

## Press Release

Theaster Gates

*1965: Malcolm in Winter: A Translation Exercise*

7 February – 6 April 2025

White Cube Bermondsey

### **Press Preview and Artist Tour**

Wednesday 5 February 2025

12pm–1pm

RSVP essential: [press@whitecube.com](mailto:press@whitecube.com)

White Cube is pleased to present a major exhibition by artist Theaster Gates (b.1973, Chicago, Illinois). Spanning the entirety of the Bermondsey gallery, the artist debuts a new series of architectural interventions, large-scale installations, film works, and archival responses.

Marking the centenary of Malcolm X's birth and the 60-year anniversary of his assassination, in Gates's latest exhibition, '1965: Malcolm in Winter: A Translation Exercise', the artist honours the revolutionary translation and archiving practice of the late Japanese journalist, Ei Nagata, and his partner, Haruhi Ishitani, who devoted their lives to preserving Malcolm X's legacy following his assassination.

On the heels of his first major solo show in Japan, 'Afro-Mingei', at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo, Gates encountered Haruhi Ishitani, the caretaker of a prolific collection of documents, images, and correspondence chronicling Malcolm X's global influence and the transnational legacies of radical Black Power movements across the world. Through the meticulous and careful archiving and translation of Malcolm X's speeches into Japanese, Ishitani and her partner created new touchpoints and audiences for his message.

In this body of work, Gates builds upon his decades-long interrogation of the truth of Blackness in Japan, a thread he began to unravel when he studied pottery in Tokoname, Japan in the late 1990s. Having received the archive just five months prior to the exhibition, Gates finds a powerful collaborator in Ishitani as he harnesses the archive and Japanese aesthetics to examine the political activity of the Black power movements in the 60s, beginning at the moment of Malcolm X's assassination.

'I've always been interested in how political thought, activism, policy, governance and power take form in the world and how they are realized within my artistic practice', says Gates. 'Nagata Ei and Ishitani Haruhi have provided new form to Malcolm X's speeches through

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translation. I hope to both steward this amazing Black Japanese archive and draw from its source inspiration for the creation of new projects and works’.

In this exhibition, Gates continues his artistic investment in the archive as a tool for the liberation and restoration of Black stories and histories. In this past year alone, Gates and his non-profit artistic project on Chicago’s South Side, have completed the digitization and cataloguing of more than 82,000 objects between the Frankie Knuckles Record Collection, the Ed J. Williams Collection of ‘Negrobilia’, and the University of Chicago Glass Lantern Slides. Currently on view at his Stony Island Arts Bank in Chicago is ‘When Clouds Roll Away: Reflection and Restoration from the Johnson Publishing Company Archive’, a monumental, experimental exhibition extending the empire of the publishers of *Ebony* and *Jet* magazine and reporting on the care that Gates has offered the material legacies of the Black media empire since closing their headquarters in 2011.

For Gates, the Nagata archive demonstrates the substantial care, protection, and activation worthy of historically significant collections. ‘1965: Malcolm in Winter: A Translation Exercise’ is, in many ways, the first act in a lifelong engagement with the contents of this archive.

‘Theaster Gates: 1965: Malcolm in Winter: A Translation Exercise’ is on view at White Cube Bermondsey from 7 February until 6 April 2025.

**For additional press information, interviews or images please contact:**

Irene Del Principe, Press Officer, White Cube

E: [iredelprincipe@whitecube.com](mailto:iredelprincipe@whitecube.com)

M: +44 (0)7734 995 878

**Notes to Editors:**

- Theaster Gates was born in 1973 in Chicago where he lives and works. He is a professor at the University of Chicago in the Department of Visual Arts.
- Gates has exhibited widely, including solo exhibitions at Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2024); Contemporary Art Museum Houston (2024); LUMA Foundation, Arles (2024 and 2023); New Museum, New York (2022); Serpentine Pavilion, London (2022); Frederick Kiesler Foundation, Vienna, (2022); Whitechapel Gallery, London (2021); Victoria & Albert Museum, London (2021); TANK Shanghai (2021); Prada Rhong Zhai, Shanghai (2021); Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, Atlanta (2020); Tate Liverpool, UK (2020); Haus der Kunst, Munich (2019); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2019); Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin (2019); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2019); Fondazione Prada, Milan (2018); Kunstmuseum Basel (2018); Sprengel Museum,

Hannover (2018); National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (2017); Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (2016); Fondazione Prada, Milan (2016); Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria (2016); Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2013); Whitechapel Gallery, London (2013); Seattle Art Museum, Washington, DC (2011); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2011); Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin (2010); and St. Louis Art Museum, Missouri (2010).

- Gates has participated in many group exhibitions including the High Museum of Art, Atlanta (2024); 18th International Architecture Biennale, Venice (2023); Fondazione Prada, Venice (2023); Brooklyn Museum, New York (2023); Punta della Dogana – Pinault Collection (2023); Sharjah Biennial 15, UAE (2023); The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2022); Aichi Triennale, Tokoname City, Japan (2022); Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson (2022); New Museum, New York (2021); Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and Crystal Bridges Museum, Arkansas (2021); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2020); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2017); 14th Istanbul Biennial (2015); 56th Venice Biennale (2015); Prospect 3, New Orleans (2014); Documenta 13, Kassel, Germany (2012); and Whitney Biennial, New York (2010).
- Gates is the recipient of numerous awards and honorary degrees including the Isamu Noguchi Award (2023); Friedrich Kiesler Prize for Architecture and Art (2021); the Royal Institute of British Architects (2021); the World Economic Forum Crystal Award (2020); J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development (2018); Nasher Sculpture Prize (2018); Sprengel Museum Kurt Schwitters Prize (2017); and Artes Mundi 6 prize (2015). In April 2018 Gates was appointed the first distinguished visiting artist and Director of Artist Initiatives at the Lunder Institute for American Art, Colby College, Waterville, Maine. He was the visiting artist in residence at the American Academy in Rome (2020); and was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2021.
- White Cube's exhibition programme extends across locations in London, Hong Kong, Paris, New York, Seoul and online. Since its inception in 1993, the gallery has exhibited the work of many of the world's most highly acclaimed contemporary artists.
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