

1. What made you choose this piece for pulp MAG?

I chose this piece because it approaches archival materials differently from the last piece I contributed. While my last work used archival illustrations to create a traditional composition, this piece intentionally disrupts composition and perfection. I enjoy pushing myself to play around with the many different ways that historic materials can be used, rather than get tied to a specific approach.

2. Is there anything you're particularly proud of about this piece, or that you learned while creating it?

I'm particularly proud of how much more comfortable I've become exploring my identity and expressing it openly through my work. I used to worry about revealing my queerness or challenging traditional ideas of masculinity, afraid of how it might shape others' perceptions of me and my own sense of self. Now, that exploration is at the core of much of what I create.

3. What was your inspiration for this piece? What prompted you to create it?

As a 2SLGBTQIA+ artist, I'm inspired to explore how heteronormativity and traditional gender roles shape the way we see ourselves and others. In my work, I treat collections and archives as reflections of community, culture, and our collective memory. For this piece, I used photographs as records of society's unwritten expectations around gender identity and how gender is performed publicly. Film stills and staged photographs, like the image used here, show how ideas of masculinity and femininity are constructed and reinforced in popular media. In my piece, this staged image is reconfigured to resemble the flicker of a TV screen just before it shuts off or the buffering of a film strip. By distorting the familiar image of a starstruck couple, I aim to interrupt these carefully staged images, inserting a sense of disruption that challenges popular media's idealized portrayal of gender roles and heterosexual romance.

4. What messages/themes do you want viewers to pull from this piece?

I wanted this visual disruption to complicate the concept of the "perfect" couple, asking viewers to question how these representations often reinforce gender, racial, and class inequalities by idealizing white, cisgender, heterosexual, and affluent couples. I encourage viewers to critically examine how mainstream media has shaped their personal understanding of relationships, and consider how they can take personal steps to actively disrupt and challenge these narratives.

5. How has your creative process changed since your last publication in pulp MAG?

Since my last publication, I have begun experimenting more with archival and historical materials. I see the process of sourcing these records as an artistic practice in itself, uncovering memory and reimagining what was once forgotten or lost. I've become increasingly invested in finding materials through antique stores and abandoned photographs. My focus has shifted toward transforming these sources beyond traditional collage methods by transferring, altering, and intentionally distressing the images to create new meanings.

6. Have your sources of inspiration changed at all since then?

My sources of inspiration haven't changed much since my last contribution to *Pulp*. I'm still focused on exploring identity and social justice in my creative practice. Recently, though, I've been inspired by unexpected materials like old magazines, newspapers, cookbooks, and other mass-produced texts. I'm interested in how people are presented in these publications, where they're shaped into palatable, engaging subjects for articles, ads, and images. Looking at this material also introduces me to past design and composition styles, giving me new ideas for how to structure my own work.

7. What have you learned and grown in, creatively, since we last interviewed you?

Since my last interview, I've begun investing more in my own creativity. As a student working two jobs, I often struggle to make time for creative expression. I used to spend that limited time trying to produce polished work, believing it had to be perfect to be worthwhile. Now, I approach creation as something valuable in itself. I focus less on perfection and more on creating for enjoyment and artistic growth. I try to push myself to do something creative each day, whether it's simple doodling or creating an entire collage, it's all valuable to me!

8. Where else can we find your work?

You can find me on Instagram [@desmond.tompkins](#) where I post my artwork and creative adventures!

9. What does the next project, or your future creative plans, look like?

I currently run the Youth Arts Council of Surrey, a nonprofit organization that hosts arts events and opportunities for youth ages 13-25 in metro Vancouver. I have several events planned this year, including our annual art show that I curate, which will be on display at the Newton Cultural Centre Gallery this July. In my own creative practice, I have started to do more experimental photography and printmaking, focusing on alternative processes like cyanotypes and image transfers. Looking to the future, I hope to continue to mindfully balance both my work in the arts community and my own creativity!