



Interfears (production still), 2023. ©Jesper Just 2023. Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin. Produced by Anna Lena Films.

JESPER JUST *INTERFEARS*

October 29 – December 21, 2024

Perrotin New York is pleased to present Jesper Just's film *Interfears*, alongside the debut of an accompanying series of MRI prints. Screened for the first time in New York this November, the film originally debuted last year at Perrotin LA—in the historic Del Mar Theatre—followed by an exhibition at Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon. In *Interfears*, Just monitors the brain activity of an actor in character, exploring our relationship with emotionality and the daily performance of being human.

Jesper Just's video installations combine his technical knowledge of film with a desire to disrupt linear narrative structure, creating surrealist encounters that leave us with more questions than answers. Over the last three decades, Just has developed a stylized approach that weaves fragmented, inconclusive storylines into his sensorially loaded environments. While watching his films, viewers must search for clues, focusing not only on the actions of his characters but the emotional discourse. Interested in how public and private spaces define human interaction, Just utilizes his character's surrounding environments to guide plot lines. And, his elaborate film scores build narrative progression, where music often serves as an integral means of communication.

Interfears explores the claim that emotions can be learned, and staged, following the protocols of our social and cultural environments. In the film, Academy Award nominee Matt Dillon is seen enclosed in an fMRI as he recites a monologue. While Dillon plays a character, the machine records the actor's authentic response, blending both beings into one shared existence. Over the course of the film, the seemingly emotionless character becomes overwhelmed, in a failed attempt to control his emotions.

In the film, Just's elaborate sound design cultivates a narrative on screen, guiding us through the development of Dillon's character. Throughout the course of the film, the actor's emotional response is mirrored by intense musical transformation. At first, Dillon's monologue is accompanied by the cold, monotonous sound of the fMRI machine, which over time is replaced by orchestral melodies of Gustave Mahler's Fifth Symphony Adagietto. As we watch Dillon become overwhelmed by his emotions, the haunting Adagietto reaches its climax.

Supplementing the film, Just debuts a series of MRI prints which map the topography of Dillon's acted emotions. The captured array of emotions—terror, joy, sadness—each light up a specific part of the brain. In his prints, Just blends various angles of the brain during each emotion in a collage of neurological activity, resulting in two dimensional representations of the mind throughout the performance.

In *Interfears*, the actor and character come together, blurring the boundary between real and simulated emotional response. As Jesper Just says, "What do you do with your ego when you are playing a role? Are you possessed? Are you still aware of who you are?"

More about the artist

Jesper Just (b. 1974 in Denmark) is a New York-based artist who is known for his immersive video environments. He has exhibited at global institutions, including Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Kunsthalle Vienna; Brooklyn Museum; Tampa Museum of Art; The 55th Venice Biennale; The National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, South Korea; Palais de Tokyo, France; Museum of Art Architecture & Technology, Lisbon, Portugal; Marino Marini Museum, Italy; and recently a permanent project "The Garden in the Machine" at Filmby Aarhus in Denmark.