

## Malcolm McLaren – Musical Paintings

Alicja Kwade, Andreas Schulze, Anselm Reyle, Damien Hirst, Delia Brown, Gregor Hildebrandt, Jack Pierson, Jim Lambie, Michael Queenland, Michael Sailstorfer, Rob Pruitt, Rodney Graham, Wolfgang Flad. Curated by Bernd Wurlitzer

**Duration:** November 1, 2008 – January 24, 2009

**Exhibition opening:** October 31 6 – 9 p.m.

**Location:** ScheiblerMitte

The adjective “shallow” means focusing on the surface, a lack of depth – an ideal description of the fast and furious world of seductive poses in glossy magazines and videoclip image sequences like the staccato of machine-gun fire.

Malcolm McLaren’s multimedia work *Shallow 1-21* draws on the ubiquitous pop culture of our times. With this work the man who made a definitive contribution to the music and fashion of the 1970s with punk has earned the respect of the art world. There are also intriguing points of intersection between McLaren’s early work and his current artistic productions: decoding and re-encoding of social symbols was an important element of punk style, and *Shallow 1-21* also brings together fragments to create a new entity that draws its vitality from decoding and generating new meanings. “**Learn to live in the ruins of culture. Assimilate the creative potential of the ruins and change it,**” said McLaren in a recent interview in German *Vogue* magazine. And strictly along these lines his 21 film sequences adapt the aesthetic strategies employed in videoclips and fashion advertising campaigns while at the same time deconstructing them. The film material itself is sourced from obscure movies from the 1960s and 1970s. Malcolm McLaren decontextualizes the images and subjects them to extensive artistic processing. The movements are played in ultra slow motion and the unusual cuts, which make the movements repeat endlessly in loops, both surprise and irritate the viewer. The slow pace of the images takes away the actors’ masks and generates entirely novel effects. The faces take on a grotesque look, and chameleon-like they alternate between lust and panic, surprise and smugness, aggression and lust. Malcolm McLaren’s “cut-ups”—which he produced himself from various audio set pieces and remixes of catchy popsongs—comment, accompany, or even thwart the images shown. A symbiosis of visuality and acoustics is created that oscillates between the hypnotic power exuded by the images and a distanced focusing on superficials, which pulls the viewer first in one direction and then in the other. Malcolm McLaren conflates sound and images in a symbiosis and calls his *Shallow 1-21* sequences “musical paintings.” In view of the pulsating, vibrant, sometimes still images, which are about play, lust, desire, wanting, expectation, and suspense, it is a fitting title indeed.

*Shallow 1-21* premiered at Art Basel 39 in a new, curated section called Art Basel Projects. In New York, the public arts organization Creative Time kicked off their new Artist Video Series in Times Square on the MTV jumbo screen with *Shallow 1-21* for two months this summer.

*Shallow 1-21* will be exhibited in Germany for the first time at ScheiblerMitte. It forms the centerpiece of a unique group show, which consists mainly of works that were created especially for this exhibition and are exhibited here for the first time. Under the direction of curator Bernd Wurlitzer, artists Alicja Kwade, Andreas Schulze, Anselm Reyle, Damien Hirst, Delia Brown, Gregor Hildebrandt, Jack Pierson, Jim Lambie, Michael Queenland, Michael Sailstorfer, Rob Pruitt, Rodney Graham, and Wolfgang Flad show their works on the theme of *musical paintings*.