



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Mike Kelley:
Photo Works 1996-2001

**September 7th – October 5th,
2013**

Patrick Painter, Inc. is pleased to present Mike Kelley: "Photo Works 1996-2001," a solo exhibition featuring selected photographic work by the late artist.

Before his untimely passing in early 2012, Kelley produced an enormous and dynamically diverse oeuvre, which encapsulated the intersection of his Catholic upbringing in Detroit with the politics of the working class, history, philosophy, and underground music. His art often examined dark themes such as criminality and perversion.

Drawing upon a wide variety of sources including nostalgia, Americana, architecture and memory, *Black Garbage (Grassy Island [Canadian])*; *White Garbage (Bob Lo Island)* (2001) confounds and challenges the viewer's expectations. From his seminal *Black Out* (2002) exhibition with Patrick Painter, he presents us with the image of garbage as art, a stunning contradiction of trash and treasure. Part of Kelley's *The Detroit River Project*, Kelley photographed images from islands in and around the Detroit River as a testament to the landmarks of his hometown. The sites and sightings of Detroit take center stage.

Produced by Patrick Painter Editions, *The Poetry of Form: (Part of an Ongoing Attempt to Develop an Auteur Theory of Naming)*, (1985/96) is comprised of thirty-four black and white photographs of cave formations. They were originally shot out of books between 1984 and 1985 as part of Kelley's project, *Plato's Cave, Rothko's Chapel, Lincoln's Profile*, which ended with a performance at Artist's Space in New York. His approach to rephotography differed from the established forms of appropriation used by New York Post modernists in the 1980s. Kelley conceptualized them as "recontextualizations" or "mythic insertions," as is evidenced by the fact that he bleached out all traces of people in the photographs.

The enigmatic photograph *Psychic Waveforms (Gerome Kamrowski's Sculpture Garden, Ann Arbor, MI)* (2001) is the outcome of a technical malfunction. On a trip to the Detroit area in 2001, Kelley visited the artist Gerome Kamrowski in Ann Arbor to photograph his sculpture garden. Upon developing the negatives, Kelley discovered the entire roll was covered with inexplicable white chainlink-shaped wave patterns. The patterns were particularly noticeable on a strip of underexposed frames. The result is four frames combined into a single horizontal image. The piece is intended to suggest the ephemeral nature of capturing psychic activity on film.

Kelley was born in Detroit in 1954. He received his BFA from the University of Michigan (1976), and his MFA from the California Institute of the Arts in 1978. A retrospective of Kelley's work has travelled from the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (2012) to the Centre Pompidou in Paris (2013), and will reach the Museum of Modern Art PS1 in New York in October of this year. Another retrospective of Kelley's work was recently on view at the Hangar Bicocca in Milan.

The opening reception will be held on Saturday September 7th, 2013 from 6-8pm.