

News Release

Wednesday 27 June 2018

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY OPENS *MICHAEL JACKSON: ON THE WALL*

Landmark exhibition explores the influence of Michael Jackson on some of the leading names in contemporary art from Andy Warhol to Isa Genzken

Sponsored by BOSS and Sony Music



Michael Jackson, 1984 by Andy Warhol, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D. C.; Gift of Time magazine; *An illuminating path*, 1998 by David LaChapelle. Courtesy of the artist © David LaChapelle; *700 Nimes Road, Bedside Table* by Catherine Opie 2010-11. Courtesy the artist and Regen Projects, Los Angeles © Catherine Opie

Michael Jackson: On the Wall

National Portrait Gallery, London: 28 June – 21 October 2018

Touring to The Grand Palais, Paris (November 2018 to February 2019), The Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn (March to July 2019) and Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Finland (August to January 2020).

The National Portrait Gallery, London opens *Michael Jackson: On the Wall*, a landmark exhibition exploring how Michael Jackson has inspired some of the leading names in contemporary art this Thursday 28 June 2018. Curated by Dr Nicholas Cullinan, Director of the National Portrait Gallery, London, this major new exhibition spanning several generations of artists across all media coincides with what would have been Michael Jackson's 60th birthday (on August 29, 2018).

Jackson is one of the most influential cultural figures to come out of the 20th century and his legacy continues into the 21st century. His significance is widely acknowledged when it comes to music, music videos, dance,

choreography and fashion, but his impact on contemporary art is an untold story; one that has not been recognised with an international loan exhibition such as this.

Almost a decade after his death, Jackson's legacy is as strong as ever: his record sales, now in excess of one billion, continue to grow; his short films are still watched; and his enormous fan base remains loyal. His impact and fame show no signs of diminishing and the questions raised by him as a social phenomenon are still relevant.



Equestrian Portrait of King Philip II (Michael Jackson), 2010 by Kehinde Wiley. Olbricht Collection, Berlin. Courtesy of Stephen Friedman Gallery, London and Sean Kelly Gallery, New York © Kehinde Wiley; *Wind (Michael/David)*, 2009 by Isa Genzken. Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, New York. Courtesy of neugerriemschneider, Berlin. Photo by Jens Ziehe, Berlin. © Isa Genzken, VG-Bild Kunst and DACS, London 2018

In addition to breaking records for the most albums sold, awards won, philanthropic achievements and cultural barriers overturned, Michael Jackson has become *the* most depicted cultural figure in visual art by an extraordinary array of leading contemporary artists since Andy Warhol first used his image in 1982. For the first time, *Michael Jackson: On the Wall* brings together the works of almost 50 of these artists, drawn from public and private collections around the world, including new works made especially for the exhibition.

The 48 artists featured are: Rita Ackerman, Njideka Akunyili Crosby, Emma Amos, Lyle Ashton Harris, Dara Birnbaum, Candice Breitz, Appau Jnr Boakye-Yiadom, Monster Chetwynd, Michael Craig-Martin, Dexter Dalwood, Graham Dolphin, Mark Flood, Isa Genzken, Michael Gitttes, Todd Gray, Maggi Hambling, David Hammons, Keith Haring, Jonathan Horowitz, Gary Hume, Rashid Johnson, Isaac Julien, Johannes Kahrs, KAWS, David LaChapelle, Louise Lawler, Klara Liden, Glenn Ligon, Sam Lipp, Isaac Lythgoe, Paul McCarthy, Rodney McMillian, Dawn Mellor, Dan Mihaltianu, Lorraine O'Grady, Catherine Opie, Yan Pei Ming, Grayson Perry, Paul Pfeiffer, Faith Ringgold, Michael Robinson, Mark Ryden, Susan Smith-Pinelo, Donald Urquhart, Kehinde Wiley, Hank Willis Thomas, , Andy Warhol and Jordan Wolfson.

The exhibition not only asks why so many contemporary artists have been drawn to Jackson as a subject, but also why he continues to loom so large in our collective cultural imagination. It explores the impact and influence of Jackson on contemporary artists and the continued interest in him as a major cultural figure. The selection embraces works by some of the most important contemporary artists working today, but also includes emerging artists. This innovative exhibition will be accompanied by a scholarly publication with essays by Nicholas Cullinan, Margo Jefferson and Zadie Smith.

Dr Nicholas Cullinan, Director, National Portrait Gallery, London said: "*Michael Jackson: On the Wall* takes an entirely new and quite radical approach by exploring the cultural impact of a unique figure through contemporary art. All the artists included - despite coming from different generations and parts of the world, and employing a range of media - are fascinated by what Jackson represented and what he invented. It is rare that there is something new to say about someone so famous, but here that is the case. The exhibition breaks new ground for the National Portrait Gallery in its subject matter and the breadth and profile of the artists who have been invited to participate. It will

open up new avenues for thinking about art and identity, encourage new dialogues between artists and invite audiences interested in popular culture and music to engage with contemporary art. Like its subject, we hope this exhibition will be inclusive in appeal, uncompromising in artistic integrity and in the process break down barriers.”

Ingo Wilts, Chief Brand Officer, HUGO BOSS AG: said: ‘With his incomparable style Michael Jackson indelibly influenced not only the music scene but the worlds of art and fashion as well. It therefore fills us with pride to have the opportunity of supporting this multi-facetted endeavor as part of our corporate arts program.’

Sony Music said: ‘Sony Music Entertainment is honoured to partner with the National Portrait Gallery for this beautifully curated collection of works, which celebrates the incomparable Michael Jackson’s impact and inspiration on a multitude of artists that span several generations. Michael Jackson’s artistry is unparalleled and Sony Music is proud to have played a part in bringing his very special talent to the world, thereby transforming the landscape of music and popular culture. We believe that this captivating collection of art shows the depth of that influence on yet another creative medium.’

Michael Jackson: On the Wall is curated by Dr Nicholas Cullinan, Director, National Portrait Gallery, London, with Lucy Dahlsen, Associate Curator. Nicholas Cullinan took up his position as the Director of the National Portrait Gallery in spring 2015 following his role as Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Prior to this, from 2007 to 2013, Nicholas was Curator of International Modern Art at Tate Modern where he co-curated an exhibition of Henri Matisse’s cut-outs with Sir Nicholas Serota in 2014.

Jackson £5 ticket for young people

Every Friday the Gallery will make 500 £5 tickets available to anyone aged 25 years old and under from 10.00- 21.00. Under 12s are free and family tickets are also available. Tickets are subject to availability on a first come, first served basis and can be booked online or in person at the Gallery. Proof of age will be required.

Michael Jackson: On the Wall is produced with the co-operation of the Michael Jackson Estate.

Michael Jackson: On the Wall

28 June – 21 October 2018 at the National Portrait Gallery, London www.npg.org.uk

Tickets with donation from £17.50 - £22

Tickets without donation from £15.50 - £20

Jackson £5 ticket for 25s and under every Friday 10am – 21.00 (500 tickets available, first come, first served basis).

Free for Members and Patrons

npg.org.uk/michaeljackson

Publication

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated publication featuring over 120 beautifully reproduced images, an introductory essay by exhibition curator Dr Nicholas Cullinan, and essays by Margo Jefferson and Zadie Smith. The publication is priced at £35.00.

For further press information please contact:

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