

HVW8

HVW8 Gallery presents:

JAY "ONE" RAMIER NOT TO LOSE MY HEAD

OPENING: OCTOBER 25

6 – 10 PM

SHOW: OCT 25 – NOV 24

HVW8 Gallery Berlin proudly presents:

NOT TO LOSE MY HEAD, an exhibition by Jay "One" Ramier.

In this series of paintings and collages, Jay "One" Ramier retrieves and reinterprets the first hip hop song that was also a work of social criticism. "The Message" performed by Grandmaster Flash and The Furious Five, feat. Melle Mel and Duke Bootee, describes social disarray, violence, decadence, alienation and self-harm. Released in 1982, it was widely recognized as one of the most iconic songs of late 20th century, and still speaks to the social reality of today.

In "The Message," hip hop's tone, formerly celebratory, becomes one of desperate urgency:

***"Don't push me 'cause I'm close to the edge
I'm trying not to lose my head
It's like a jungle sometimes
It makes me wonder how I keep from goin' under"***

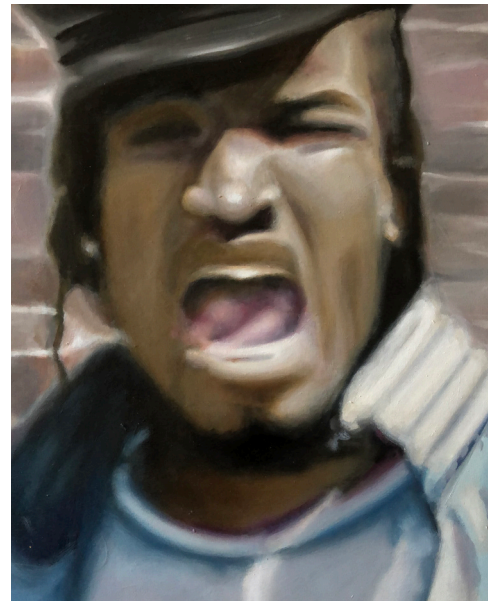
By crystallizing elements of the song and its video into still images, Jay Ramier invites us to pause and consider in detail the harsh realities and evocative expressions of urban life. In this moment, hip hop's mission changes. Jay Ramier has always stated his love for music, which he considers inspirational and the mightiest of all art forms:

"I like the way music, like the holy spirit, can take possession of one's soul, either by the power of the lyrics or the enchantment of hypnotic melodies or sounds."

The video cuts between frenetic New York City streets, South Bronx residents strolling or playing, elderly people lying in the streets, and abandoned lots of rubble. The group raps on stoops and street corners, and the police make conspicuous appearances.

In translating imagery from the music video into the medium of static visual arts, NOT TO LOSE MY HEAD reveals the lives that Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five sought to bring attention to and their lasting impact on us in today's world.

Almost 40 years later "The Message" still rings true, speaking to economic pressures and systemic racism that persist today. On the one hand, Jay Ramier's focus on the song highlights the ongoing nature of social inequality, but on the other hand, he explores the roles of popular music and art for expressing and questioning social experience, highlighting the importance of struggle and resistance.



"Not to lose my head (HuHu hu hu !!)", 2018
Oil on canvas
56x46 cm

About Jay “One” Ramier

Jay Ramier is a multidisciplinary artist working in the media of painting, video, installation and music. His work is an ongoing investigation into his own Caribbean cultural roots and the representation of African diaspora people in cultural spaces.

The narrative he constructs extends into and draws from the plenum of Pan-African experience from West African coast to the Americas. His work fuses the iconography of struggle and resistance as well as popular culture with the styles of musical and linguistic expression of African descendant worldwide. The focus is on the establishment of a new global system of representation to undermine that of western mainstream hegemony.

Jay has been key actor in the building of the European Graffiti and “Urban-Art” scene, a cosmopolitan Afro-centric movement, for the better part of thirty years.

Jay Ramier is a co-creator and contributor to many local magazine projects such as *Paris Zulu letters* – Hip Hop’s first international Zine, *Backjumps Berlin* – Street-Art’s first magazine. Currently, Jay is the Artistic-Director of and regular contributor to *Afrikadaa*, a magazine and conceptual project created in 2010.

He has also published the book *MOUVEMENT. Du terrain vague au Dance-floor 1984–89*, ed. *Les mots et le reste 2017*.

His work has been featured in the 2015 Venice Biennale exhibit “BRIDGES OF GRAFFITI”.

His work is an ongoing fight for a better and more accurate representation of Minorities in cultural spaces (galleries, museums, institutions) and the recognition and importance of Africa’s influences on modern and contemporary culture.

About HVW8

HVW8 Gallery Berlin was established in 2014 by HVW8 Gallery co-founders Tyler Gibney and Addison Liu.

HVW8 Gallery was founded in 2006 in Los Angeles with a focus on supporting fine art and avant-garde graphic design. HVW8 fosters artistic visions at the intersection of art, music and design, and collaborates with an international community of artists. Emerging and established artists such as Brian Lotti, Jean Jullien, Cody Hudson, Jerry Hsu, Jean André, Atiba Jefferson, Inès Longevial, Brian Roettinger, 44Flavours and Haw-lin Services have exhibited their works in Berlin at HVW8.

Gallery & media contact

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