

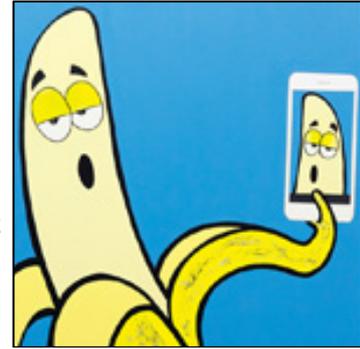
# LUNGLEY

## MICHAEL PYBUS: soft play

07/12/18 - 13/01/19

Private view 05/12, 6-9pm.

For his first solo exhibition at LUNGLEY, Michael Pybus presents **soft play**.



“Our ability to think independently is being manipulated by digital algorithms optimised to make social media platforms as addictive as possible. Users are being encouraged to build their identity around conflict & victimhood. In doing so they lose personal agency, becoming vulnerable to group think & the collective hysteria of outrage cycles.

This infantilization of adults (which is also a tried & tested approach in consumer marketing) is creating a cultural environment where communication & expectations are increasingly becoming reductive, binary & dictatorial. Altruism is now worn as a ‘filter’ - pathologized as a means to manipulate & dehumanise those who share different opinions.

The egocentric application of social media which physically detaches humans from one another, insulating them in technology, pressures each user to reveal increasingly excessive & intimate personal details for public consumption. This enters us into a digital Hunger Games where a virtual scoreboard of likes & follows constantly live broadcasts our position in the social hierarchy.

Validation is the opiate of the masses & now a preference for falsification permeates our culture. This pressure to be ‘liked’ is leading us to believe everyone else’s lives are bigger, better & more beautiful, instilling a sense of personal inadequacy by planting seeds of doubt in ones own agency to make decisions autonomously. Users are encouraged to mould their opinions to placate the audience rather than risk expressing true thoughts for fear of ostracisation & public shaming. For many it is the norm to seek approval based on bogus projections of themselves. This is ushering in an age of pseudo integrity, feeding on an egotistical drive to be admired, obeyed & beyond questioning.

A public voice brings with it a responsibility to accept a diversity of ideas. Instead of attempting to tackle the complexities of our modern world, many choose instead to campaign for restrictions on free & open thought as a means to remain coddled in digitised arrested development. A perverse hypereality is then cultivated where an ‘authentic’ individual is defined by one who repeats mob mandated mantras instead of speaking what they believe. Users now perform to please the atomised crowd, breeding a hive mind conformity that seeks to feed the ego in a narcissistic drive towards a zero-sum game.” Michael Pybus

For ‘soft play’ Pybus transforms the gallery into a fully immersive ball pit. A ‘safe space’ so to speak. An Instagrammable opportunity where the audience is invited to contemplate his new works which channel his trademark reconfiguration of pop iconography to comment upon the increasingly divisive cultural & commutative digital environments that we have found ourselves unwittingly submerged into at the dawn of the 21st Century.

Michael Pybus (1982, UK) lives & works in London, (UK). He has a BA in Fine Arts from Goldsmiths 2004 and an MA in Sculpture from the Royal College of Art 2008, London (UK). Recent solo exhibitions include ‘I’m sure they have very different paintings on their own walls’, Jelato Love, Palma (ES) 2018 ‘HIVE MIND’, Jonathan Hopson, Houston (USA) 2017 ‘Pretend the world is funny and forever’, Amor, Mexico City (MEX) 2017, ‘HOLLOW’, Thierry Goldberg Projects, NY (US) 2017, ‘PEAK HUMAN’, Depart Foundation, Los Angeles (US) 2017, ‘CRUMPLE ZONE’, Tatjana Pieters, Ghent (BE) 2016, ‘Karaoke’, Carl Kostyal Stockholm (SE) 2016, ‘If it works, it’s obsolete’, Johannes Vogt NYC (USA) 2015. His work is included in the collections of Takashi Murakami (JP), Zabludowicz (UK), Philippos Tsangrides (GR), Popov (RUS) and can be found in private collections in the USA, UK, Brazil, Ireland, Sweden, Belgium, Greece, Germany, Spain, Taiwan, France, Switzerland, Italy, Canada, Australia & China.

For further information please contact the gallery at [mark@lungleygallery.com](mailto:mark@lungleygallery.com)

**LUNGLEY Gallery**

[www.lungleygallery.com](http://www.lungleygallery.com)

Haggerston Pub (*in the cellar*), 438 Kingsland Road, London, E8 4AA. / Open Fri-Sat 2-6pm & by appointment.