

Myth Maker: Marco Zaffino

In a new exhibition of striking photography, each image takes the form of an alternate world; and a universe which Marco Zaffino much prefers to reality.

Born in 1973, Huddersfield-born artist Marco Zaffino trained as a painter – inspired by mastered disciplines of Renaissance art and their parallel to philosophy. Bored by one medium, he moved on to the next – surrealist independent films and novels. Driven by the endless opportunities of the arts and an eclectic array of mediums, a striking style of photography was born. Initial concepts are made through a process of extensive sketches (figures 1 & 2) to conjure a dialogue as powerful as the Myth it projects. Prime subjects are often females, who contrast or entwine within their bold surroundings. “I was always inspired by powerful, strong women who had not ‘Earthed’ well” says Zaffino, “I admired [pioneering English aviatrix] Amy Johnson – for she believed that reality wouldn’t be honest of how we see the world.”



Within ‘Moors Myth’ (figure 3), travellers embark on a cross-cultural journey. A primordial composition portrays the dynamics of each character from self-written novel ‘Arthur Blue and the Carnival of the South’ (2014). The Models within photograph are relations: friends, parents of children at playgroup, journalists and fellow artists – connections which Zaffino believes to be integral to bring characters to life. “Working in industry, it can feel like the camera is just clicking” he reflects, “however when a



model can connect with a photographer – you can create some really epic images.”

The technicalities behind Zaffino's distinctive style of image are entirely self-taught, born through a lengthy process of trial, error and humble craft. Costumes are often entirely self-made in order to illustrate intricate characters within each collection of photographs. “I often re-work vintage clothing” Zaffino explains, “or find inspiration by objects I find lying around – such as a red lampshade with tassels, which I plan to re-work into a headpiece”. The backdrop to ‘Red’ (figure 4) [a striking image of journalist Rhiannon Edwards immersed within rich red velvet] “was in fact a length of fabric clipped to a washing line in my garden” Zaffino explains - demonstrating that expertise need not require a budget – only experience, creativity and most importantly: passion.



For future projects, Zaffino intends to develop his established portfolio by changing the perception of photography altogether. “Photography is very much ‘down & safe’” he says, “however painting on top of it turns it into an interesting object. It also provides opportunities to involve current thoughts – such as slogans.” Zaffino looks to art as opportunistic, eclectic and most importantly, ephemeral. “I want to push what's possible and not just create something pretty”.

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See Marco Zaffino's Art at:
<http://www.theveranda.co.uk/>