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# Through the lens of the romantic child: portraits of children by Mark Hipper and Terry Kurgan

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# Abstract

This research report explores how the eighteenth century *Romantic Child* Ideal influenced the representations of children created by artists Terry Kurgan and Mark Hipper, and subsequently what the responses to these works reveal about a relationship to and participation in the ideal within the context of South Africa in the late 1990s. Through a close reading of two seminal exhibitions, the group show *Purity and Danger* (1997) which featured Terry Kurgan's photographs of her son, and *Vicera* (1998) Mark Hipper's mixed media offering of child nudes, I analysed the manner in which these artists both perpetuate and subvert the Ideal through their specific visualisations of *the child*.



Keywords: Romantic Child Ideal, childhood innocence, Terry Kurgan, Mark Hipper, child pornography, censorship