

The Museum of Modern Art presents *Projects 106: Martine Syms*, the first solo museum exhibition in the United States of the work of Martine Syms (b. 1988) from May 27 through July 16. The exhibition features an immersive installation centering on a never-before-seen feature-length film, *Incense Sweaters & Ice* (2017). Shot on location, the film travels from Mississippi to Los Angeles by way of St. Louis, reflecting the legacies of the Great Migration. The narrative follows three protagonists—Girl, her great-aunt Mrs. Queen Esther Bernetta White, and her new acquaintance WB (“whiteboy”)—as they move between watching, being watched, and remaining unseen. Accompanying the film is a suite of prints that superimpose photographic stills from *Incense Sweaters & Ice* onto found American movie posters.

An artist-designed augmented reality (AR) app is being planned in conjunction with the exhibition and will allow viewers to unlock additional content from the film’s narrative through the posters, creating an exchange between audience and artist, still and moving images, and screens both public and private. Using original and found content, Syms shows how identity production and image production are intertwined activities in contemporary life, particularly due to the public’s constant interaction with and appropriation of mass culture for personal social media. In crafting this personal narrative, it is now common to incorporate images that are only experienced through the mediating lens of mass culture. Using this as a departure point, Syms’s film explores a shared cultural inheritance of television shows, advertisements, police cameras, Vines, and original photography to create a dynamic collage about familial, cultural, and historical legacy. *Projects 106: Martine Syms* is organized by Jocelyn Miller, Curatorial Associate, MoMA PS1.

Presented on the Museum’s third floor, the exhibition is designed to resemble an image production set. Continuous swathes of purple reference the chroma-keyed environments used by visual effects studios to composite images for motion pictures, news broadcasts, or video games. At the center of the space, *Incense Sweaters & Ice* appears on three large screens arranged in a triangular configuration, with the image migrating from screen to screen as new scenes unfold, designed to keep viewers moving in space and following the artist’s cues.

Initiated by MoMA in 1971 as a platform for new and experimental art, The Elaine Dannheisser Projects Series, now presented at both The Museum of Modern Art and MoMA PS1, provides a forum for the most urgent international voices in contemporary art. *Projects 106: Martine Syms* will be accompanied by an illustrated brochure. In conjunction with *Projects 106*, Syms will participate in a Modern Monday evening on July 10.

ARTIST BIO: Martine Syms uses video and performance to examine representations of blackness

and its relationship to narrative, black vernacular, feminist movements, and radical traditions. Her artwork has been exhibited and screened extensively, including presentations at Artspace, Berlin Biennale, Manifesta 11, Hammer Museum, New Museum, Studio Museum in Harlem, Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, MCA Chicago, The Green Gallery, Gene Siskel Film Center, and White Flag Projects. Her critically acclaimed documentary *The Mundane Afrofuturist Manifesto*, explored the work of five Southern California artists and premiered on KCET. Syms has lectured at Yale University, SXSW, California Institute of the Arts, University of Chicago, Johns Hopkins University, and MoMA PS1, among other venues. Her recent exhibitions include *Borrowed Lady*, SFU Galleries, Vancouver; *Fact & Trouble*, ICA London; *COM PORT MENT*, Karma International, Los Angeles; *Vertical Elevated Oblique*, Bridget Donahue Gallery, New York. From 2007 to 2011 she was the co-director of the Chicago artist-run project space Golden Age, and she currently runs Dominica Publishing. She is the author of *Implications and Distinctions: Format, Content and Context in Contemporary Race Film* (2011).

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