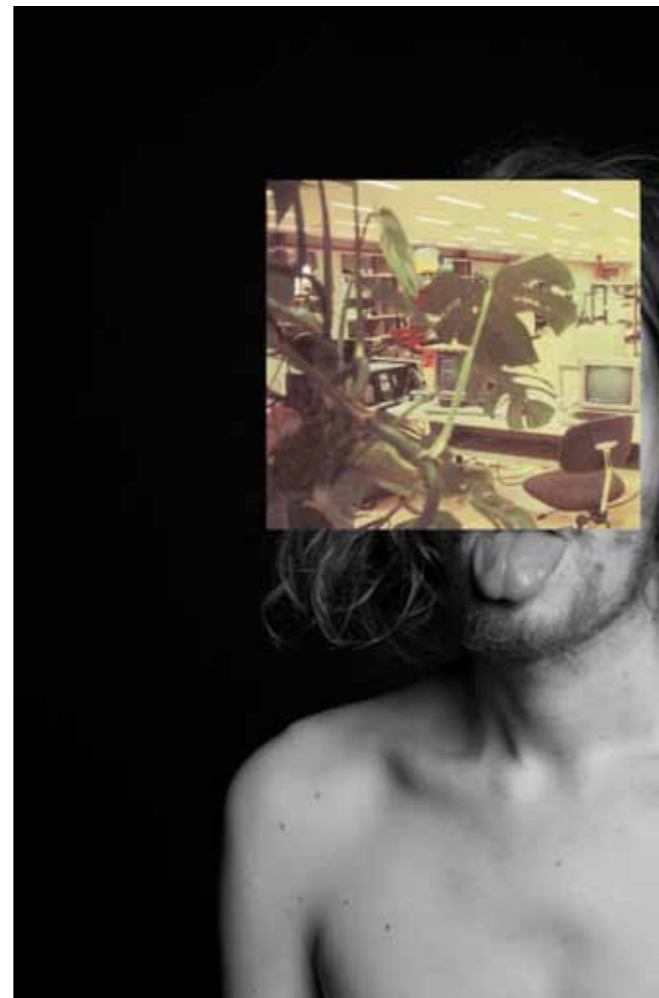
Semblance looks in particular at changing current views on masculinity and how it has shaped the way men of my generation see themselves. Using photographic performance and self-portraiture this body of work expresses concerns about the evolving (or lack thereof) sense of masculinity.

TJ Phillipson
December 2009



M.R.I.

Semblance



Back Cover Image: *Semblance*
Front Cover Image: *Versus*

This exhibition is part of the ANU School of Art Emerging Artists Support Scheme 2008

photoaccess
at the Manuka Arts Centre
An ACT Government Arts Facility



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TJ Phillipson
18 December 2009 - 31 January 2010
HUW DAVIES GALLERY

Biography

Qualifications

- 2008 Bachelor of Visual Arts (Hons), Australian National University (ANU) School of Art, Canberra, ACT
- 2007 Bachelor of Arts (Visual), ANU School of Art, Canberra

Solo exhibitions

- 2009 *Semblance*, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, PhotoAccess, Canberra
- 2008 *In Stereo*, Photospace Gallery, Canberra
- 2007 *ICU*, Photospace Gallery, Canberra

Group exhibitions

- 2009 *Lost Property Developers*, Belconnen Bus Interchange, Canberra
- 2008 *Graduation Exhibition 2008*, School of Art Gallery, Canberra
Hot New Things. Touring exhibition, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane
VIVID: The National Photography Festival, Parliament House, Canberra
Arigato Gozaimasu, Doho-Kan, Kyoto Seika University, Kyoto, Japan
- 2007 *Graduation Exhibition 2007*, ANU School of Art Gallery, Canberra
We Like Older Men, Quay Hole Gallery, Wanganui, New Zealand
The Empty Show, abandoned building, Acton, Canberra, ACT
- 2006 *Fragile*, a public art exhibition in the grounds of ANU, Canberra
Come to our Exhibition, Photospace Gallery Canberra
- 2004 *Heritage Afresh*, Albury Regional Art Gallery, NSW

Screenings

- 2009 Film for the ANU at TROPFEST, Commonwealth Park, Canberra
- 2008 *BEAM*, projection, Civic Square, Domain Arts Festival, Canberra
- 2007 *BEAM*, projection on the National Library of Australia, Canberra
- 2006 *CUT*, Facultad de Bellas Artes Festival, Argentina
CUT, National Film and Sound Archive, Canberra

Prizes, awards and residencies

- 2008 Artist in residence, Canberra Contemporary Art Space
Artist in residence, PhotoAccess, Canberra
Winner of the Annual Doho-kan Art Prize. Kyoto Seika University, Kyoto, Japan

Collections

Collection of The Molonglo Group, Canberra; National Film and Sound Archive, Canberra; Private Collection of Mrs Megan Vollmer, London, UK; private collections in the ACT, NSW and Victoria

All images are 112 x 75 cm or 75 x 112 cm; available for sale (unframed) at \$550 each