

YA FEEL ME?!
TROY LAMARR CHEW II
September 9–October 28, 2023

Parker Gallery is proud to present *Ya Feel Me?!*, an exhibition of new work by Los Angeles-based artist Troy Lamarr Chew II. This is the artist's second solo show at the gallery.

Coinciding with the 50th anniversary of hip hop, new paintings by the artist remix venerated hip hop album covers and music videos with Chew's face supplanting that of the musical artist. Spanning 30 years of music history, the paintings showcase the evolution of fashion, sound, lyrics, and form that each musical artist pioneered. This new body of work continues Chew's ongoing exploration into the semiotics of hip hop in which he teases out the symbolic innuendo of lyrics and slang. In the new paintings, titled after lyrics by the musician portrayed, Chew destabilizes the role of the visual artist and draws attention to how we identify with pop culture media. Like a musician sampling from across genres and cultural histories, Chew uses his musical idols across decades to produce his own unique type of authorship, representing himself simultaneously as the producer and the consumer. Each self-portrait inhabits the particular confidence of the musical artist depicted while also bringing humor to his own journey of self-realization.

In *Supa dupa fly* Chew inserts himself into Missy Elliott's 1997 music video for her first single 'The Rain (Supa Dupa Fly)', sporting her immediately recognizable "garbage bag" suit and glasses helmet viewed through a fisheye lens. Missy's costuming in the video purposefully accentuated her chubbiness, underscoring the trait she felt served as her biggest obstacle to stardom. In leaning into this insecurity, Missy dared the audience to criticize her in the face of her undeniable talent and original voice. Similarly, in Chew's painting, the vulnerability of a self-portrait becomes a point of strength, bolstered by the artist's technical precision and comedic approach. Through occupying Missy Elliott, Chew paradoxically announces coming into his own artist identity.

Drawing from Chew's personal connections to hip hop, *Ya Feel Me?!* spans decades of musical output and shifts in how audiences connect with musicians. The evolving means of musical consumption are visible across the paintings in the exhibition, from defunct TV channel logos to graphics of new streaming services. *Hustlers-r-us, Game sharper than a elephant's tusk.* depicts Chew occupying the 2006 album cover for Bay Area rapper E-40's highest grossing record *My Ghetto Report Card*. Chew has made cheeky edits to the text which reads "T-40, My Ghetto Art Show" and replaces the parental advisory sticker with his own name. By taking ownership not just of the musical

artist's image but the CD packaging, Chew draws attention to the changing physicality of media. Music eras unite through Chew's identification with each musical artist, his self-portraits becoming representations of the connective tissue each consumer brings to their idols, this artist included.

In conjunction with the paintings, Chew has created a limited edition mixtape for the exhibition featuring his own voice rapping familiar hip hop tracks. The mixtape will be available for purchase with t-shirts from the artist's collaborative Wet Paint label at the exhibition opening reception on Saturday, September 9th from 4 to 6pm.

Troy Lamarr Chew II (b. 1992 in Los Angeles, CA) lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. Recent solo exhibitions include *The Roof is on Fire*, Altman Siegel, San Francisco, CA (2022); *Yadadamean*, CULT Aimee Friberg Exhibitions, San Francisco, CA (2020); *Fuck the King's Horses and all the King's Men*, Parker Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (2020); *WWJZD*, Cushion Works, San Francisco, CA (2019); and *Stunt 101*, Guerrero Gallery, San Francisco, CA (2019). Recent group exhibitions include *Walk Against the Wind*, Micki Meng and Parker Gallery, New York, NY (2023); *The Culture: Hip Hop and Contemporary Art in the 21st Century*, The Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD (2023); *Imperfect Paradise*, Barbati Gallery, Venice, Italy (2023); *Continuum*, presented by the Kinsey African American Art & History Collection and Residency Art Gallery at Sofi Stadium, Inglewood, CA (2022-2023); *I Yield My Time. Fuck You!*, Altman Siegel, San Francisco (2020); *California Winter*, organized in collaboration with Hannah Hoffman at Kristina Kite Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (2019); *Vanguard Revisited*, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA (2019); *Graduation*, Good Mother Gallery, Oakland, CA (2019); and *Black Now(here)*, Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, CA (2018). His work is included in the collections of the Kadist Foundation and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.