



Media Information
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Isaac Julien: PLAYTIME

Works from the Wemhöner Collection

The PalaisPopulaire, in cooperation with the Wemhöner Collection, presents *PLAYTIME*, a film installation by renowned British artist Sir Isaac Julien. From March 8 to July 10, 2023, large-format photographs created in the context of the production process will be shown alongside the room-filling work. With this show, the PalaisPopulaire continues its series of collaborations with internationally renowned private art collections.

Isaac Julien realized the film *Playtime in* 2013, five years after the global financial crisis. In it, he attempts to artistically describe the interconnectedness of the financial and art worlds, as well as the effects of the crisis on a global level and very personal one. The exhibition, curated by **Philipp Bollmann**, head of the Wemhöner Collection, invites visitors to take now a fresh look at Julien's work.

The title *PLAYTIME* can be understood as an allusion to the comedy of the same name by Jaques Tati from 1967. In Tati's film, the character Monsieur Hulot gets lost in a futuristically designed, fully automated Paris. Tati's comedy is a playful, ironic critique of the conformity and sterility of modern times. At the same time, against the backdrop of the global financial crisis, *Playtime* can be associated with an age of speculation in which economic, cultural, and social values can be won or destroyed, as in gambling.



Whereas in Tati's work people are engaged in uniform activities in open-plan offices, Julien gives us a glimpse into server rooms in which enormous amounts of virtual money are moved around the world. A central aim of his film is to give these abstract capital flows an image.

In *Playtime*, Julien follows different protagonists: two London hedge fund managers (Colin Salmon and Craig Daniel Adams); a cynical art dealer played by James Franco; an Icelandic artist (Ingvar Eggert Sigurdsson) who has lost his studio house and fortune; a journalist (Maggie Cheung) interviewing the famous auctioneer Simon de Pury, who plays himself; and a Filipino maid (Mercedes Cabral) who is trapped like a modern-day slave in the luxury apartment of a wealthy family in Dubai. All the characters in the film are based on real people who were interviewed. They are portrayed through the prism of the crisis and its consequences.

Photographic works from the series of the same name serve as a prelude to the three-screen installation *Playtime*. Although they are photographs, Julien uses various modes of representation known primarily from sculpture and painting: the tondo, a round image valued since antiquity; and the back figure, which recalls Caspar David Friedrich.

Playtime is an associative, rhythmic installation that playfully works with time, space, landscape, and architectures to draw a psychosocial portrait of an era "after the crisis." In doing so, Julien makes use of elements of the musical and docu-fiction, and alludes to Arthouse cinema.

"Almost a decade after the completion of *Playtime*, the links between the financial and art worlds have become even closer. In the face of geopolitical and economic crises, global capitalism (paradoxically) appears more powerful and at the same time more fragile than ever.



Playtime has lost none of its topicality. On the contrary, Julien calls for an end to ignorance, for more empathetic, critical thinking that takes us out of our dangerous comfort zone," says **Svenja von Reichenbach**, director of Deutsche Bank's PalaisPopulaire.

About Sir Isaac Julien

Sir Isaac Julien RA (*1960 in London) studied fine art and film at St. Martin's School of Art and in 1980 co-founded the Sankofa Film and Video Collective, dedicated to independent black film culture. In his work, Julien investigates important social issues of our time, including racism and classism, and his work is on view in museums around the world. Having previously been honored many times, he was awarded the prestigious Goslarer Kaiserring in 2022 and knighted in Great Britain.

To accompany the exhibition, a publication with texts by Zeigam Azizov, Philipp Bollmann, Anna Herrhausen and Isaac Julien is published by Kerber Verlag.

For more information, please visit www.db-palaispopulaire.com

On March 16, April 29, and July 6, Philipp Bollmann will lead guests through the exhibition in a curatorial talk.

Press photos can be found at: www.photo-files.de/db-palaispopulaire

#IsaacJulienPlaytime #PalaisPopulaire

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About Deutsche Bank's commitment to art

With its involvement in contemporary art Deutsche Bank has set standards worldwide, be it with the Deutsche Bank Collection, one of the world's most important collections of contemporary artworks on paper and photography, with international exhibitions, or with the PalaisPopulaire, the bank's forum for art and culture in the heart of Berlin. For many years Deutsche Bank has been present at selected art fairs such as Frieze London, New York, Los Angeles, and Seoul.