

Self Hypnosis

2018

Oil, acrylic and spray paint on canvas

50cm x 60cm

A kind of self portrait, *Self Hypnosis* was painted as an imaginative space for the artist to play out the idea of forcing himself to become straight. Epp, as the figure, is painted as a banana, which represents male sexuality. He is wearing a straightjacket, which encases his limbs in a static, unforgiving prison. Is this some kind of sick, gay conversion therapy? Dangling from the figure's head is a piece of grapefruit, painted in juicy, delicious realism. This fruit is a symbol of female genitalia. A symbol of otherness to Epp; of conforming to heterosexuality. His eyes have morphed into two spinning colour wheels. Hypnotised by the alluring slice of fruit, Epp's sense of personhood has dissipated, replaced by a complying social machine, who has no sense of autonomy. The grapefruit is a lure, like the bioluminescent light of an anglerfish, which drifts through the deep water flashing its beacon. Waiting for something to take the bait. On this occasion, the prey fooled into taking the bait is the fish himself. *Self Hypnosis* is Epp's attempt to grapple with complexities of sexuality and identity in an oversaturated, all-consuming digital era.