

An abstract painting by Nick Modrzewski, featuring a dark, textured background with various shapes and colors. A prominent white, stylized face with a large eye and a wide, open mouth is visible on the left side. Other elements include a red, comb-like shape, a white rectangular shape, and a blue, curved shape. The overall style is expressive and gestural.

COMA

Press Release

Nick Modrzewski
The Plaintiff's Third Face

Dates:
9 July - 21 August, 2021

COMA is pleased to present The Plaintiff's Third Face, a new body of work by Melbourne-based artist Nick Modrzewski, on view 9 July - 14 August, 2021 in the gallery.

Viewing modern day law and its associated practices through a theatrical and historical lens, The Plaintiff's Third Face suggests that to exist in the legal system, a series of 'faces', disguises or masks must be worn. The presentation looks at how the law uses 'masking' to construct an elaborate fictional universe, populated by characters who are written into existence during legal disputes. Plaintiffs, defendants, debtors, creditors, judges and legislators all act their parts in both the real and imagined processes of law.

Drawing on historical and contemporary sources, Modrzewski unpacks how legal ideas travel through time and space. The rituals of law are performed across different artistic mediums: a public accusation is rendered in paint; a judgment is etched into an ancient scroll, and an arsenal of floppy sculptural weaponry is used to enforce a debt. One thing is for certain: to be visible in the eyes of the law, it is necessary to adorn one of its many masks.





Nick Modrzewski holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Victorian College of the Arts and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Melbourne. He has exhibited locally and internationally, including at Discordia (Melbourne); First Draft (Sydney); the Institute of Contemporary Arts (Singapore); Blindsight (Melbourne); Fort Delta (Melbourne); KINGS ARI (Melbourne); OH Open House (Singapore); and the Australian High Commission (Singapore). His writing has been published by Running Dog; Art & Australia; Monash University Museum of Art; un Magazine; Writing & Concepts; the Lifted Brow; Fireflies; VRE Books and The Research Handbook on Art and Law. Nick is the co-chair of West Space.

Selected Recent Writings

un Projects, 'A crowd of soccer players, a group of lawyers, a band of Malay Muslims', by Nick Modrzewski
More information [here](#).





Honoré Daumier, *For a poor American, please* (detail), 1835, lithograph, 24.0 x 27.5 cm.
Courtesy of the Collection of Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia



Nick Modrzewski
Pronounced Accuser, 2021
acrylic on board, powder coated
welded steel frame
159 x 146 cm framed
62 19/32 x 57 15/32 inches framed

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"I feel compelled to pull apart law, language and the body, only to stick them all back together again in a hodgepodge of flopping, jostling parts."

– Nick Modrzewski



COMA

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