

ARUSHA

GALLERY

Casper White

Bell, book and candle

The phrase "bell, book, and candle" refers to a Latin method of excommunication by anathema, imposed on a person who had committed sin. This phrase also has ties to witchcraft and spiritualism, and has come into use as a general term or for deviation from norms in a historical and modern sense., denoting that which exists outside of the traditional.

Casper White's most recent body of work embodies this, with the process of excommunication herein signifying a shift, or bridge, between the classical and works from the post-canonical digital world. The singularity or personal performance shown in these works, particularly those stemming from an observation of internet trends and the digital world, mirrors that sense of historical excommunication, with a more modern twist. The figures shown could be seen as excommunicating themselves from a socially charged setting in order to perform, or explore their own emotions through crying or displaying overt emotion on digital media. This signifies a separation from standard accepted societal norms to an emotions-led platform in which the individual seeks only to be governed by themselves, and their own intuition rather than a following of a dogmatic or controlled community.

In works such as *Saint Michael the Archangel Andrea Della Robia filmed at The Met with pleated skirt by Ariana Puga* and *Neapolitan Creche Figure from the Met*, White encompasses the themes of classical influence through an observation of established works of art with a respectful reverence which is transformed through the brushstrokes and colour palette to something new and invigorated. Conversely, the *Crying online* series pay homage to the deviation from the early modern influence through the inclusion of works with a contemporary digital inspiration, drawing parallels from that which is traditional and was deemed within the bounds of artistic canon in the past with the vibrant, new, emergent influence through the works, selfhood, and the new digital landscape of the post-classical world.

The phrase 'bell, book and candle' embodies a sense of otherness, of mystery, shrouding the works in a charged and obscurial nature - echoing the works coming forth from the darkness, enlightened only by themselves, from within, free from external influence, through the use of flickering candle. It conveys a sense of uncovering, of emergence and illumination. The mysterious and captivating nature of the works seem to draw us closer, encouraging us to connect and engage with the show on a deeper level, igniting a deep rooted curiosity and desire to see beyond the material construct of the work itself.

The candles which illuminate a selection of the works not only create a dramatic impact, but further speak to the enlightenment from within that comes with a break from the societal standard. The works are not lit from above, from any external light source or influence, they are cast in light and shadow from their own personal candle - lit from within.