

## CORY ARCANGEL

AUDMCRS - PSK - SUBG

PARIS PANTIN

01 Sep 2015 - 27 Sep 2015



Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is presenting a solo exhibition by the artist Cory Arcangel, born in Buffalo (USA) in 1978. Arcangel has built up an international reputation since the early 2000s with his innovative performances, videos and computer-generated projects. Arcangel is now considered a pioneer of a generation of artists who have devoted themselves to the archaeology of (computer) technologies. The presentation of the already legendary installation *Super Mario Clouds* (2002-) in the opening exhibition of the new Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (USA), *America Is Hard to See*, underlines Arcangel's position.

The genealogy of iconic pop music hits, awareness of the historic character of (electronic) musical instruments, the archiving of music and the mutual permeation of the "pop" and "classical" spheres have become central to Arcangel's work in recent years. Take for instance Arcangel's concert series *Dances for the Electric Piano*, performed from 2013 to 2015 at venues including ICA London (UK), Berlin Philharmonie (Germany), MUMOK, Vienna (Austria) and the University of Television and Film (HFF) in Munich (Germany). In these compositions Arcangel plays with our collective unconscious knowledge about the sound of the synthesizer Korg M1, popular in 1990s house and techno music, which has become less and less significant for electronic music since the 2000s.

One of the three works in the exhibition, the sculpture *PSK* (2014), has a similar function: it consists of the drum machine *Roland TR-909* programmed with a rhythm which became popular with the song *P.S.K. What Does it Mean?* (1985) by Philadelphia rapper Schooly D. It is one of the most sampled beats in music history between 1985 and the 1990s. *P.S.K. What Does it Mean?* is considered one of the most influential songs of early hardcore and gangster rap, with direct textual references to sex, drugs and weapon use – still unusual at that time. The drum machine plays this beat in an endless loop, filling the exhibition room with a monotonous sound. In a public discussion with Hans Ulrich Obrist in Munich in May 2015, Arcangel repeatedly remarked that for him this work was about the *protest about forgetting*. According to Arcangel, technology is a trend, and one possible function of his work is to save outdated technologies from being forgotten.

Another work in the exhibition is the installation *The AUDMCRS Underground Dance Music Collection of Recorded Sound* (2011-12). From 2011 to 2012, Arcangel's Brooklyn studio archived 839 trance LPs that had been purchased from 1990s trance disk jockey, Joshua Ryan. *The AUDMCRS Underground Dance Music Collection of Recorded Sound* is an archive of these LPs, in which visitors to the exhibition can audition each 12 inch, as well as page through a booklet presenting all relevant data (format, size, speed, generation, etc.) on each record. The project underlines the personal obsession often involved with collecting, as well as Arcangel's own interest in preserving a cultural history that relates to his work and life. "It is said that the music we hear as teenagers is, and will always be, the most important music for the rest of our lives. For me, this music is techno – the cheap, voiceless, machine-age disco that became popular in the clubs of Chicago in the late 1980s and from there quickly spread throughout the globe" (Arcangel, 2011). The *AUDMCRS Underground Dance Music Collection of Recorded Sound* was shown at the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh (USA), DHC/ART Foundation in Montreal (Canada), Herning Museum of Contemporary Art (Denmark) and Reykjavik Art Museum (Iceland), and has an online component at <http://audmcrs.coryarcangel.com>

Kelly Clarkson's hit *Since U Been Gone* (2004) forms the background for the series of screen prints on silver foil *Since U Been Gone* (2011) also on display in the exhibition: for years, Arcangel has studied the genealogy of Clarkson's song which he considers the watershed moment when "punk" was finally fully subsumed into the US musical mainstream. In the late 2000s, Arcangel started collecting CDs related to Kelly Clarkson's hit. This collection was shown in Arcangel's last exhibition *Image Is Everything* at the gallery in Paris Marais in 2010, and the screen prints exhibited here are based on the surfaces of selected CDs from this collection.

The exhibition is accompanied by a concert to be held on Sunday, 7 June at 12pm in our Paris Pantin gallery. This is a unique collaboration between Cory Arcangel and the world-famous Ensemble Intercontemporain founded in 1976 by Pierre Boulez, which is devoted entirely to contemporary chamber music. Since January 2015 the ensemble has been based at the Philharmonie de Paris, not far from the gallery. The programme will include pieces composed by Cory Arcangel especially for the occasion, as well as works by Claude Debussy, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart/Daniel Glatzel/Johannes Schleiermacher and Anton Webern.

Cory Arcangel received a Bachelor's of Music from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Ohio (USA) in 2000 and has since practiced as an artist. Arcangel works in a wide range of media, including composition, video, modified video games, performance and the internet. His recent projects include *Arcangel Surfware* (2014), a merchandise imprint with products including bedsheets, iPad covers and magazines; *Working on My Novel* (2014), published by Penguin Books, and an extensive research project with a team of computer experts from the Carnegie Mellon Computer Club, in collaboration with the Andy Warhol Museum, the Carnegie Museum, and the Carnegie Studio for Creative Inquiry, to unearth Warhol's lost digital experiments.

Arcangel is the youngest artist since Bruce Nauman to have a full floor solo show at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (USA, 2011). His other recent solo exhibitions include Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea Bergamo (Italy, 2015), Reykjavik Art Museum (Iceland, 2015), Herning Museum of Contemporary Art (Denmark, 2014), Fondation DHC/ART Montreal (Canada, 2013), Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (USA, 2012), Barbican Art Gallery, London (UK, 2011), Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (Germany, 2010) and Museum of Contemporary Art,

Miami (USA, 2010).

Cory Arcangel is the recipient of the 2015 *Kino der Kunst Award for the Filmic Œuvre*.

Works by Cory Arcangel are on display in collections including the Albright-Knox Gallery Buffalo (USA), Essl Collection, Vienna (Austria), Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain Provence-Alpes- Côte d'Azur, Marseille (France), Miami Art Museum (USA), Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich (Switzerland), Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami (USA), Museum of Modern Art, New York (USA), Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin (Germany), Smithsonian Museum of American Art, Washington D.C. (USA), Tate Gallery, London (UK), University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor (USA) and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (USA).

Share your thoughts on social media with @ThaddaeusRopac and the hashtag #CoryArcangel