

Larry Gianettino, *Autoportrait Ensanglanté*

Known for his large photos of toys and fuzzy friends, Larry Gianettino's *Autoportrait Ensanglanté* suggests a finger puppet having a bad day. The finger stands isolated in blackness. At first glance it offers a wry little smile. Perhaps it is an expression of Schadenfreude produced by an artist with a slightly twisted mind. The spacing of the drops, though, indicate the scale of a staple. The blood from dual punctures forms the subject's eyes and the transfer of a little extra liquid below produces a mouth. A second look reveals the raised eyebrow of the right eye that conveys a questioning air. Offering an image including a fingerprint, a carrier of DNA and a poor excuse for a face, the work might be read as a metaphor for the complex nature of identity in today's security conscious world. But side lighting gives the eyes sickly white pupils and the plaintive quality of the overall expression indicates discomfort. Maybe Gianettino is mirroring his own reaction to a frustratingly stingy wound or does the image refer to a fatal condition, the diminutive scale of the injury representing the victim's sense of hopelessness against insurmountable pain? —John Gayer

