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Cedarville Review Spotlight: Brian McCray

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CEDARVILLE REVIEW SPOTLIGHT: BRIAN MCCRAY



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43

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Cedarville
Review

44



IT'S MORNING

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

I guess you could say I, like anyone else, am a unique conglomeration of disparate influences. Bad things influence me more than good things. If I see something that irritates me or that I don't like, it helps refine what I want because it sets itself up as a boundary or an adversary.

SO DOES THE ART PLAY A NEGATIVE ROLE, WHERE IT TEARS DOWN FALSE NARRATIVES?

I hope so and I hope it presents an alternative also. In order to show how we can live well, we can show that by examples of a bad thing.

WALK US THROUGH THE HEIRLOOM CAT

The Heirloom Cat is an old character for me. I've been writing stories about the Heirloom Cat since I was in high school. They've gradually gotten more and more abstract. It has a sort of foundation I know, but no one else has any context for it, which is good because it makes it more confusing and mind-bending.

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45



THE HEIRLOOM CAT

TELL US ABOUT YOUR AESTHETIC AND WHY YOU MAKE ART THE WAY YOU DO

My comics are influenced by an artist and writer named Edward Gorey. He did all of these children's books, but they're really dark in a suggestive and understated way. The text is bland compared to the drawings, but the pictures interact with the words in a way you don't expect. It's a sort of Gothic sensibility. The Heirloom Cat is heavily influenced by Edward Gorey's style.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR TECHNICAL PROCESS—WHY DO YOU CHOOSE THESE PROCESSES?

Basically, I try to copy the materials and processes of people whose work I admire. I dig a lot of different forms of art, so I split my time between doing comic and more what would be considered “fine art” techniques. Oil painting would be my favorite in that field. I know what I like seeing in a gallery. Large canvasses can make a lot of impact. Look at David Salle or Willem de Kooning or somebody that works with immense surfaces. That form has a lot of gravitas you can play with. Then, people will notice it, take it seriously, and you can upend their expectation of what a painting might be.

The
The Middle

47

Cedarville
Review

48



PORTRAIT OF DOUG MALCOLM



The
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49

PORTRAIT OF DOMINIQUE JACKSON