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BARACK OBAMA, LISA JACK, M+B, YVONNE LEE

Obama Exhibit Still Going Strong

In News, The Shot, inspiration on June 11, 2009 at 2:31 pm



Lisa Jack/Contour by Getty Images

By now you've undoubtedly heard about and seen the photos of a young Barack Obama posing for Lisa Jack, Panama hat in tow while wisps of cigarette smoke lingered about him. The pictures were taken by Jack when the would-be President was a freshman at Occidental College in LA. It was 1980 and Jack, an aspiring photographer, shot pictures of her subjects as part of her weekly assignments. "Barry," as he was referred to back then, did his best to evoke an aura of cool.

Jack unearthed the photographs decades later, but waited for the right moment to reveal them to the American public. Now in an exhibit at [M+B](#) in LA, the media hype surrounding the exhibition included coverage in *Time* magazine, the *LA Times* and other noteworthy publications.

It's been a little over two weeks since the media attention began, but Obama's enduring appeal still draws a large crowd for the fine arts gallery. M+B gallery assistant Yvonne Lee says of the turn out, "The average Saturday crowd numbers 50 to 100, which is rare for any private art gallery." But even during the week, she notes, "People [are] waiting at ten [a.m.] to be let into the gallery."

Responses have been "overwhelmingly positive" she says, adding, "Gallery goers have said they appreciate the artist keeping [the shots] under wraps until after the election (since he is seen smoking), and gush mainly about how young, boyish and cute he looks in the photos."

Lisa Jack's "Barack Obama: The Freshman" will be on exhibit through July 18th.