

## Queen of the Sea ~~ Queen of the Deck

In 2004, I had the opportunity to participate in a group exhibition centred around the theme of “Mermaids”. After a brainstorming session with a friend, we developed the concept of a deck of cards featuring the “queen”. As a member of the LGBTQ+ community, I embraced the role of the queen. In modern slang, particularly within LGBTQ+ circles, referring to someone as a "queen" serves as a compliment, celebrating their journey and recognizing their strength. This experience was not only a creative expression but also a meaningful representation of identity and empowerment.

Creating this piece involved applying skills in set design, costume design, and make-up. By examining each of the silver gelatin prints, viewers can observe variations in shadows, model positioning, and lighting.

An amusing aspect of this process was that after each shutter click, there was a need to flip my tail and waddle back to the camera to advance the film before returning to the rock. It was a shame that this wasn't captured on video.

~ Dale M Reid

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