

Amber Boardman, *CrossFit Crowd*, 2019, oil on polyester, 182.9 x 213.4cm; courtesy the artist and Chalk Horse, Sydney



twisted, stretched, mistreated and self-pampered beyond all reason.

Whether a symptom of, or solution to, contemporary disenchantment, Boardman freely mixes private and public, leisure and work motifs to generate distinctly relatable cartoon worlds of neoliberal 'care of the self' rituals. The term 'care of the self' comes from the later writings of Michel Foucault, who, echoing Weber's concern for the lived experience of rationalisation, conveyed a vision of neoliberalism as an economic and governmental power that essentially structures people to govern themselves. Art in this scenario gets attached to a broader aesthetics of existence, which in the Nietzschean sense of 'aesthetics' requires the ceaseless 'transvaluation of all values' – creative ways to resolve apparently conflicting forces.⁷ For Foucault, our physical and mental selves should be continually tended to, refined, challenged and reconciled in the name of an ethics that is no longer considered as obedient to a code of rules. He wanted to revive an earlier pre-modern question of how to make 'one's life into an object for a sort of knowledge, for a *techne* – for an art'.⁸ In other words: decisions, decisions, decisions ...

1. Max Weber, 'Science as a vocation' (1917), in *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, Routledge, London and New York, 1991, p. 145.
2. Jane Bennett, *The Enchantment of Modern Life: Attachments, Crossings, and Ethics*, Princeton University Press, 2001, p. 57.
3. *ibid.*, p. 131.
4. Amber Boardman quoted in Stuart Horodner, 'Interview with Amber Boardman', *Decision Fatigue*, exhibition catalogue, Chalk Horse, Sydney, 2021, n.p.: see www.amberboardman.com/exhibitions, accessed 1 February 2021.
5. Angela Farmer, 'Cartoon Network's Adult Swim and Aqua Teen Hunger Force as Rabelaisian carnival', *Studies in American Humor*, vol. 3, no. 17, 2008, pp. 49–66.
6. Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*, trans Michael Eldred, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1987, p. 117.
7. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson and trans Carol Diethe, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 103.
8. Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow, Pantheon Books, New York, 1984, p. 362.

Amber Boardman's 'Decision Fatigue' was on display at Chalk Horse, Sydney, from 28 January until 27 February 2021.