

# Serpentine Gallery

## Press Release

### **Derek Jarman exhibition curated by Isaac Julien at the Serpentine Gallery marks major Jarman season for 2008**

#### Season Partners:



A Serpentine Gallery survey of the work of Derek Jarman, **opening 23 February 2008** curated by foremost artist and film-maker Isaac Julien, will form the central part of a major season celebrating the life and work of Jarman, the leading British film-maker of his generation.

This Derek Jarman season is a timely re-appraisal of Jarman's work and will include:

- The premiere at the Serpentine, and on More4, of *Derek*, a new film about the artist featuring Tilda Swinton, directed by Julien and selected for the World Cinema Competition: Documentary at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival as well as for the 2008 Berlin Film Festival
- The launch of the Jarman Award for artist film-makers, presented by Film London and More4 in partnership with the Serpentine Gallery
- A season of Jarman films on More4 and a series of related screenings at City Screens cinemas, London

The Serpentine exhibition will highlight Jarman's work in film and painting, including his pioneering presentation of the moving image within the gallery context. The exhibition is conceived and designed as an immersive environment by Julien and will feature several examples of Jarman's early Super-8 films from the James Mackay collection, shown here for the first time since the 1970s, an installation of his film *Blue*, (1993), as well as a selection of his paintings. Julien will also make an installation of photographic light boxes for the exhibition, documenting Jarman's cottage and garden in Dungeness.

Jarman was arguably the single most crucial figure of British independent cinema through the 1970s, 80s and 90s and films such *Sebastiane* (1976), *Jubilee* (1977), *Caravaggio* (1986), *The Last of England* (1987), *The Garden* (1990), *Wittgenstein* (1993) and *Blue* (1993) epitomised his own era. He struggled for Gay Liberation and lived with the impact of AIDS and was a participant observer, noting with pen or camera all that passed before him – from the punk and Thatcher years, from Hampstead Heath to film premiere.

*Derek*, Julien's new film about Jarman, whom he knew as a friend, is a film of Jarman's life, as well as the story of England from the 1960s to the 1980s. At its centre is a day-long interview Jarman recorded in 1990 with film producer and author Colin MacCabe. A message in a bottle, it surveys Jarman's life from the point of view of his death. Tilda Swinton is the film's narrator, reading a letter she wrote to Jarman a decade after he died. Clips of Jarman's feature-length and Super-8 films are juxtaposed with news and current affairs footage of the times that his life illuminated. *Derek* will play at the Gallery throughout the exhibition.

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## Notes to Editors

### Isaac Julien

Isaac Julien is a prominent artist and filmmaker, represented in museum and private collections throughout the world. He was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2001 for his films *The Long Road to Mazatlán* (1999), made in collaboration with Javier de Frutos, and *Vagabondia* (2000), choreographed by Javier de Frutos. Earlier works include *Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask* (1996), *Young Soul Rebels* (1991) which was awarded the Semaine de la critique prize at the Cannes Film Festival 1991, and the acclaimed poetic documentary *Looking for Langston* (1989). In autumn 2007 his most recent work *WESTERN UNION: Small Boats* premiered at Metro Pictures, New York, and he presented a live multi-screen performance work, *Cast No Shadow*, at Sadler's Wells, London and BAM, New York (Peforma 07). He is also a Trustee of the Serpentine Gallery.

### Derek Jarman Season:

#### Exhibition

*Derek Jarman curated by Isaac Julien*

Serpentine Gallery

23 February – 13 April 2008, 10 am – 10 pm daily, admission free.

Kensington Gardens, London W2 3XA

#### Film

Joint Premiere of *Derek*, directed by Isaac Julien and featuring Tilda Swinton, at the Serpentine Gallery and on More4. First showing at Serpentine Gallery: 23 February 2007. Film credits: Produced by Colin MacCabe and Eliza Mellor, Executive Producers, James Mackay and Tilda Swinton, supported by Channel 4, Film London – London's film and media agency – and the Sundance Documentary Film Fund. The film will be shown daily at the Serpentine Gallery on a loop for the duration of the exhibition.

#### Launch of Jarman Award

Celebrating the spirit of experimentation, imagination and inspiration in the work of UK artist film-makers, the *Jarman Award* recognises individual artist film-makers whose risk-taking work resists boundaries and conventional definition – work that encompasses innovation, excellence and vision. The award will shine a light on artist film-makers who could be to our times what Jarman was to his.

The winning artist will receive £20,000, co-sponsored by Film London and More4, along with a commission of four short films from *3 Minute Wonder*, Channel 4's documentary shorts strand, to be aired in Autumn 2008. Three further awards of £1,000 will be presented to the three other short-listed artists. Nominations for the Jarman Award will be invited in January 2008 and the award will be presented in April 2008 at the Serpentine Gallery.

#### Channel 4 / More4

Broadcast of the Jarman Award *3 Minute Wonder* on Channel 4 and season of Jarman films on More4.

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**Serpentine Gallery, Kensington Gardens, London W2**

**Open 10 am – 6 pm daily. Admission free**