



THE PERFECT BOY MYTH  
LIBERTÉ GRACE



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## THE STORY

*The Perfect Boy Myth* is the story of the Orator, a charismatic child-racist with the face of an angel. Using a dark and threatening fairy tale, he controls a crowd of masked orphans in an abandoned school hall, from the pulpit of a stage.

Smugly satisfied with his power to rule over the faceless mob, he discovers a fault in his self-appointed omnipotence, as unexpected rivals burst through the seams of his carefully planned dictatorship and teach him a lesson he will never forget.



# INTRODUCTION

Just as light can only be carved out of darkness - in order for meaning to exist, meaningless must exist; in order for love to exist, hate must exist.

*The Perfect Boy Myth* is a short film which explores this spiritual conflict between cultured ideals and primordial instincts.

As human beings, we live by a law of diametric opposites wherein; everything has meaning to us ideologically, whilst biologically, nothing can be meaningful to us beyond the measure of its usefulness for our own survival.

Author Milan Kundera coined the phrase “The Unbearable Lightness of Being”, which I interpret as this poignant human dilemma of living with both our desire for meaning and also the unconsciously detached nature of our humanity.

*The Perfect Boy Myth* is a mysterious gothic fairy tale that takes audiences on a journey to the inside of this paradox, through an enigmatic shadow within an unknown geography, revealing a world of childish opulence and primal fears, where innocence and desire become one and the same.

Liberté Grace

# ARTIST STATEMENT

*The Perfect Boy Myth* explores the conflict between our desire to believe in ideals and the detached nature of what we are as biological animals, which prevent our ability to truly live them. Author Milan Kundera refers to it as, “the unbearable lightness of being”, which I interpret as the dilemma of living with both our desire to live with meaning, and the transient, detached nature of our humanity.

Humans live by a law of opposites; wherein everything is both meaningful to us, while nothing can be meaningful to us beyond its usefulness for our survival. That is, we feel a sense of ‘meaning’ towards something or someone, but this exists within us only so long as we need it to—for the purpose of our own survival—not because that object/subject has inherent meaning to us by itself.

Therefore, our ideals, which due to their absolute nature, are based on total meaningfulness, are ultimately impossible to live out beyond our imaginations, despite our desire to believe in their possibility.

The story of *The Perfect Boy Myth* is a dark gothic fairy tale about an idealistic boy who wants to be loved by someone over all others; to be respected, to experience loyalty, and to live out his dreams. But what makes this film’s exploration fascinating, is that it asks the audience to reconcile the premise that someone who we will judge as committing ‘evil’, is governed by the same emotional desires as we are.

The irony and absurdity of conflict between any opposing parties is that both nemeses share the same fundamental human desires and dilemmas, beneath entirely conflicting ideologies. Is conflict, and therefore opposing parties, necessary to maintain our survival? Probably not. But our belief in concepts of ‘the other’ as expressed in racism, sexism and the myriad of other dualistic concepts the human race has held onto, appear to reflect a collective belief in it—that we as humans love to and must fight to survive. So long as human beings identify with a ‘side’ which opposes another, it is impossible for the conflicts we claim to want to resolve, to be resolved. It’s the addictive nature of power and ego, which keep them alive.

Just as a narrative story does not maintain interest and therefore meaning to us without conflict, our ‘real’ lives appear to reflect the same dynamic, in that, we react to a story with the same biases, which colour our reactions in reality. And so, the final irony is, in order to maintain a sense of interest and therefore meaning in our lives, we create these absurd conflicts, which we often claim to oppose. Racism is just one of them, based on the absurd notion that skin colour defines value.

I find these paradoxes of human nature poignant: in order for meaning to exist, meaningless must exist, in order for love to exist, hate must exist—just as light can only be carved out of darkness. This poetic and perplexing complexity underpins the sociopolitical issues of our time, which continue to rage, even now, long after this small film was made and conceived.

*The Perfect Boy Myth* represents a distilled perspective of human nature and the ‘Era of Trump’ we now find ourselves in. Until we tell a different story, we are bound to repeat the past.

Surprisingly, I discovered the answer to my question, “Why does racism still exist today?” during the making of the film, which can be read at: [www.LiberteGraceFilms.com](http://www.LiberteGraceFilms.com)



Production still from *The Perfect Boy Myth* (Featuring Pierre Le as The Little Mouse)

## EXHIBITION BRIEF

### Backstory

Representing the only collaboration of its kind from Australia by a first-time director and artist, Grace brought together over 100 creatives from four countries, dedicated to bringing the timely message of *The Perfect Boy Myth* to a global audience. The award-winning key creative team includes the Production Designer of the Sydney Olympics, Michael Scott-Mitchell; celebrated Golden Tripod Winner and Cinematographer, Joel Peterson; Visual Effects Supervisor, John Mangia, who has worked with the most respected directors and studios in Hollywood, and AFI-nominated Composer, Basil Hogios, who has worked with famed music group, Sigur Rós.

### Formats

*The Perfect Boy Myth* is a single-channel and multi-channel video work, which exists as multiple versions of the short film and is being developed into a multi-screen installation as a three-screen triptych.

### Exhibition

The multiple award-winning work has exhibited in Australia, Italy, New York (Time Square), and exhibited at the Cannes Film Festival. In 2013, a single-channel version of the work won the Churchie National Emerging Art Prize - awarded by Sydney gallerist Roslyn Oxley and went on to be exhibited at the Roslyn Oxley9 gallery in 2015.



Production still from *The Perfect Boy Myth* (Featuring Calvin Welch as The Black-skinned Singer)

## Triptych Installation

The three-screen triptych version of *The Perfect Boy Myth* will recreate the film as a live dialogue between the characters acting and reacting to each other and providing the illusion to the audience; that they are within the school hall where the events of the film take place.

Scored by award-winning composer Basil Hogios, the immersive installation will be enriched by a complex operatic score, interweaving the subtextual and thematic concerns of the work within the narrative—divided into three moving video portraits.

**Screen 1:** Depicts the character of the Black-skinned Singer, asleep and singing in the voice of a white woman. As the world of *The Perfect Boy Myth* erupts in drama, the Black-skinned Singer narrates the false belief system that he must be saved, in the background.

**Screen 2:** Depicts the Orphan mob reacting to the events, which occur on the Orator's stage. The mob will at times react in unusual ways to his sermons and performance antics, betraying both an array of emotionally invested responses, as well as completely indifferent ones.

**Screen 3:** Depicts the Orator and his stage; the illusion that he wishes to portray to the Orphan crowd, in order to gain their trust and loyalty to his cause.

To view trailers of each 'character' visit [www.LiberteGraceFilms.com](http://www.LiberteGraceFilms.com).

## Artist Biography

Liberté Grace is a multidisciplinary artist and filmmaker born in Australia and currently living and creating in Sydney and the US, working in the media of film/video, installation, and photography. Her works have been exhibited in cultural institutions in Australia, Italy, and France. Grace has received multiple awards in Australia and the US including the Sutton Commercial Galleries Award, the Chroma Australia Award (Gallery NSW), the Lloyd Reeds Youth Memorial Art Award Commendation, Brett Ratner Scholarship (NY) for film direction, as well as winning the top graduate prize at V.C.A, The Wallara Traveling Scholarship, and the Churchie National Emerging Art Prize. In 2014, Grace was selected as part of the top 25 video artists worldwide by the international panel of the inaugural Arte Laguna Art Prize, held at the Arsenale in Venice, Italy and exhibited images from her film *The Perfect Boy Myth* video series in Time Square, New York. Her art practice centralises on the premise of identity as creation, through transformation via new consciousness perspectives. Liberté believes that all realities are the outer fantasy of the inner world and the consciousness of each individual. Her works depict challenging belief systems reconstructed as fantasy worlds, distilling the wisdom within repetitive historical patterns of behaviour into simple re-played narratives. Grace is an auteur filmmaker and contemporary artist who has screened at the Cannes Film Festival. For trailer excerpts of the film visit [www.LiberteGraceFilms.com](http://www.LiberteGraceFilms.com)

**Production Company:** Joyvolution® Films

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