

RUBY CITY

For Immediate Release

RUBY CITY TO PRESENT *ISAAC JULIEN: TRUE NORTH* MAY 5, 2022 –JANUARY 2023

SAN ANTONIO, TX, (April 8, 2022) -- Ruby City will present *Isaac Julien: True North* beginning May 5, 2022. The installation by British filmmaker and installation artist Isaac Julien is loosely based on the journey of Matthew Henson (1866–1955), the African-American explorer who was widely believed to be the first person to reach the geographic North Pole 113 years ago this month. Julien’s immersive three-screen projection *True North* (2004) depicts a lone, fur-clad figure crossing a snowy white landscape. In so doing, Julien reinserts Henson’s significant contributions, which were largely overlooked, into the historical record.

The exhibition will be on view May 5–July 24, 2022, and again September 8, 2022–January 2023. The installation will be closed July 25–September 7 during reinstallation of Ruby City’s permanent collection galleries.

True North is one of three works in Julien’s series, “Expeditions,” which explores globalization and the resultant circulation of people. Another work from the series, *Western Union: Small Boats* (2007), is on view through April 24, 2022, and was among the inaugural works installed at Ruby City when it opened in 2019. The final chapter in the trilogy, *Fantôme Afrique* (2005), will be installed after *True North*. Ruby City and the Linda Pace Foundation hold more than 50 works by Julien, who is one of the most represented artists in the collection.

Known for his poetic, meditative multi-screen film installations and photographs, Julien often uses landscape to present counter histories. His work is known for its non-narrative style that examines black and queer identities, diaspora, migration and underlying effects of capitalist economic systems. In *True North*, the vast, icy landscapes and the

struggling, meandering figure contrast typical heroic tales of exploration and discovery.

Henson (1866–1955) accompanied Robert Peary on his famous Arctic expedition in 1908–09 and was one of the first people to reach the North Pole. Though Peary received kudos for the expedition, Henson’s key role in the expedition was largely unrecognized for decades. Henson’s own accounts of the journey gained wider attention towards the end of his life.

About the Artist

Isaac Julien CBE RA, was born in 1960 in London, where he currently lives and works. Julien is also professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz. His 1999 film *Looking for Langston* garnered Julien a cult following. His 1991 feature *Young Soul Rebels* won the Semaine de la Critique prize at the Cannes Film Festival. Nominated for the Turner Prize in 2001, Julien has received numerous awards including the James Robert Brudner ‘83 Memorial Prize and Lecture at Yale University (2016) and the Charles Wollaston Award (2017) for most distinguished work at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. In 2018 he was made a Royal Academician (RA). He was awarded the title Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the Queen’s Birthday Honours, 2017. Julien’s solo exhibitions and presentations include Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (Zeitz MOCAA), Cape Town (2017); Platform-L Contemporary Art Centre, Seoul (2017); The Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (2017); Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris (2016); MAC Niterói, Rio de Janeiro (2016); Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo (MUAC), Mexico City (2016); De Pont Museum, Netherlands (2015); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2013); Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago (2013); The Bass Museum, Miami (2010); Museum Brandhorst, Munich (2009); Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2005); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2005) and Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2005).

About Ruby City

[Ruby City](#) is a [contemporary art center](#) in San Antonio, TX, dedicated to providing a space for the city's thriving creative community to experience works by both local and internationally-acclaimed artists. Envisioned in 2007 by the late collector, philanthropist and [artist Linda Pace](#), Ruby City presents works from the Linda Pace Foundation Collection of more than 900 paintings, sculptures, installations and video works. The new building, designed by renowned architect [Sir David Adjaye OBE](#), is part of a campus, which also includes [Chris Park](#), a one-acre public green space named in memory of Pace's son, and Studio, an auxiliary exhibition space which presents curated shows and [programming](#) throughout the year.

Ruby City is open Thursday through Sunday, 10am to 6pm. Admission is free; advance reservations are recommended. Information and reservations are available at www.rubycity.org.

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