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## Gary Dempsey | Masculinity and Screenprinting

BY [RUTH CONNOLLY](#) ON JUL 7, 2016 [FEATURED ARTISTS](#). [VISUAL](#). [VISUAL ARTS](#)

**Gary Dempsey is an Irish visual artist and printmaker. He received a B.A honours degree in fine-art printmaking from the Limerick School of Art and Design in 2011, whereupon he was awarded an emerging artist bursary from Cork Printmakers.**

After relocating to Cork, Dempsey was an active member of Cork Printmakers, Sample Studio and later the Backwater artist collective. In 2013 he co-founded the Machismo project, a series of art exhibitions and public symposiums held throughout Ireland which focused on establishing a public dialogue on modern masculinities. The project was complimented by a documentary of the same name and was awarded the Arts the Project Bursary Award from Cork City Council. He was an artist in residence at the National Sculpture Factory, Cork 2013/14. He held his first solo exhibition entitled *'fatuously forlorn'* at the Guesthouse Project Space, Cork 2014, after which he took a year's hiatus to travel throughout Asia with his wife. He has shown extensively throughout Ireland and internationally including exhibitions in New York, U.S.A, London, England and Berlin, Germany. He currently works out of Limerick Printmakers.

Discover more of Dempsey's work on his website [here](#) and facebook page [here](#).



*A portrait of the artist in a flashy suit. Photo by Keith Hogan*

## Machismo

“Within the exhibition I addressed the topic of modern masculinity through my use of screenprinted imagery and innovative construction methods. My imagery draws on my observations of relationships and the imposed sexual expectations placed on men today. My men are represented by curious animal like creatures which have been reduced to a perfunctory series of primal urges. The work consists of large scale prints on cast concrete mounted on large free standing steel structured utilising the inherent masculinity of the materials size, strength and toughness juxtaposed against the surface imagery to further resonate the mental state of the depicted characters.” – Gary Dempsey

Steel frames by [Alex Pentek](#) | Photos by [Roland Paschhoff](#)



*Machismo 5, Screen-print on concrete, 38 x 44cm*



*Machismo 1, Screen-print on concrete mounted on steel, variable dimensions*



*Machismo (installation shot), Screen-print on concrete mounted on steel, variable dimensions*

### **Chicken Triptych**

“This is a set of three densely layered screenprints comprised of handmade and digitally rendered stencils. When working in printmaking I endeavour to establish a partnership with the process within which its inherent ascetic qualities are emphasised, therefore becoming a significant element of the final piece in an un-predetermined manner. The overt subject matter of the prints confronts the viewer with aspects of modern consumption habits and the industries which fuel them. The characters depicted in various states within the series are done so humorously in a disarmingly cartoonish style which softens the disquieting nature of the scenes. Each of the pieces informs the others to create a visual narrative larger than any of the individual images.” – Gary Dempsey



*Chicken triptych (right), Screen-print on Fabriano 5 300gsm paper, 44x44 cm*



*Chicken Triptych, screen-print on fabriano 5 paper installation*

## Shoulder to Shoulder

“This print installation is comprised of screen-printed imagery on paper which embrace the reproductive tradition of the medium. During the printing process small inconsistencies were encouraged, resulting in a set of slightly different images which feed into one another. The title pays homage to the Men’s Shed Association’s slogan ‘Men don’t talk face to face, they talk shoulder to shoulder’.” -Gary Dempsey



*Shoulder to Shoulder, print installation, screen-print on BFK Reeves 200gsm paper, 30 x 140 cms*



*Shoulder to Shoulder, print installation, screen-print on BFK Reeves 200gsm paper, 30 x 140 cms*

### **Fatuously Forlorn**

“Drawings with screenprinted components from the Fatuously Forlorn series which comment on the imposed sexual expectations and masculine stereotypes placed on men. Mostly Solitary figures are depicted, seen in the moments before, during or after an action. Before and during we see their feckless regard towards the consequences however passively aware of them they may be. Afterwards however we see them tangled in a state of regret, uncertain of why they are suffering from emotions which they are incapable of dealing with. Ultimately they are trapped in a seemingly endless cycle of isolation and confusion, unable to break away from their gritty existence with little beauty and only short term gratification.” – Gary Dempsey

Photos by [Bríd O' Donovan](#)





*How long can a man enjoy what he doesn't feel? mixed media on Snowdon Cartridge Paper 300gsm, 70x100 cm*

#### ABOUT AUTHOR



#### RUTH CONNOLLY

Ruth Connolly is an Irish visual artist and photographer. She has an MA in Photography from Central Saint Martins and a BA in Fine Art Printmaking from LSAD. She works alongside Claire Byrne as visual editor of HeadStuff.