

Steven Hector Gonzalez

The consumption of the idealized, white, masculine body, as viewed through television, film, social media, and gay pornography has largely contributed to the construction of my sexual identity. I negotiate the conflict of lusting after eurocentric ideas of physical perfection while simultaneously constructing myself as an object of desire in my work. Currently, my practice incorporates collage wherein I physically and digitally manipulate depictions of the macho man. I cull material from a variety of places. Found gay pornography has been a primary source by functioning as early adolescent affirmation of my queer identity. Tom of Finland illustrations and Old-Hollywood gay film icons (e.g. Rock Hudson, James Dean, Marlon Brando, and Tab Hunter) are additional sources I consider, as their imagery is ever-present even in contemporary queer media. Manipulation of these images comes in the form of slit-scanning and analog generation loss, as well as creating physical tears and wrinkles in the image. This collage practice designates a period to reflect on the image's relationship to myself as I handle, caress, and rip, the representation of what I yearn for. The production of these collage works currently culminate in photographic prints, books, and sculptures.

In addition to collage I experiment with modes of self-portraiture and the idea of queer space through expanding on my experiences of consumption and desire. My explorations in self-portraiture involves projecting a gay pornographic video of a jock orgy onto myself as I perform Connie Francis "Where The Boys Are.". This video performance refers to a longing for inclusion and idealization where it cannot be found. In a fantasy where all bodies could be present, this orgy caters to the fantasy of the white jock where no men of color are allowed. Self-portraiture is again addressed in my other video performance, "Untitled (Hotel Shoot)". This video places me within the a hotel room to locate myself within the aesthetics of common pornographic space wherein I to direct myself to be consumed for the viewers pleasure. Beyond presenting my body to be visible, desired, and consumed I also interrupt that process by bringing to the forefront the constructed artifice surrounding the desirable subject. The rupture within the video takes the form of inserted clips documenting the production of the staged performance which then in turn has become a part of the work.

- January, 2019