

PLUS ONE GALLERY

ANDREW HEMINGWAY



Hemingway's exploration of the concept of packaging has taken some unexpected turns. He first became fascinated by the way in which printer and manipulated versions of well-known masterpieces were often to be found superimposed on everyday objects, particularly in museum and gallery gift-shops – the mantle of the old masters thrown unthinkingly around the mundane and the commonplace.

Hemingway has been in thrall to the old masters from an early age. He first came into contact with art through a volume from a set of encyclopedias that his father, a coal miner, bought from a door-to-door salesman. Full of reproductions of iconic works of western art, this book has stayed among the artist's treasured possessions.

As an artist fascinated by the minute replication of surface, the observation of the way in the reproductions in his book could be reflected by the silver surfaces of a saltcellar he kept in his studio and had used in previous still life arrangements proved an irresistible temptation.

He regards the activity of reproducing these canonical images a way of restoring to the work some of its original aura. It is, in a sense, the opposite of the mechanized superimposition found in the museum shop. Not only is each image reversed through its reflection on the saltcellar, but the unevenness of the silver surface cause certain other idiosyncrasies – sometimes figures loom with an air of menace not found in the original, or innocent smiles becomes smirks and leers. In the other plane of the saltcellar, we can often see Hemingway's studio windows and various discarded objects left around his studio. The threads of the illusion are thus left free to unravel as the origin of the image, fabricated by human hands, is left in no doubt.