

FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2009

Interview With Artist Rona Green & Art Giveaway

A few months ago, I got an email from a fabulous Australian artist named **Rona Green**. She and I bonded over Bunnies and she emailed me some examples of her interesting, imaginative, and fabulous work. Eventually we talked about showcasing her art on *DavidDust* - and Rona offered to send me a couple of her pieces (*one for moi, and one to give to a lucky Dust Bunny*).

From her online **BIO**: *Rona Green (born 1972, Geelong, Australia) is a visual artist who uses figuration to explore ideas about identity, in particular the darker side of the psyche. It is the artist's fondness for animals and an interest in popular and subcultures that are the inspiration for the hybrid creatures that inhabit her pictures. Her imagery, based on observation and imagination, is a musing on the nature of the individual. A fancier of characters and the absurd, humour is also an integral part of Green's work.*

A couple of weeks ago, Rona got up extra-early in the Melbourne morning to let me interview her. We did the entire interview via email/chat - which is the **ONLY** way to interview someone, trust me. You don't have to shower, you can take pee breaks - and you can even order Chinese take-out if you get hungry. Not that I did any of that while I chatted with Rona...

THE INTERVIEW:

David Dust: *First of all, tell us about your day-to-day life right now. Married? Partnered? Single? Children? Murder convictions? Felonies?*

Rona Green: **I live in Melbourne, Australia with my animals – a rabbit, a cat, two dogs and my wonderful Manimal. My record includes a couple of speeding tickets but i haven't killed anyone... yet...**

DD: *Oooooohhhhhh - I LOVE Manimals! If you ever find one you don't want/need anymore - feel free to send him to me. When and where do you create your art? Is there a certain time of day or season that seems to be a better/worse time in regards for your creativity? Is there any kind of music or other environmental factors which help you create?*

RG: **My studio is a mezzanine room in my home which is made of wood and mud bricks and has a beautiful view of gum trees and lots of birds fly by to watch as I work during the day. I usually start work in the afternoon and go into the evening. The pets are welcome in my studio space - the dogs have a special 'studio mat' each to chill out on. Music is a great inspiration and I always listen to something whilst working. Favourites include Alice Cooper, Morrissey, Joni Mitchell, Judas Priest, Otis Redding and The Who.**

DD: *Rock on, Rona! I have looked through your fantastic portfolio on your website - and even though I am not knowledgeable about art, I definitely get a sense about what your art is, and what it says. For those readers out there who have never heard of Rona Green before - please give us a general description of what you create and what you try to say/convey through your creations. In other words - give us the short version of "Rona Green's artwork is..."*

RG: **Luckily I have just had to write an artist statement for an upcoming show so I have had a bit of a think about this recently - here goes:**

The medium I work with predominantly is printmaking. The prints I create examine identity. At the moment I am particularly interested in exploring the way people communicate using body adornment. Through the characters in my pictures I endeavour to connect with the viewers experience of acceptance and exclusion. That does sound a bit wanky but I hope you get the point...

DD: *That's not wanky at all. BTW - I LOVES it when you speak Australian... How did you find DavidDust?*

RG: **Funnily enough someone told me to look at a particular blog (which was boring) so I kept hitting the 'next blog' button and came across the extremely entertaining David Dust! (which I immediately bookmarked). And as they say, the rest is history!**

DD: *Awwww - thanks. I'm so glad you did! As you know, I call the readers of my blog my "Dust Bunnies". You seem to have a love of Bunnies/Rabbits yourself and use them often in your work. You even have one of your own - the adorable **Freddie** (Rona and Freddie are pictured below). Tell us what is so fabulous about Bunnies and why they show up in your art so often?*



Artist **Rona Green** and **Freddie**

RG: Most of the animals I use as subject matter in my work are domestic ones. The rabbit is such a great pet – a real *Jekyll and Hyde* character – right up my alley – all matey one second and a bastard the next. It is their dual nature that attracts me. They look cute, but if they need to defend themselves or get a point across they can be mean and nasty. If our dogs annoy Freddie he will grunt and jump up and punch them on the nose (usually they get on fine but there is the odd occasion when Freddie just wants to be left alone). Excellent subject matter.

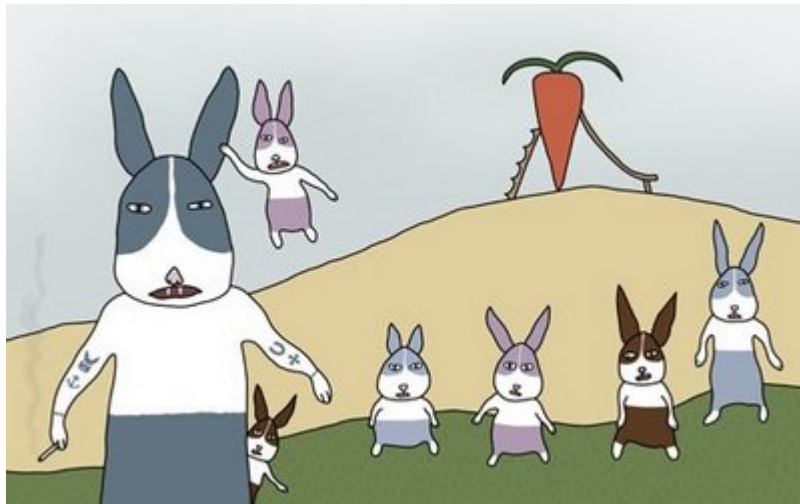
*DD: Yeah - Dust Bunnies are exactly the same way. Don't mess with 'em! I want to discuss the two pieces you were kind enough to send me. First of all, **Lagomorphia** (below) - the fabulous tattooed/hooded bunny. Talk to us a little bit about it, and also tell us a little more about the "linocut" technique you used to create it. I must admit, I had to Google "linocut" after you emailed me...*



Lagomorphia
etching
38 x 28 cm
edition 40

R: Lagomorpha is based on Freddie - he is Freddie's wrestling alter ego. This print is a sugarlift etching, but i made a linocut first and painted it with a sugarlift solution and stamped it on a copper plate and etched and printed it... sounds like goobledgook... here is a [link](#) to the Wiki printmaking page, as words fail me when it comes to clearly communicating technique!

DD: Thanks for the link - I will definitely include that. Secondly, you sent "**Weekend Buck taking kittens to Carrot Slide Park**" (below) - which I will be giving to one lucky reader. Please tell us a little bit about your inspiration for this piece - and also how a "digital print" is created.



Weekend Buck taking kittens to Carrot Slide Park

RG: Buck is a 'pay cheque' dad. He split up with his doe and only gets to see his kittens on the weekend. A bit of social commentary going on in this image... Buck is based on Floyd (RIP) who used to live with us. The carrot slide is a reference to a certain type of playground that exists in Australia. These playgrounds are usually quite desolate and dry with one piece of weirdo play equipment made of fibreglass - in this case a carrot slide. I create my digital print using Photoshop and I have the images output from file onto archival photo paper.

DD: I've definitely known a few Bucks in my day. What kind of art/artist do you absolutely HATE?

RG: This one is tricky... I don't really hate any art completely. But if I must comment, I don't find a lot of video art that stimulating... I'd rather watch TV! I will hold my tongue in regards to commenting on other artists - live and let live...

DD: *I was wondering how you would answer that question. As someone who doesn't have a lot of exposure to art in the first place, I must agree - video art usually leaves me quite puzzled. Other than your own, what kind of art do you LOVE?*

RG: **Art I most admire is stuff I look at and say 'wish I did that'. Favourite artists (*the list could go on forever but here are a few*): Jean Dubuffet, Leon Golub, Ed Paschke, Annette Messager, Francis Bacon, Philip Guston.**

DD: *OK - here is the last question and I will let you get on with your day... Finally, the more I look at your work, the more I see a very masculine sexiness in some of your "characters". Seriously - if "Leonid" (below) or "Theodor" were real tattooed men, I would be featuring their pics on my blog! First of all, am I completely imagining this sexual/sexiness of these images, or am I just some kind of perverted weirdo? And if I'm not imagining it - what role does sexuality play in your work?*



Leonid
2008
linocut and intaglio
76 x 56 cm
edition 30

RG: **The masculine physique is very inspiring in all its forms. The image Theodor (*below*) that you refer to is inspired by the dog my grandparents had when I was a kiddie and Bon Scott of the band *AC/DC* (do you know them? if not, everyone should!). Sometimes I like trying to capture sexiness, other times androgyny. I like playing with identity and ideas about gender / sexuality in the images. Basically my work is an escape from the 'real world', I can create a world of my own. This doesn't exactly answer your question perhaps but gives a clue to what I am on about (*maybe!*).**



Theodor

2008

linocut, watercolour and ink

76 x 56 cm

edition 13

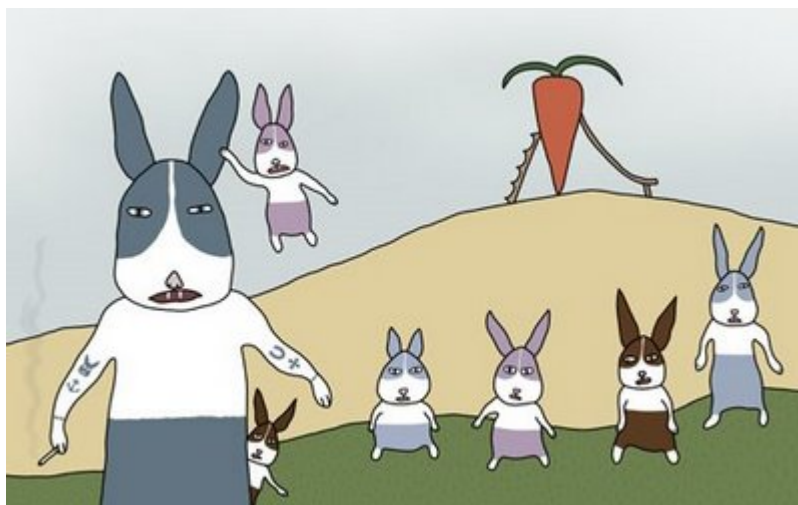
DD: First of all, thanks for not calling me a pervert. Secondly, yes, I am totally aware of AC/DC (although I'm not a big fan). Thirdly, you absolutely answered my question while also providing us more insight into your work.

Rona, dear, this has been an absolute pleasure! I appreciate you taking the time to do this - and I REALLY appreciate you sending me two of your pieces of art.

Isn't she COOL?!? It really WAS a pleasure - and I'm so glad Rona and I got a chance to chat. Please check out Rona's website [HERE](#) - and if you are interested in purchasing any of her work, you can email her directly at rona@ronagreen.com.

THE GIVEAWAY:

OK - now for what you've all been waiting for - the Giveaway. Rona sent me ***Weekend Buck taking kittens to Carrot Slide Park*** (below) to give to one lucky Dust Bunny.



Weekend Buck taking kittens to Carrot Slide Park

digital print

25 x 40 cm

edition 6

retail value \$360 USD

print number 3/6

comes with signed certificate of authenticity

In order to win Buck, I need you to do one simple thing - email a relatively recent picture of yourself to **dauidust@gmail.com**. And if you're really feeling feisty - include a bunny in your picture - or take the picture at Arby's. Better yet, take the picture AT Arby's WITH a bunny! I will pick a winner at random - but I'll try to somehow give 'extra credit' for bunny/Arby's pics. FYI, the winner will have his/her picture posted when I announce - so make it cute! And no fake-ass cartoons, avatars, or a 3rd-Grade class photo. Also, please use an email address that you check every once in a while - because I will alert the winner via return email.

I'll get the ball rolling ... and you know how much I HATE pictures of myself - but here I am with **Lagomorpha** - the piece Rona gave to me...



You'll have the next few days to email me your pics - I'll announce the winner on Tuesday. One last stipulation, because I am BROKE, you must reside in the Continental U.S. to win - 'cause I can't afford to send Buck to Timbuktu!