

Edgar Arceneaux „Negative Capability. The Michael Jackson Project “

Preview on Saturday, 18th September 2004, 5pm – 9pm

Exhibition from 21st September - 6th November 2004

Opening times Wed - Sat, 11am - 6pm

"...several things dovetailed in my mind, & at once it struck me, what quality went to form a Man of Achievement especially in Literature which Shakespeare possessed so enormously - I mean NEGATIVE CAPABILITY, that is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason - " John Keats, 1817.

Galerie Kamm is pleased to present the American artist Edgar Arceneaux with his second solo-exhibition in the gallery, with a work entitled "Negative Capability. The Michael Jackson Project".

Edgar Arceneaux's highly complex installations of drawings, photographs, and sculptures, network American and European culture, link linguistic strategies with non-linear combinations of pop and high culture from different centuries, and also demand "negative capability" from the viewer.

In the exhibition, famous artists such as Michelangelo Caravaggio and Jacques-Louis David meet Michael Jackson and the elephant man. Edgar Arceneaux sees similarities between them in the history, mythology, and transformation of tragic subjects and the manner of their representation.

His starting point was Caravaggio's famous painting "David and Goliath", where Caravaggio portrayed himself as the beheaded Goliath. The young David holds the head in his hand with a gesture similar to the youthful Michael Jackson showing his muscles. This picture, taken from the booklet of the compilation "History. Past, present, future, Book 1" by Michael Jackson, which appeared in 1995, is one of many that are meant to tell the story of Michael Jackson. The "Dancing Machine", a symbol for the beginnings of our technological world, also shows himself in the booklet as a baby, using the image to reveal his own story, thus showing something, but also concealing something which can't be aligned with his transformation. It was similar for the painter Jacques-Louis David, a supporter of the French Revolution, who tried to capture the Revolution's meaning with three portraits. The most famous is the dead Marat in his bath, who became representative of a revolution, which in itself cannot be represented.

Edgar Arceneaux links these tragedies of geniuses - beheaded, uprooted, and killed - within a complex network of relationships, which he draws from language. The pattern which thus emerges, he finds in the relation between words and images, signifier and signified. This allows him to make leaps which are not defined by linearity. Edgar Arceneaux shows us something which can't be shown.

At the Artforum Berlin, 18th – 22nd September, the gallery presents the Danish artist Simon Dybbroe Møller with a solo exhibition. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the gallery.