

*Prima Facie* 1993

Del Favero's *Prima Facie* investigates the ambiguous nature of the male body. On the one hand this body is unique and independent, the sign of power in the human imaginary. On the other it is largely dependent, nurtured in a female body, a nurturing that is retained in its memory of itself as a fragile entity. The double nature of this body renders it an unstable and enigmatic figure, a figure explored in images that emerge from and then return to a luminous darkness.

Excerpt from Susan Best *Prima Facie*, Wollongong City Gallery, Wollongong. 1993.

"...To represent the nude male body is to take an appreciable risk. It can very easily become feminised, and, for a heterosexual audience at least, it risks provoking amusement and/or embarrassment. If laughter and embarrassment are avoidable, feminisation may not be so easily to evade. Del Favero's images probably avoid the former by calling up images of Christ's passion - the quintessential, acceptable images of naked, bound and defenceless masculinity. The images of slender, sinuous, naked Christ languidly draped on the cross, head lolling like a spent lover, traditionally, contain male passion and male nudity within acceptable parameters, assuaging the possibility of embarrassment or arousal. Yet these images present Christ, unusually for a man, or indeed a man who is the son of God, as passive and masochistic - again traditionally 'feminine' positions."