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Organised by David Jenal and Noah Klink

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♯ is an exhibition based on a 200GB digital database of Prince fan ephemera, books, music, bootlegs, videos, and imagery. The files were compiled by Prince fans in and around Hamburg over years and passed on to friends and strangers at bars and clubs via a USB stick, engraved with ♯. Taking the material and the open medium of the database as a starting point, the exhibition brings together artworks that reflect on Prince's politics, identity as well as visual and musical aesthetic. All material produced in the course of the exhibition will be added to the digital database afterwards, which will then be passed on.

Funk

Prince was in constant search for difference, "the avant-purple". What made him become a larger-than life icon is a singular merging of a reckless will to produce and little hesitation to stand up. Whilst charged with illegible references and gestures, everything remains danceable, light and present.

Controversy

Whatever Prince did was sexually charged, full of allure and notions of Camp. His androgynous, provocative "para-queer" performance, that is everything from album titles to his perfectly manicured moustache, was an impertinence for some, but of attraction and stimulation for most.

Community

Community was arguably one of Prince's favourite words. He wanted his biography to be a "handbook for a brilliant community." Long before the establishment of platform-like structures, Prince set up accessible and democratic forms of online distribution and encouraged others to do so as well (see the database).

Politics

For his entire career, Prince dealt with the segregated music industry in the US. His attempts to deploy both aesthetic and political strategies seeking to evade himself from the dynamics of the industry culminated in re-naming himself to the unpronounceable ♯. Reclaiming control over his work, and challenging the racial hierarchy as paradigmatically instituted in the US thereby were part of Prince's conscious representation of race.

The gallery donates to the Minneapolis African American Heritage Museum and to the Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland Bund e.V. and asks those who can to do so as well.