

JASKI GALLERY

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Henry

mixed media on panel

26 x 18 cm 2022

Henry has been all alone for as long as he can remember. He lives on his own private planet. Alone with his thoughts, his dreams and his imaginary friends, to whom he declaims his poems. You might feel sorry for Henry, but there is no need, he says. He has a hard shell that suits him well, an armor for protection so he feels no affection. So he says.

Sitting on his tiny planet, he looks up at the stars. He so desperately wants to be somewhere else, anywhere else, he decides to leave his planet and starts to make the journey in search of other worlds, other planets, other moons, other dreams and maybe even new friends. One given moment, between Sunday evening and Monday morning, he finds himself on yet another planet, enjoying the sight of yet another group of creatures living together, laughing together and he smiles.

But it is a sad smile. Not a smile of recognition, not even a smile of craving, but a smile of knowing what is

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missing in his life. The sadness suddenly overwhelms him and he can't bear to watch the happy bunch anymore.

Instead, he looks away, to the direction he came from. And there, among the millions of stars, he sees his own private sun, and slowly orbiting in front of it, his teeny tiny planet he calls home. And he mumbles: "My world's sunne Becomes a starre elsewhere"

Slowly his smile returns to his beautiful face, he stands up and recites:

"The frigid spheres that 'bout them fare; Which of themselves quite dead and barren are, But by the wakening warmth of kindly dayes, And the sweet dewie nights, in due course raise. Long hidden shapes and life, to their great Maker's praise."

The creatures around him look at him and they smile as Henry's armor starts to crack and crumble. And through the cracks his light starts to show, for this whole new world to see his beauty, that is, in fact, out of this world.

HENRY has the power to rise above himself. To look at himself from another perspective. He has learned that even the most intense feelings, good or bad, look small and insignificant from a distance. And whatever you feel in comparison to others, the opposite is also true, when looked at from another angle.

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Chris Berens

Chris Berens studied illustration at the Academy of Art & Design in 's-Hertogenbosch, graduating in 1999. He has developed a complex and time-consuming painting technique, mostly shown as mixed media on panel.

"I'm most comfortable using fine brushes and drawing inks and graphites, but I also regularly use water color paints, markers and acrylics", Berens says. "For some time now I've added digital image making to my line of techniques, meaning 3D sculpting, digital painting and image processing. I combine and mix them with my more traditional media."

After his first major solo show at Jaski Gallery in 2005, Chris Berens' fame spread quickly. The young artist has already exhibited all over the world, from Amsterdam to New York, from Tokyo to Los Angeles, Seattle and Singapore. He also designed the cover for *Panic of Girls*, an album which was released in 2011 by Blondie. Deborah Harry and Chris Stein, founders of the band, are admirers of his work.

Back home Chris has been the subject of a television documentary. *Chris Berens, Master of his Magical Universe* was made for Dutch broadcaster Avro's *Close Up* series in 2013 and has since been broadcast several times at home and abroad.

Chris Berens also featured prominently in the television documentary *Krabbé searches for Van Gogh*, in which actor/painter Jeroen Krabbé traced the path of Vincent van Gogh in co-operation with Dutch artists.