

PAUL P.

LES PAS EFFACÉS

PARIS DEBELLEYME

02 Wednesday - 02 Saturday



Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is pleased to announce «Les Pas Effacés», the first Paris solo exhibition of Canadian artist Paul P. The artist named his exhibition after the title of a book, "Les pas effacés, Mémoires" written in 1923 by the Count de Montesquiou.

This new series consists of eleven portrait paintings and drawings. These pencil and watercolor works on paper, feature references to Whistler and Goya. Their swirling and flowered backgrounds have the same Symbolist sensibility.

The artist's subjects can be divided into the traditional art historical genres of still life- portraits and landscapes, and are inspired by the aesthetic of late nineteenth century painting and by gay pornography from the late 1970's and early 80's.

According to Paul P., his subjects were minor "stars" who, given the upcoming AIDS epidemic, would quite possibly be dead a few years later. And in this way Paul P.'s project becomes that of a patient archivist whose empathy for the dead transcends care, becoming a means of positing on paper something new, sensual, lively and comedic.

As the artist explains "these young men's faces are chosen for their ability to communicate, within their expressions and physiognomies, ideas of boyishness, lust, fascination and compulsion. They are pictured from the shoulders up, confusing their pornographic origins and dignifying them with the historical conventions of portraiture (...) creating an expanded narrative that works to unsettle the original images (...)"

"Given the identity of Paul P.'s subjects – sexually active men at the beginning of the AIDS era – the drawings can't help seeming like memorial portraits. At the same time the work is different in tone from most art produced during the AIDS crisis. These aren't heroicizing or mournful portraits; however historically aware, they're second-hand, distanced, dandified (...)"

Holland Cotter, The New York Times, July 18, 2003.

Paul P. received a BFA from York University, Toronto in 2000 and has been featured in numerous group and solo exhibitions since 1999. He has been featured in solo exhibitions at Daniel Reich Gallery in New York in 2003 and Angstrom Gallery in Dallas. His work has also been included in group shows at D'Amelio Terras, NYC, The Power Plant, Toronto and in "Heavenly Creatures", an exhibition curated by Lisa Ruyter and Max Henry for the Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac in Salzburg in 2004.