

# SQIFF

## BRUCE LABRUCE: REPRESENTING THE UNREPRESENTABLE



I came to fruition as an artist, so to speak, during the gay sexual liberation movement. The engine of the gay movement in the seventies and eighties, right up to the mid nineties, was militant, extreme, with unapologetic sex and sexual experimentation. I used pornographic imagery in my films, photographs, and writing as a direct and confrontational expression of homosexuality, so it was political in that sense. I've also tried to present a complex and at times politically incorrect expression of homosexuality, intersecting its extreme and explicit representation with religious imagery, iconography and historical references from other militant movements, horror and gore imagery, etc. I've tried to present homosexuality in a historically and psychologically complex manner, not shying away from its darker or more disturbing manifestations. For me, this is also political in its challenging of the status quo of both the dominant culture and of the gay mainstream.

I'm not really interested in porn *per se*. Which I keep telling people and no one believes me! But I'm not really interested in porn, I don't watch porn, I don't follow it so much. What interests me is the effect it has on people. And how you can manipulate it, or how you can incorporate it into your art practice to create a certain effect. So it's the taboo value, it's the idea that it's a kind of a forbidden zone that you are not supposed to enter. My work has always represented taboos, fetishes, and transgressive sexual behaviour in many forms. I'm interested in my art in representing what isn't supposed to be represented. In representing the unrepresentable.

Lately I have been collaborating with a number of trans artists and performers, as I see them as the new queer radicals. I have certain affinities with what is considered New Queer Cinema, but my work has been far more underground, pornographic, and problematic than most of the films associated with that genre. Perhaps I am the problem child of the New Queer Cinema. People would say "You're only making those films as a provocation." Well, I don't see anything wrong with that. Being provocative. I'm an *agent provocateur*. I just think that people get very complacent about cinema or gay politics or anything like that. So I try to shake up other people's complacencies. People tend to stick to certain idioms or certain behaviour and I'm trying to knock them out of that pattern. I guess it's like a goal in life... it really boils down to my philosophy of homosexuality which is that for me being homosexual is a great opportunity to be different and to express difference and as an outsider to observe culture.

*Bruce LaBruce's film **The Misandrists** will open the Scottish Queer International Film Festival at the CCA on 27th September 2017. We will be joined by director Bruce LaBruce and actor Caprice Crawford for a Q&A after the screening, followed by a drinks reception.*

*SQIFF will also be screening LaBruce's 1996 film **Hustler White** alongside his new short film **Refugee's Welcome** at Glasgow Film Theatre on 1st October.*