



Dani Marti, Disclosure

CONVERSATION PIECE

Visual artist Dani Marti explores gay men's health and sexuality in his work. But it's his recent experience of censorship at the hands of Culture and Sport Glasgow that has made him a political artist he tells Allan Radcliffe

Dani Marti's new exhibition, *Insideout*, has been safely installed in the sh(OUT) Space at Parlane Street as part of Glasgow 2009. Yet the convoluted tale of how one of the show's installations ended up in this space still sticks in the craw of the Barcelona-born artist.

Insideout was developed out of Marti's residency commissioned by the Gallery of Modern Art and Gay Men's Health, exploring issues around gay men's sexuality, intimacy and disclosure. Among the exhibits are sculptural works made from red PVC pot scooters, hand-sewn by volunteers from Mozambique whose lives have been affected by HIV. The works are suggestive of red blood cells, internal organs and reflexes.

Also on display is a video and sound installation addressing the reality of living with the AIDS virus. Working with Gay Men's Health, the artist, who is HIV positive, invited men of all ages to reflect on their experiences of intimacy and coming to terms with their sexuality. His research exposed certain recurring cultural attitudes.

"I began to realise that there's still a lot of stigma about HIV in Scotland, and also around coming out," he says. "For many of these men this was the first time they had been given permission to talk about their sexuality. Glasgow in particular, is very Calvinistic – you know, let's not talk about

emotions, let's not talk about sexuality."

The installation, 'Disclosure', was featured as part of *sh(OUT)*, *Contemporary Art and Human Rights*, the social justice programme commissioned by the Gallery of Modern Art, which also included the controversial 'Made in God's Image' installation, an open Bible with instructions to write in it, which offended certain religious organisations.

Marti's own installation features seven people talking about their HIV status, including a video entitled 'Time in the Fire', which features a former male prostitute and porn actor discussing taking crystal meth and taking part in intense sexual acts. Following the controversy surrounding 'Made in God's Image' this and another video, 'Assumed', which features full frontal male nudity, provoked Culture and Sport Glasgow, which runs GoMA, to request that Marti's work be removed in order to reform the debate.

"The *sh(OUT)* programme was a platform commissioned by GoMA to overcome the stigma about sexuality," says Marti. "Pornography is not the point of my work. I'm interested in intimacy, emotions, relationships. It happens that the men featured in my work are HIV positive."

"It was important that this work was shown at GoMA. It's a great platform and we need to keep pushing dialogue. Now it's going to be shown in a basement."

Despite these recent experiences, Marti maintains that Glasgow is a great, active city in which to live and work, and that he is more determined than ever to get his message across.

"I won't compromise in my work at all... As an artist I have to take a stand against these attitudes."

Dani Marti *Insideout, sh(OUT) Space, 14 Parlane Street, until Sat 10 Oct.*

BEST OF THE BEST

Highlights from Scotland's celebration of queer culture

Markus Makavelevan's International Order

An hour in the company of other pioneer New York performance poet Markus Makavelevan, the star of Glasgow-based writer and performer Drew Taylor's *Archives*. *Wed 14 & Thu 15 Oct.*

David Hoyte

The performance artist formerly known as The Divine David returns with a live show to celebrate 25 years of the Transmission Gallery, and will also be appearing at Death Disco. *Transmission Gallery, Fri 16 Oct.*

Death Disco

The monthly electro disco night celebrates Glasgow's with a sparkling line-up of DJs, bands and performance artists including Wiley Sell Oct, Baby's Crystal Fighters and James Vull. *Archives, Sat 17 Oct.*

The Sunday Service

Shimmering queen of the double entendre Jonathan Mayor hosts the special comedy night, which includes an appearance from starring comedian/rapper Magic Mervyn Mullen. *The Stand, Sun 18 Oct.*

Regina

Award-winning choreographer Tom Sapford collaborates with computer artist XMA and designer Steve Stewart to create an exciting new piece of dance theatre exploring the life of Elizabeth I. *Parlane, Fri 22 & Sat 24 Oct.*

Black Cab

Glasgow's first ever Black and Minority Ethnic cabaret presents the creative output of some of Scotland's finest up and coming live entertainers. *Arts, Thu 29 Oct.*

Hair Is An

Performer and writer Helen Quinn presents the latest, shorn, strand of her project exploring the topic of ginger hair. *The Hair on My Head at Omelet, developed in conjunction with Dance House and the OCA, OCA, Wed 4 & Thu 5 Nov.*

Terry Neeson: Torch Songs of Pleasure & Passion

A late night line-up of both songs from high-voiced Glasgow girl Neeson, including numbers made famous by the likes of Paul, Glen, Graham and Garland. *Tron Theatre, Fri 6 Nov.*