

videos to show today.

BS: Who do you admire?

MM: What in the art world? Or in general? I suppose there's my son, my dad, and my partner. In the art world, it comes and goes, but there are people I really like (but I like everyone). Even though I have been flippant about the art world, I think everyone has the right to exist in their own place. There are art worlds within art worlds and I will go to anything.

BS: Who do you respect?

MM: You don't know them – people like Rex Nemo and the Psychik Selfdefenders, Simon Old, Liam Scully. No one knows them. They are alcoholics, drug addicts, they're liggers, they go to every art event, they make rubbish art, and they pick up things off the street and make it into art. They're the best. There are also supportive people in the art world, like

Robin Klassnik and Sacha Craddock who have looked out for me; Dave Beech too but he's gone off me *[laughs]*.

KB: Is provocation different now after your talk?

MM: Provocation to me is about poking people and if you're not doing that in art, well ... there are different economies in art, there is the current financial economy, but there are other economies like the economy of spirit, which is the main one in art. There's the political economy, sexual politics, identity politics, leftwing politics, mainstream politics. I always encourage students and other artists to politicise their work no matter what type of work they do because it's about carrying a message. I always encourage the provocation, getting under peoples' skin or tapping them on their shoulder, saying, hold on.

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Transmission Provocation

Guest: Mark McGowan

Host: Becky Shaw

Interviewer: Keith Barley

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KB: This is fifteen minutes of conversation in which you are invited to leave the highs of the lecture behind and to talk about what it feels like for you now. A question that comes to mind immediately is that two members of the audience tonight challenged you about things you had said. Did they provoke you?

MM: How did you feel, Becky?

BS: Actually, I was glad an MA student in the audience asked a question. I was pleased that he spoke as

he did – he was right to do so. You were pushing harder and harder and nothing was happening so it was about time something did. I felt that every time I tried to ask you anything you avoided my questions. You're really good at changing your characterisation, either to play the fool or to wilfully misunderstand, which is part of what you do. But you didn't do that with the student and I am interested in that ...

MM: Those two students that they thought they had the right to a proper answer. Now I don't mind that, but I do know there are certain things I shouldn't say when it's not appropriate. Here you feel safe talking about art, supposing that people are not going to laugh and ridicule you. At the same time if I get emotional I cannot deny my own feelings and this is where talking about the now is difficult. Through a lot of therapy I was able to become aware of emotions

when they happen, so I know when they rise up: I know when I feel shame. It can be quite traumatic talking about my work and talking about past experiences. I get emotional when I step away from it. I don't deny my feelings at the time and I don't suppress them – I allow them to come out later – not in a hippy way but just in a way of letting them be. Often I will do a performance and later I will cry. Whether that's because of the amount of media attention or because of putting on the mask of being the idiot, being the artist and involved in it, I end up crying in the night. I assume that many people in the performing arts do so, because it's exposing, what they do.

KB: You hint at something there which promotes a question. It is something which has also affected me as well and that is a your

interest in shame. Could you expand on that?

MM: Yes, I am interested in shame. I learned about shame that the primary purpose of shame is not to be exposed. If shame is not exposed, it manifests itself in other ways. So if you get caught doing something or found out, it's exposing and you will suppress that shame. If you get reprimanded by anyone in public, at work or in the home you should feel shame – allow it. If you have done something wrong, don't cover it up or make excuses. We are allowed to make big mistakes as well as small ones. Often with our partners and other family members we won't allow it, we will talk about something else instead. You learn as kid if you admit to something you're in trouble. I find that shame is part of everyone's practice whether they like it or not. There is that moment when you're nine or ten and someone is watching you

painting, they are laughing and say 'That's a boat? That's meant to be a boat. Come and look what Mark's done, that's not a boat, that's rubbish.' That behavior stops us because it exposes us.

KB: When you were asked to think about a talk centred on provocation what did you understand it to be about?

MM: I never thought about it for one nano-second [all laugh], I never do. I've got this technique of not doing that, as I think everyone has different ways of preparing. For me it's good not to sit with something, because what happens with that is I start looking at it in many different ways and it changes. Alain Badiou writes that 'Any attempt to preempt an event is foolish'. I apply this lack of preparation to the talks and workshops I teach. I don't know what workshops I am going to do. I turn up, I look around and suddenly it

appears: let's do something about becoming an animal. Let's all be an animal and get a camera, anything, I like the unpredictability of setting up and I like the word provocation and I knew I could talk about it, but I didn't bother preparing for it.

BS: Do you like the risk in that, because you're putting yourself under enormous pressure?

MM: I know I can do it and there's no need to use my tiny brain to get complicated about it. I've got other things to think about and I'll do that when I'm at the talk. Otherwise I get overloaded – don't you get overloaded if you think you've got too much on your mind? Don't worry about it; you will be fine but only as long as you know your stuff. What you have to remember is that you're there to talk about the work and you're the only one that knows everything about it. I didn't even know which