

# SHOWSTOPPER DAVID LYNCH

DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL  
MAY 30–AUGUST 15  
MICHAEL KOHN GALLERY  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

As collaborations go, the concept's been practically marketed dry. With nearly every Dick and Tom releasing a new collab on X, Y, and Z's product line these days, the theory's effectiveness behind a novel idea—your favorite artist pairs up with your favorite merch company—has almost been watered down to near ad nauseam. Partnerships, however, buoyant enough to rise to the surface of a saturated market and demand your attention are the ones dreamt up when first learning about this modern-day production relationship. To the credit of artists and companies' alike, collaborations are feasible avenues for expanding branding opportunities, reaching niche markets, all the while awarding artists the chance to cross market themselves. At the end of the day, artists, companies, and consumers are all happy ... as long as the shit ain't whack.

Revolutionizing the traditional collaboration, and as far from whack as imaginable, iconoclastic filmmaker David Lynch and master of music Danger Mouse teamed up for the first time, creating a project and installation far reaching that which fans of both have ever seen. Though, nothing either Lynch or Danger Mouse do is ever ordinary. In late May through mid-July, Lynch and Danger Mouse's two-room installation at Michael Kohn Gallery materialized the complementary relationship between art and music. Originating from Danger Mouse and Sparklehorse's album *Dark Night of the*

*Soul*, for which Lynch created the artwork, the exhibition capitalized on the interplay between the project's two components. Interestingly, an ongoing dispute with EMI (matched by Danger Mouse's fear of being sued) halted release of the album completely (featuring notables like Iggy Pop, Julian Casablancas, Frank Black, even Lynch himself), or rather led to Danger Mouse dropping: "For Legal reasons, the enclosed blank CD-R contains no music. Use it as you will." That said, the buzz over Lynch's exhibit of the same name resonated far and wide when the music accompanied opening night, not only satisfying the project's goal but encapsulating a complete atmosphere within the gallery.

Fifty photographs mounted on aluminum panels inspired by the original songs Danger Mouse and Sparklehorse created were on display and grouped into bunches of four (each grouping relative to a track), reinforcing the music's moody rhythms. "The installation encouraged a fully enveloping experience that surpassed the individual visual or auditory elements," Michael Kohn Gallery said of the orchestrated event. *Dark Night of the Soul's* ominous images tapped into Lynch's propensity for dark to light transmittance, not to mention blasting open new doors for collaboration crossover of the most authentic variety. —Erin Dyer

