

GIAN MANIK

Gian (pronounced Gee-ann) Manik likes to keep you guessing. His work is layered with what he calls "potentiality" and "activation" and like Joseph Beuys or Franz West the materials he uses have begun to develop their own language, one that has brought him significant recent visibility as an artist.

Manik graduated from Curtin University in 2007, was a participant in *Hatched* in the same year and is the current recipient of the Artsource Gunnery residency. He recently exhibited in *Yellow Vest Syndrome* (a survey of contemporary Western Australian artists at the Fremantle Arts Centre) and in a collaboration with Jacob Ogden Smith called *How Works*, which takes up the whole of the Perth Town Hall.

His entangled system of analysis and critical enquiry is making curators sit up and take notice. "I'm lucky in that people are interested in what I try to communicate. I find working fast and constantly generates more ideas and outcomes," he says.

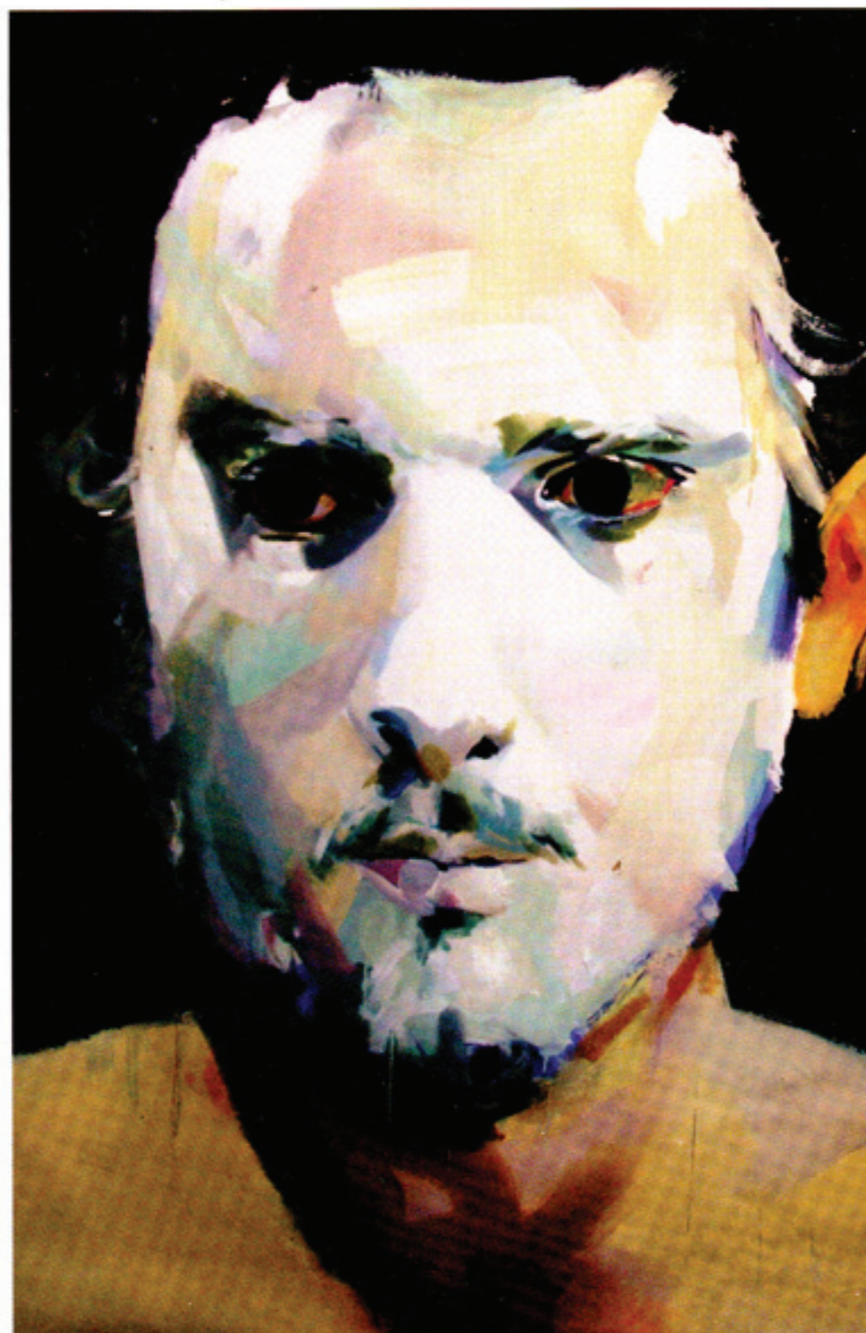
Based on real and imagined concepts and systems analysis, Manik's work crosses the boundaries of painting, sculpture, video and performance. His use of material is reduced to allow him to concentrate on the potentiality of it, but its use is constantly inventive and seductive and just occasionally given some added bling. "I have reduced my materials to one type of twine, cord, wood and plaster," he explains, "and my work takes three definitive stages: the first to question the potential of these materials; the second to develop imagined systems or structures that might evolve from them; and the third is to activate that potentiality, to see if the imagined systems might work or not." The result is sculptures that become performance, performance that becomes video, video that becomes painting, and so on. One example is *Aggembogaata*, a compartmental octagonal wooden sculpture that was tied to eight people who turned it slowly around in a circle. This séance like performance then became a sound video piece that in turn influenced a series of beautiful and communicative paintings. Manik's work is continually resourceful and full of bursts of energy.

Ric Spencer

Born: 1985

Price range: \$350 – \$1800

Contact: www.gianmanik.com



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Above: Gian Manik, *Large Pause*, 2008. Oil on canvas, 310 x 270cm.
Opposite: Gian Manik, *Rotunda/Rotunda in Motion*, 2008. Pine, taxidermy coyote faces, twine, casters, 90 x 90 x 33cm.
COURTESY: THE ARTIST

