

Press Release Victoria Miro Gallery

Isaac Julien

True North • Fantôme Afrique

14 October – 12 November 2005
Private View 6.00pm to 8.00pm, Friday 14 October

This October, Victoria Miro Gallery will present the UK premiere of *True North* and *Fantôme Afrique*, two audiovisual installations by celebrated artist and filmmaker Isaac Julien, alongside associated photographic series. Developing Julien's preoccupation with notions and expressions of diaspora, the creolising of space and crossings, the works explore the impact of location – both cultural and physical – to resounding effect through a juxtaposition of opposing global regions. *True North*, shot in the spectacular landscapes of Iceland and Northern Sweden, is conceived around the expedition and writings of Matthew Henson. One of the key members of Robert E. Peary's 1909 Arctic expedition, Henson was controversially and arguably the first person to reach the North Pole, who was also African-American. *True North's* counterpart, *Fantôme Afrique*, weaves cinematic and architectural references through the rich imagery of urban Ouagadougou, the centre for cinema in Africa, and the arid spaces of rural Burkina Faso, and is punctuated by archival footage from early colonial expeditions and landmark moments in African history. Renowned choreographer and dancer Stephen Galloway (Ballet Frankfurt) and actor Vanessa Myrie (*Baltimore*) figure as 'trickster/phantom' and 'witness' in this carefully composed meditation on the denationalised, de-territorialised spaces born of the encounters between local and global cultures, where the ghosts of history linger amid the realities of the day.

Biographical Details

Isaac Julien was born in 1960 in London, where he currently lives and works. Julien graduated from St Martin's School of Art, where he studied painting and fine art film. Julien's films include *Fantôme Afrique* (2005), *True North* (2004), *Baltimore* (2003), which won the Grand Jury Prize at the Kunst Film Biennale in Cologne, *Paradise Omeros* (2002), *Vagabondia* (2000), choreographed by Javier de Frutos, for which he was nominated for the 2001 Turner Prize *The Long Road to Mazatlan* (1999), made in collaboration with Javier de Frutos. Earlier films include *Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask* (1996), the Cannes prize-winning *Young Soul Rebels* (1991) and *Looking for Langston* (1989). Julien was the recipient of the prestigious MIT Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts, 2001. Solo exhibitions have included GL Strand

Press enquiries:	phone + 44 (0)20 7336 8109	Victoria Miro Gallery	open Tuesday to Saturday
Bryony McLennan	fax + 44 (0)20 7251 5596	16 Wharf Road	10am to 6pm, admission free
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Kunstforeningen, Denmark, Musee d'art contemporain de Montreal, House of World Cultures, Berlin, Art Pace, San Antonio, Bohlen Foundation, New York. *The Film Art of Isaac Julien*, curated by Amada Cruz at Bard Curatorial College was shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art Sydney and toured to the Bildmuseet Umeå, Henie Onstad Museum, Norway and Yerba Buena Center, San Francisco.

Exhibitions in 2005 include Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; MAK Center, Los Angeles; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin and Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami. Isaac Julien is currently visiting Mellon Professor at University of Pittsburgh and is a Trustee of the Serpentine Gallery and InIVA in London and of the Art Pace Foundation in San Antonio, Texas.

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