



LAURENZ FOUNDATION

Press Release

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Dia Art Foundation and Schaulager, Laurenz Foundation, Announce Major Commission by Steve McQueen to Premiere at Dia Beacon in Spring 2024 and Travel to Schaulager in Summer 2025.

Dia Also Announces a Second Exhibition of McQueen's Work to Open at Dia Chelsea in September 2024.

New York, NY, September 20, 2023 – Dia Art Foundation and Schaulager, Laurenz Foundation, today announced a major commission by the renowned artist and film director Steve McQueen. The co-commission will be presented in May 2024 in the vast lower level of Dia Beacon, New York, before traveling to Schaulager, Münchenstein, in June 2025.

The joint commission at Dia Beacon will be accompanied by a presentation of McQueen's *Sunshine State* (2022) at Dia Chelsea, opening September 2024. The two concurrent exhibitions mark Dia's 50th year and highlight the institution's decades-long commitment to ambitious, single-artist presentations.

"I am thrilled that in 2024, as we celebrate Dia's 50th anniversary, we are able to bring McQueen's work in a multitude of forms to viewers in Beacon and Chelsea. Since the 1990s, McQueen's work has witnessed and marked our time, bringing lasting insight into our condition. This expansive presentation is a powerful example of our programming across locations and of how these long-term encounters with artists foster a unique engagement with audiences," said Jessica Morgan, Dia's Nathalie de Gunzburg Director.

Maja Oeri, president of Schaulager, Laurenz Foundation and Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation, added: "At Schaulager we are thrilled to join forces with Dia in realizing this exciting new project and enabling its commission. Over the past few decades, McQueen has become one of the most significant artists in our collection. Our collaborations with him include the widely acclaimed, large-scale survey exhibition at Schaulager in 2013, a 'City of Cinemas' that presented over 20 of his filmic artworks."

McQueen has worked in film, installation, and photography in a career spanning over 30 years. His work critically engages with themes such as history and race, through filmic imagery and nonlinear storytelling. For this new joint commission, McQueen will create an immersive installation exploring the complete spectrum of visible light in concert with a sonic component responding to the 30,000-square-foot gallery space at Dia Beacon. At Schaulager, McQueen will adapt the presentation to the unique architecture of the renowned Swiss institution.

The Schaulager, Laurenz Foundation, and Dia Beacon commission builds on McQueen's ongoing interest in light, color, and sound. In *Blues Before Sunrise* (2012), the artist replaced the warm white lights of 275 streetlamps in Amsterdam's Vondelpark with subdued, blue-toned bulbs, transforming the nighttime experience of one of the city's most heavily trafficked green spaces. In *Static* (2009), a film shot from a helicopter as it circumnavigated the Statue of Liberty, McQueen filled the gallery space with the loud and rhythmic roar of the aircraft's blades. In *Illuminer* (2001), a video camera positioned on a hotel room's TV set captured McQueen laying naked on the bed, lit only by the light emanating from the screen as it displayed images of the American special forces training for a mission in Afghanistan. Building upon these



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previous experiments, this new joint commission explores how light, color, and sound affect our perception of space, time, and ourselves.

Opening in September 2024, the complementary exhibition at Dia Chelsea will feature *Sunshine State* (2022), a recent two-channel video work originally commissioned by the International Film Festival Rotterdam. Shown on both sides of two large, adjacent screens, visitors are encouraged to move through the space and watch the video from different vantage points. Opening with footage of a burning sun, the work unfurls clips from the musical drama *The Jazz Singer* (1927), the first “talkie” in the history of cinema, which starred the famous singer Al Jolson. In a voiceover, M^cQueen recounts a poignant story that his late father relayed on his deathbed about a personal experience of violent racism in Florida, giving the work its title.

“This ambitious commission extends all that Steve M^cQueen is known for,” said Donna De Salvo, Dia’s senior adjunct curator, special projects. “His gallery installations, as well as his feature films, tell stories based on investigations into histories, often repressed or forgotten. Using projected light, space, and sound, much like a sculptor or a painter, he creates immersive environments that resonate on multiple levels and go beyond the conventional frame of cinema. M^cQueen places us, individually and collectively, at the center of his scenarios, thus firmly embedding us, but also destabilizing us, in the inescapable present. In M^cQueen’s words, he ‘wants to put the public in a situation where everyone becomes acutely sensitive to themselves, to their body, and respiration.’”

The Schaulager, Laurenz Foundation, and Dia Beacon commission will be accompanied by a catalog, published by both institutions, documenting the development of the work alongside essays and illustrations.

Steve M^cQueen is curated by Donna De Salvo, senior adjunct curator, special projects, with Emily Markert, curatorial assistant, Dia Art Foundation. Following Dia Beacon, the commission will travel to Schaulager, Münchenstein, where it will be curated by Heidi Naef, senior curator, and adapted to Schaulager’s unique exhibition spaces.

The joint commission is made possible by the Laurenz Foundation.

All exhibitions at Dia are made possible through the Economou Exhibition Fund.

Steve M^cQueen is made possible by major support from Ford Foundation. Special thanks to Visiolite.

About Steve M^cQueen

Steve M^cQueen was born in London in 1969. Surveys of his work have been held at the Art Institute of Chicago (2012); Schaulager, Münchenstein (2013); Tate Modern, London (2020); and Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan (2022). Recent solo presentations include those at Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2016); the Art Institute of Chicago (2017); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2017); Pérez Art Museum, Miami (2017); the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester (2017); Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2017–2018); Tate Britain, London (2019–2021); and Serpentine Gallery, London (2023). M^cQueen has participated in Documenta X (1997) and XI (2002); as well as in the Venice Biennale (2003, 2007, 2013, and 2015), representing Great Britain in 2009. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Turner Prize



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(1999); the W. E. B. Du Bois Medal, Harvard University (2014); and the Johannes Vermeer Award (2016). He was declared Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in 2002, Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 2011, and Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in 2020.

M^cQueen directed the feature films *Hunger* (2008), *Shame* (2011), *12 Years a Slave* (2014), and *Widows* (2018); as well as the series *Small Axe* (2020), an anthology of five films shown on BBC and Amazon; and *Uprising* (2021), a three-part documentary series made in collaboration with James Rogan for BBC. His latest documentary, *Occupied City* (2023), is based on the book *Atlas of an Occupied City, Amsterdam 1940–56* by Bianca Stigter. He is working on the historical film project *Blitz*. M^cQueen won the *Caméra d'Or* at Cannes Film Festival for *Hunger* in 2008, and an Oscar for Best Motion Picture for *12 Years a Slave* in 2014.

M^cQueen lives and works in Amsterdam and London.

About Dia Art Foundation

Taking its name from the Greek word meaning “through,” Dia was established in 1974 with the mission to serve as a conduit for artists to realize ambitious new projects, unmediated by overt interpretation and uncurbed by the limitations of more traditional museums and galleries. Dia’s programming fosters contemplative and sustained consideration of a single artist’s body of work and its collection is distinguished by the deep and longstanding relationships that the nonprofit has cultivated with artists whose work came to prominence particularly in the 1960s and ’70s.

In addition to Dia Beacon, Dia Bridgehampton, and Dia Chelsea, Dia maintains and operates a constellation of commissions, long-term installations, and site-specific projects, notably focused on Land art, nationally and internationally. These include:

- Walter De Maria’s *The New York Earth Room* (1977) and *The Broken Kilometer* (1979), Max Neuhaus’s *Times Square* (1977), and Joseph Beuys’s *7000 Eichen* (7000 Oaks, inaugurated in 1982 and ongoing), all located in New York City
- De Maria’s *The Lightning Field* (1977), in western New Mexico
- Robert Smithson’s *Spiral Jetty* (1970), in the Great Salt Lake, Utah
- Nancy Holt’s *Sun Tunnels* (1973–76), in the Great Basin Desert, Utah
- De Maria’s *The Vertical Earth Kilometer* (1977), in Kassel, Germany
- Cameron Rowland’s *Depreciation* (2018)

About Schaulager, Laurenz Foundation

Established in 2003, Schaulager in Basel, Switzerland, is an unprecedented institution focusing on open storage and research of contemporary art. Devised by collector Maja Oeri, it is housed in a unique building designed by Pritzker-winning architects Herzog&de Meuron in Münchenstein/Basel. Schaulager’s innovative concept has gained worldwide recognition among professionals and scholars. It is complemented by meticulously researched large-scale survey exhibitions focusing on artists from the collection. In addition to the running of Schaulager, Laurenz Foundation also funds two professorships in the Art History department of the University of Basel and enables projects promoting contemporary art worldwide.



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