

SIGNAL TO NOISE



THE DOPPELGÄNGER TRILOGY

New York-based artist Slater Bradley filters his latest videos through the idea of the doppelgänger, using his look-alike pal Benjamin Brock not only as a stand-in for himself, but as a facsimile of rock icons Ian Curtis, Kurt Cobain and Michael Jackson. In the large-scale projection piece *Factory Archives*, we see a lone, hazy figure who appears to be walking. The image's flickering blur of lavender, blue and gray almost looks as if it were shot through water, but ultimately comes to resemble concert footage, and indeed, it's Brock in a simulation of "found" performance imagery of Joy Division's ill-fated Ian Curtis. Similarly, in the black-and-white *Recorded Yesterday*, Brock re-creates a series of iconic Michael Jackson dance moves — the moonwalk, crotch grab with pelvic thrust — in what appears to be rehearsal footage, marred by its own deteriorating emulsion. And in *Phantom Release*, the actor becomes Nirvana's Kurt Cobain, in a rock-star tumult of glaring red lights, stringy hair and guitar strumming. Each video triggers nervous uncertainty about identity and authenticity while also inviting us to consider our relationship to these bigger-than-life pop icons. How much of what we see in them is fantasy projection? And what do we steal from them in crafting our own identities? In this sense, the doppelgänger of the series title is less about the relationship between Bradley and Brock and more about the push and pull between reality and its representation. In this case, though, reality gets doubled so many times that finding your way back to the real gets tricky. (*Blum & Poe*, 2754 S. La Cienega Blvd.; thru Jan. 22. 310-836-2062)

—Holly Willis