



**CENTER**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAK CENTER TO EXHIBIT NEW SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS BY ISAAC JULIEN**  
***"True North" Exhibition Marks Artist's First Solo Show in Los Angeles***

Los Angeles, CA (April 2005) – The MAK Center for Art and Architecture is delighted to produce Isaac Julien's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles and to debut the artist's new body of photographs entitled ***True North*** in the United States. The show, which includes six large-scale photographs and two photographic triptychs, will open July 15, 2005, and runs until October 15, 2005. The MAK Center will collaborate with the City of West Hollywood as well as Outfest: The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film Festival on a series of educational outreach activities: panel discussions; film screenings; and a public billboard project on Sunset Boulevard in West Hollywood, California.

Isaac Julien is an award-winning filmmaker and photographer whose work has been exhibited internationally. Best known for his films and installation work, Julien's images are as visually captivating as they are theoretically complex. This new series of photographs is comprised of formal stills from Julien's 2004 film shoot in Iceland. The images are lushly detailed pictures in which this irreconcilable site of ice and ocean is hyper-realized through the artist's lens. Julien's signature of high formalism and uncanny framing transforms this found environment into a field of fantasy and metaphor. The photographs and film are loosely based on the story of Matthew Henson, an African American manservant, who went to the North Pole with famed explorer Robert Peary in 1909 and was one of the first people to reach the North Pole.

"In keeping with his larger creative practice, this project continues Julien's poetic and political explorations of space and subjectivity, of historical memory and contemporary experience," says the show's curator Lauri Firstenberg. "The ***True North*** project reanimates heroic polar explorations through the lens of mythology and fiction which are rooted in a distinctly imperialist history and ultimately evoke ethnographic precursors such as *Nanook of the North*."

In this series of photographs, Isaac Julien works through the legacies and complexities of the documentary tradition in photography and carefully negotiates his way through the romanticism and alleged "realism" within the genre's lexicon. The photographs encourage the viewer to think about the construction of identity and how the mythologies of history and powers of desire regulate and inform identities in the visual field.



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### RELATED ACTIVITIES

**Billboard:** In collaboration with the City of West Hollywood Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission's Art on the Outside Program and Viacom Outdoor, a billboard on the corner of Sunset and Olive Drive in West Hollywood, (one block east of La Cienega above the House of Blues) will be mounted with an image from Julien's **True North** series.

**Panel Discussion:** On July 16, 2005 (*details and time to follow*) at the Schindler House, a group of cultural critics and art historians will gather with the artist for a public discussion about his new work and politics of cultural identity and representation in the context of a larger discussion of third cinema, the black Atlantic, and Diaspora.

**Outdoor Screenings:** In October 2005 (*details and time to follow*), the MAK Center will host a series of screenings over the course of the exhibition at the Schindler House including *Nanook of the North*, *Nanook Revisited*, and Julien's famed *Looking for Langston*. The films will be screened outdoors at the Schindler House in the evening.

**Outfest Screenings at the Directors Guild of America:** On July 12, 2005 (*details and time to follow*) at the DGA, The MAK Center will collaborate with Outfest to present three of Isaac Julien's notable short films. The shorts include *Three* (1999), *The Long Road to Mazatlan* (1999), and *The Attendant* (1993). Julien will be in attendance and will introduce his work as well as answer audience questions.

### CURATOR AND CATALOGUE

This exhibition was curated by Lauri Firstenberg. Firstenberg is a Ph.D. in the History of Art and Architecture at Harvard University. She is curator of Isaac Julien **True North** and Amir Zaki **Spring Through Winter** at the MAK Center for Art and Architecture (2005). She is co-curating **An Image Bank for Everyday Revolutionary Life** with Anton Vidokle at REDCAT, Los Angeles (2006). Accompanying the exhibition will be a catalogue. The catalogue is designed by Connie Purtill and fully illustrates all the images in the exhibition with beautiful color plates. Additionally, the catalogue will include several essays including work by Okwui Enwezor, Jose Munoz, and a conversation between Julien and Firstenberg.

### FUNDING

*True North* is funded, in part, by generous contributions from the National Endowment for the Arts, The Peter Norton Family Foundation, The City of West Hollywood Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission.

Special thanks to the Federal Chancellery, Department for the Arts and Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture of the Republic of Austria, The LaFetra Family Foundation, and the Los Angeles County Arts Commission.

### ABOUT THE MAK CENTER

The MAK Center seeks out and supports projects and ideas that break the disciplinary boundaries between the fields of art and architecture. Through its programs, the MAK Center acts as a "think tank" for current issues in art and architecture, encouraging risk, experimentation and invention.

MAK

FOR ART + ARCHITECTURE, L.A.

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By using modernist architect R. M. Schindler's House and Studio (1922) as an exhibition space, artists, architects, and curators can engage the house as a living object, thus extending it far beyond a traditional museum construct.

**MAK Center for Art and Architecture - Los Angeles is located at the Schindler House  
835 N. Kings Rd. West Hollywood, CA 90069  
323.651.1510 [www.makcenter.org](http://www.makcenter.org)**

**The MAK Center is open Wednesday – Sunday 11am to 6pm (closed Monday and Tuesday)**

**Admission: \$7 general admission; \$5 for students with valid ID and seniors; children under 12 are FREE. Admission is FREE on Friday afternoons from 4pm - 6pm, September 10 (Schindler's birthday) and December 1 (A day Without Art). Admission is always FREE for *Friends of the Schindler House*.**

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**For more information about Isaac Julien, *True North*, and the MAK Center, including high resolution images, please contact Sarah Stifler at 323.966.4600 or [sarah.stifler@cliffordpr.com](mailto:sarah.stifler@cliffordpr.com).**