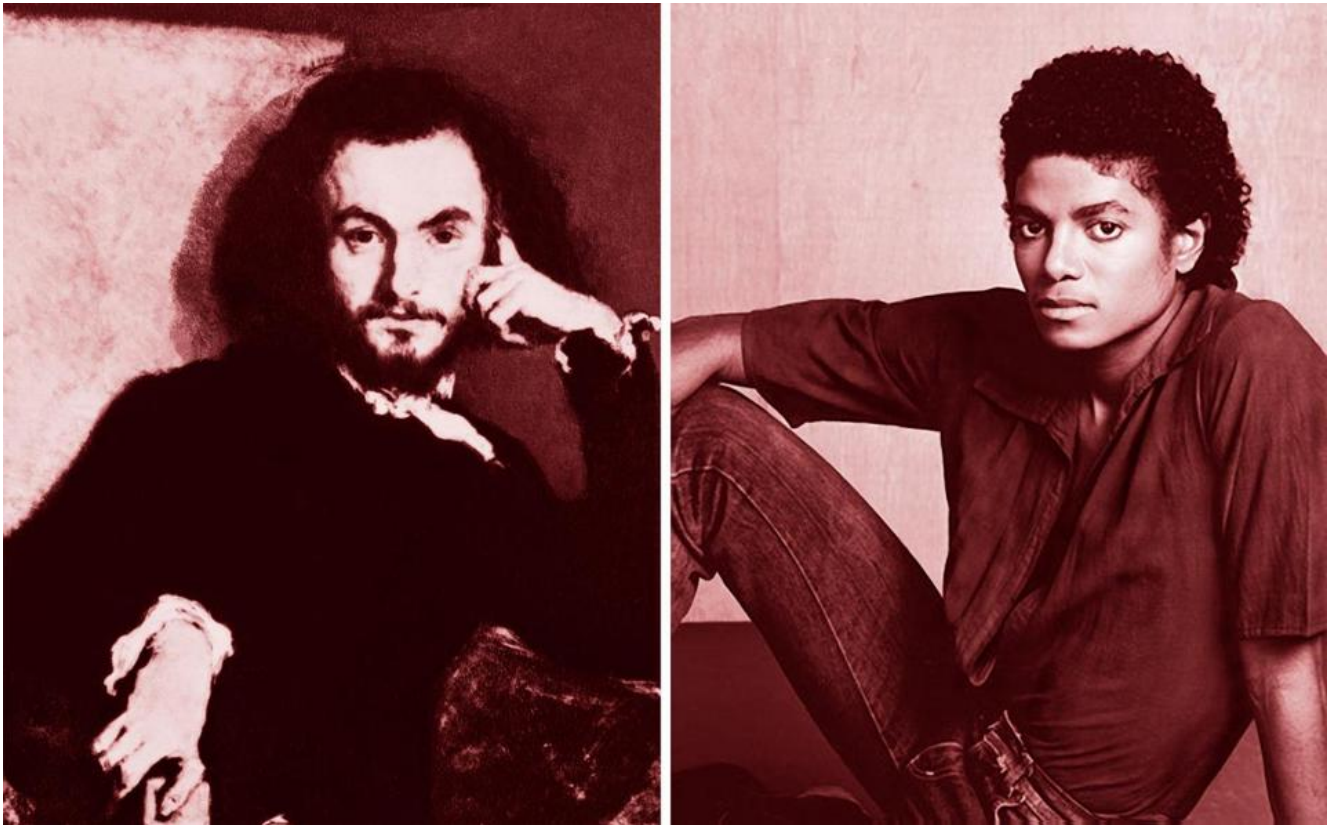


GALLERIES | CATE MCQUAID

Body images on display at Harvard



ALEXANDER GRAY ASSOCIATES

Lorraine O'Grady's diptych "The First and the Last Modernists."

By Cate McQuaid | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT DECEMBER 22, 2015

"The Fir-Palm," a photomontage in "Lorraine O'Grady: Where Margins Become Centers" at Harvard University's Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, might be a self-portrait. O'Grady, the child of mixed-race Jamaican parents, grew up in Boston.

A fir's bristling branches top the sloping trunk of a palm. The tree rises from the dark, satiny ground of a black woman's back. It blends the tropics with chilly New England. The piece comes from a series titled "Body is the Ground of My Experience."

From the ground of O'Grady's body and her imagination spring quandaries about identity, race, and power dynamics. O'Grady, who is 81, has been using images to puncture social constructions for more than 30 years. Her show at the Carpenter Center proves a cogent antidote to hoary yet still dominant notions we fall into about self and other, white and black, man and woman.
