

Michael Jackson Doesn't Quit: Part 1

Opening Reception: Thursday, April 30th 2009, 6 – 10 p.m.

On view: May 1st – May 7th, 2009, 12 – 6 p.m

The Future Gallery is proud to present, Michael Jackson Doesn't Quit: Part 1, the first installment of a two part series of exhibitions featuring works related to the entertainer and social phenomenon, Michael Jackson. His music, performances, and media coverage have had a poignant, bizarre, and fascinating resonance in contemporary society. He is simultaneously hated and worshiped, idolized and demystified. There are few people who haven't been affected by the "King of Pop" in some dimension or form; he is truly an unforgettable character.

Curators Mike Ruiz and Ben Aqua have selected a group of talented, up-and-coming artists to investigate their unique observations and aesthetic decisions surrounding the complex being that is Michael Jackson. The resulting works are insightful and sincere, varying across several mediums -- from works on paper to multimedia installation.

It is no secret that Michael Jackson has undergone drastic physical transformations throughout his career. Dutch artist, **Martijn Hendriks (Amsterdam)**, curiously explores this aspect of Michael's character, posing a great big "what if" to his current appearance. Hendriks put a found photo of a young Jackson through an age processing software program often used to help people searching for missing persons. The result is both disturbing and at the same time strikingly familiar. The viewer is immediately confronted with a visual comparison of the potential Jackson and the mental projection of the real Jackson.

Another Dutch artist **Harm van den Dorpel (Amsterdam)** also examines the constant reconfiguration of Jackson. He does this through his work, *Sort*, a programmed flash animation in which a portrait of Michael Jackson infinitely reorganizes itself like a puzzle cube.

Jason Lazarus (Chicago) also uses text as a means of investigation. His piece, *Thriller (release date)*, extremely faint light grey lettering on a white artist paper, spells out the release date of Jackson's best selling record, Thriller. At first glance one does not notice the light text, but rather a resonant hum on a floating void. The white plane is both seductive and luring. As one comes nearer the text becomes clearer. The date serves as a crucial moment in pop culture history.

Dennis Knopf aka **Tracky Birthday (Stuttgart)** takes concept of pop to an extreme. He had an image of later Michael engraved into a glass cube. It's a mini monument of one of the greatest artists of our times. The king of pop art for your living room trapped inside his own persona, frozen in time like his timeless work. The kitschy aspect of this work expounds on the accessibility of his music and our endless obsession with watching him as a public media icon.

Chris Buck (NYC), points to the seemingly odd and fantastical behavior Michael is known for. Shortly, after the clearing of his child abuse trials in 2005 he flew to Bahrain, a place where he is widely loved and admired. Buck photographed a staged recreation of Michael Jackson in Bahrain wearing the traditional Islamic female dress.

All artists explore their own personal interests and fascinations with the King of Pop, posing questions about his definitively singular character. As an artist Jackson's work will never lose relevance as he transcends time. Michael Jackson truly doesn't quit.