

For immediate release

You are a Part of the Fabric of my Life
Clare Menck

5 April – 8 May 2016



Gentleman with cane, monotype and drypoint combination, 10 x 15cm, 2016.



Pubescent side-show performer, monotype and drypoint combination, 10 x 15 cm, 2016.

Menck's latest solo exhibition which opened on 5 April signals a shift in this established mid-career painters' development. Acknowledged as one of South Africa's finest painters, Menck is also one of a handful of painters who have specialised in the genre of self-portraiture. A career highlight came in 2014 with her inclusion in the Paula Modersohn-Becker Museum exhibition, *Sie. Selbst. Nackt. (She. Herself. Naked)* showing alongside, Marina Abramovic, Louise Bourgeois, Imogen Cunningham, Ana Mendieta, Yoko Ono, Catherine Opie, Jenny Saville, & Francesca Woodman amongst others.

In the extract below, she shares her thoughts on the genesis of her current solo exhibition. "Yes indeed, your proposed alternative mediums show has had a major influence on my change of direction, because I have been standing on the brink of moving to working on paper for some time now; and your brief forced me to consider its possibilities concretely as an incentive.

My printing experience included merely six months with the artist Hardy Botha who was my etching lecturer in my second year at the University of Stellenbosch. I always thought that technically I had learnt the minimum (but I must have learnt about using a file and Brasso from

him!). It has taken me decades to build up my self-confidence to return to this art form. Hardy taught us about *life* because his classes were more of his stories (reminiscences or lore?) of him having toured Europe as a circus acrobat. This, in hindsight, is particularly ironic and strangely fitting, considering my present growing pre-occupation with the marginalised sideshow crowd of the 19th Century, touchingly rendered in more than 700 tintypes/daguerreotypes by Eisenmann.

Since art school I also did a few years with Paddy Bouma, printing with litho stones. More recently I completed three individual week-long workshops. One was a lithography workshop at the Atelier Pons in Paris where I printed off a stone with the formidable Madame Pons. The other two workshops were a week with Mark Attwood at The Artist's Press in Wit River, Mpumalanga, printing large scale double and triple layered monoprints made possible by the use of Perspex and light tables. And very recently (end of 2015) a three-day stint with master printer Tim Foulds in Midrand, Johannesburg, printing single layered small and medium monoprints painted on metal. Tim, like Mark had trained at the Tamarind Institute for Printmaking in the United States. It was this last workshop with Tim that prompted me finally to overcome my fifteen year long fear of using my own press for the first time, at the start of 2016. And I am thrilled with the results. My current exhibition includes a few paintings on metal, and one on copper plate."

About Clare Menck

Menck obtained a BA (Fine Arts)(cum laude) from the University of Stellenbosch in 1990; an Advanced Diploma in Fine Art (painting) from the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town in 1991; an MA (Fine Arts) (painting) from the University of Stellenbosch; and Post-graduate studies in 1998 at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Dresden, Germany.

She is represented in museum, corporate, academic and private collections both in South Africa and internationally.

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For interviews or further details on the exhibition, detailed artist biography and/or images please contact the gallery on 021 422 2762 or email us on photogallery@mweb.co.za

ERDMANNcontemporary
84 Kloof Street | Gardens | Cape Town | 8001
T. 021 422 2762 | F. 021 422 3278 | E. photogallery@mweb.co.za
www.erdmanncontemporary.co.za