

Bodies Politic

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'Bodies Politic' is a series of eight desktop drawings. A senior lecturer at RMIT University, Creek regularly takes art students to wet specimen laboratories for anatomical studies. Equally pragmatic and macabre, the labor laboratories showcase human body parts, enabling close study and research. The eight tables in Bodies Politics refer to the experience of these visits and the eight continents of the body as it is divided in classical anatomy. These are the head, neck, thorax, back, upper limb, abdomen, pelvis and lower limb. The anatomy laboratory lays out the dissected body for study onto eight tables representative of these 'continents'. In addition to the observational training these visits provide, the experience of studying human remains also offers a sobering reminder of our ontological state and has naturally led Creek to consider his own corporeal self.

In this work Creek has inked his own body and made physical body prints on the paper, which forms a ground or landscape from which the drawing emerges. The prints are not always obvious as markings made with the artist's body although the inference of skin, edges of limbs, hair is clearly visible. In this way Creek makes the inherently private, public and opens the body up to political actions, protestations, observation and defacement. There is a playful use of scale in the attachment of small ink-jet transfer prints of 20th century international political leaders, each related to one of the various 'continents' of the world. The play on geographic and bodily land masses, and the absurd scale of the little pinned on heads against their power-ranger-esque bodies is comic and also slightly abject, reminiscent of the political caricature of cartoonists such as James Gillray (1757-1815).

The eight tables sit in their space akin to geographic land masses, which the viewer can move between, connecting one drawing to the other. There are cross-references to read across the tables with parts of drawings having been removed and repasted into others. Synergies emerge with the markings of gestures and physical actions visible in rips, tears and losses. The remains of these attacks on the paper, tear at the body prints leaving us to wonder in Creek's words "Who would do that to a body? But then whose body is it anyway?"

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