**BRUCE EVES**

ARTIST’S STATEMENT

**As an amalgam of Aubrey Beardsley and Johnny Rotten, my conceptually-driven art practice has been directly influenced by the theoretical issues raised by performance and behaviour art, and gained resonance from my experience as co-founder and chief archivist of the International Gay History Archive (now housed in the Rare Books and Manuscript division of the New York Public Library). While working in a number of media – photo-based works, texts, DVD projects, and in the past performance, recordings, and installation works – from the earliest point in my career I have delved into the question of the so-called "gay sensibility", and the proposition explored in much of this is that it should be possible to be simultaneously hot and sweaty and critical and detached. It is desirable – even exhilarating – to question the givens of our cultural baggage while at the same time allowing ourselves to be wrapped in its brawny arms. If there is any theme that unites this disparate body of work it is that it concentrates on the representative gestures of maleness, their signifiers, and their remains. ¶ Working against the backdrop of a global art practice that is all too often a self-contained tautology, I have established a presence internationally through participation in exhibitions and festivals in Argentina, Brazil, Britain, Cuba, Germany, India, the Netherlands, Spain, Thailand, and Venezuela; and represented in collections as diverse as the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Tom of Finland Foundation. ¶ As an artist I've positioning myself as an ironic spectator. Cherry-picking at will from mutually exclusive sources – the morning headlines, the official record of 20th century art, the signs and signifiers of the gay male underground, as well as plumbing the well of my own internal zeitgeist. This has allowed me to explore the spaces between these charged relationships by creating** a series of **disruptive juxtapositions that explore the** interconnectedness of masculinity, aging, bias, history, and data collection presented through the mashed-up lens of gay history, art history, and my history **yet, frustrate any simple narrative reading. ¶ The works are neither decorative nor self-consciously political. Ironically, a critique of masculinity has gone largely unexplored. Herein lies the challenge.** These series of works present themselves as image abutting image and text topping image with the resulting elements of ambiguity engaging memory – not exclusively, but not insubstantially either – and neatly echo what Mary Warnock would insist “operates under perpetual tension: the only way to cope with life is to learn what to forget; the only way to feel one as an identity is to remember.”