

**Mischievously melancholic with a gentle violence, *Masters of Mis/direction* plays with menace.**

*Nondumiso Msimanga, opening speaker for The Masters of Misdirection solo show at Lizamore & Associates gallery*

The archetypes are a remodeling of contemporary mythologies with a mature awareness of the histories that have shaped the images that make us who we are today. The work tells a story that has been in the making for three years (and also for eternity). It is a cycle of subtle fears of what lurks in the shadows of human consciousness, from the calm-terror of the Scarecrow to the gluttonous Mother, the soft-fisted Hero to the haunting rhymes of angry children's voices; there's an unanswered question lurking beneath the swirling waters of the unconscious.

Are we really free?

What does freedom of speech mean? ...When you have a ball-gag in your mouth and can only spell out the words given to you? Whose myth are we really living? ARE we really living?

Jenny Nijenhuis has sculpted an alternate consciousness, one that is aware of the archetypes that mould it. From Greek mythology to Jungian psychology and even a little comic book legend, her exhibition here today is an exposition in the most sincere fashion: she is revealing, exhibiting pictures of the psyche that stay so well hidden in contemporary society.

We are all Scarecrows, with our goggles and gas-masks; we hide so well what the frail make-up of our beings is. And, we need to because we need to become armour- our very selves. We need to protect ourselves from the world. We need to protect ourselves from dreams.

Jenny studied art as a student, a few years ago now, but she didn't pursue her dream immediately after completing her degree. As is often said- life happened. She got a job, she worked, and she was responsible. And she has been creative in her work and has been quite successful at it. But she did not dare to live her dream until now. She said that she's finally arrived at the right place, at the right time; and, she has allowed herself to be an artist. She is a really good artist at that and the world can only be grateful that life did not let that talent go unseen. But it is a talent that almost went unrevealed.

The world does not let us dream. The big bad world is the robber of innocence. This is partly why the archetypes exist. As human beings we grow up and learn to stop playing so we can protect ourselves, to play only given roles so that we are safe; even from our own dreams.

The mirror that stands next to the menacing crow is such a telling piece of curatorial art, also. How can you not turn to see yourself when you delve into the Shadow parts of the psyche? In Jungian terms it stands as a hint at Syzygy: a yin and yang working together. Perhaps that is what sparks the life of this exhibition as a whole. *Masters of Mis/direction* is not just a young rebels rant at the world for its wrongs, for its stealing away of the right to dream, for its gagging of the voice that seeks to be creative... the voice that is Other (to borrow from Bev Butkow's display next to this one). *Masters of Mis/direction* has years of experience and life behind its gentle form; just as *M/Other* does. There is Yin and Yang that are at play here. Jenny has toyed with a deep sadness that seems to have its roots throughout the history of the collective unconscious; as Cronus' eyes have bled dry but appear to have metamorphosed into a scattering of little creatures that look all around him, looking out for him and seeing what he can no longer see. She's also created a very playful sense of peril. There are no easy archetypes in her new mythology, the Mother is not necessarily all good or bad, she sits as a question of how we live today. The two parts are present all at once and with a moving lack of judgment.

In an interesting dialogue with Bev's *M/Other*, not only by proximity, but because of the questions that these two emerging but mature artists are asking; the exhibitions offer no easy answers. There is a lack that is so present in both showings that it can only be up to the individual to fill in the gaps with their own experience. Maybe this knowledge comes from their experience as mothers and business-women and wives who have found their creative spark again but, what is shared here is an offering for you all to participate in the continued writing of the stories... You are each invited to add to the contemporary mythology and see the archetypes that inform our world in 2-and 3-dimensional form. Enjoy.