

Penny for your thoughts

Artist's study of self
takes viewers on
inward journey

SHERI NAULT

Toronto-based artist Evan

Penny's studies of the human figure share a strong relationship with photography — particularly in the realm of perception — rendering tropes such as stretching, skewing, time photography and scale distortions into life-like busts and figures. Crafted using silicone, pigment, hair, fabric and aluminum, his sculptures create an incredible illusion of reality, complete with blemishes, age spots and veins.

While his most recent work seems straightforward on the surface, his focus is internal, giving his sculptures

VISUAL ARTS PREVIEW

YOUNG SELF, OLD SELF — A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

Evan Penny
Until February 18
TrépanierBaer


a relatable, contemplative strength.

In *Young Self, Old Self — A Portrait of the Artist*, Penny examines how we view, perceive and imagine ourselves both in youth and old age, reflecting our obsession with mortality by imagining himself both on the cusp of manhood and in the last stages of his life.

The selection of self-portraits at Trépanier Baer is comprised of four pieces: two sculptures and two photographs. In creating these different selves, Penny meditates on the relationship that he has to photographs of how he once was — and what he

may become. “Young Self, variation #4,” a sculpture of an imagined, young Penny is marked by an alert expression — his gaze is assertive and directed outward. In “Old Self, variation #4,” on the opposite wall, he appears introspective and troubled, his gaze directed at the floor.

The two photographs, “Portrait of the Artist as He Will (Not) Be” and “Portrait of the Artist as He Was (Not),” are of other sculptures in the *Young Self, Old Self* series. By including these, he reiterates the role of photography in how we perceive ourselves and others — young and bright, aged and introspective. Distorted. In the exhibition Penny acknowledges that memories of his youth and what he anticipates of old age are not reality, but an illusion.

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Courtesy the artist and TrépanierBaer

Oh, to be young again... Evan Penny takes a step back in time.