

What kind of work will be in your exhibition *Relatively Fruity*?

I wanted my exhibition to be a nice platter filled with different flavours of my practice. Showcasing the variety of materials used, from dripping drops of bubble gum, disco coloured frames to glossy clinical white objects. It's a promised land of affected senses. As my debut show the exhibition will show a journey of my creative development, allowing viewers to see how each work flows into one another and are related. The body of work is diverse and catered towards all tastes. Using conventional methods vs the more unconventional to create a visual journey, giving room for contemporary tastes.

What was the inspiration behind the name of the exhibition?

I find it difficult to name work and so coming up with a name that I felt gave the work justice took a while. I wanted something that was fun and playful that reflected the work, with a subtle reference to queer culture. So I was quite delighted to come up with a title that was multi layered! A name that was able to explain what some of the work was on a very surface level and then delve deeper into some of the issues that my work deals with.

What inspires your art?

My concepts for work are born from intimate personal experiences. Each individual piece of art has an identity, a reason to speak and exist. The creative process behind my artworks is the most important thing and therefore it can be made of anything and take any form. Appropriated everyday objects transform stereotypes and famous art historical references become twisted. As a member of the queer community, I uses this to examine, question and criticize the relationships between gender, (homo)sexuality and societies' misconceptions about those themes. But, despite what it might look like to the contemporary spectator, a purely erotic and queer reading of the work would be misguided. There is an universal profundity at play revealing itself slowly for those willing to look and feel.

What do you hope people will take away from seeing your exhibition?

My hope is that I can entertain people's idea of what art can be and that they will be able to connect with the story as much as the actual work itself. As I have a mix of different types of art it will be interesting to see how people can see the connection between a painting and a sculpture and how some works blur the lines of what that means. I would love people to question and ask why, open minds are how new ideas and loves are formed.

I love listening and watching people react to my work, its playful and seemingly light-hearted but with serious undertones. I particularly enjoy pushing the viewer into an uncomfortable space but not over the edge – wanting them to experience something different – or to step back and to think about a topic in a different light.

Do you have any artistic heroes?

I love many artists and always love seeing what people create and what ideas I can use in my own work. Artists and art movements that I grew up studying in school have had a big impact on me. I love pop art and artist like Andy Warhol, Damien Hirst, and Jeff Koons. I admire their art and also how they view the world around them. Reacting to what they see around them and making it their own.

I also have a real love for William Morris and the impact he had on the world through his initiative ideas. It's inspiring to see artists whose work can change an industry or a part of history.

Your work touches on issues around sexuality and the experiences of the queer community, why do you think this is such an important topic to look at in your art?

My art can be interpreted however you want and I do find it fascinating to hear how those who aren't in the queer community connect with my work. One doesn't have to be gay to find a phallic banana entertaining or beautiful. The topic of sexuality can be quite confronting for some people and so I aim to make work that isn't immediately in your face, just enough so people are drawn in and question it. This allows people to discuss and enjoy what they see sometimes before they know what it is or what it means. Making work that is clean, pleasing and entertaining creates a bridge between the meaning/interpretation of the work and how it is initially viewed. It's an important topic to discuss as there are still many who view the queer community as a negative thing, allowing others to connect with my work is a step in the right direction of acceptance for all.

How do you see your own identity within your art?

It's very important for my work to be filled with personality as people can see heartless art. When I first started making art I was inspired by others work and now I know it's not enough to draw your ideas from others. Making art that is directed linked to me makes it so much more enjoyable and passionate, others can see that as well and gives me even more joy when someone connects with my work as it's an extension of myself. Over the last few years my art has taken a big jump and it's purely because I've introduced personal topics and experiences, this gave me confidence not only in my work but also in myself.

You work in different mediums – how do you choose which medium to work in for each piece? What do you think is next for you?

As I'm so diverse in my mediums I always have ideas bubbling away and it's always a great journey to find the right material or way of creating the work. Experimenting and playing is the best way of seeing if ideas work or what materials would be best suited. Materials have different personalities and react differently, which I take into consideration when creating. Using more unconventional materials gives

Why should the community support Artweek?

Who wouldn't want to go and see some amazing work and broaden their minds to others ideas and creations. Especially during this difficult time for everyone, the creative world has definitely been struck hard and everyone needs a little support, even if it's just turning up and being part of something. I thrive on other people's creativity and love being part of the process. There are so many talented people who all have individual stories to tell and they show it through their work, go look and engage in someone's story.