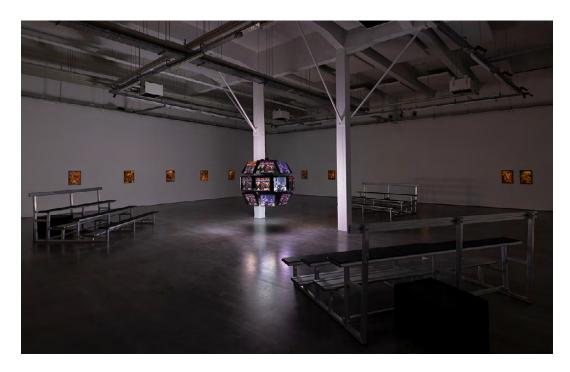# GAGOSIAN

Gagosian to Present Christopher Kulendran Thomas's Debut US Exhibition

Featuring Paintings and Video, *Peace Core* **Opens on September 4 at Park & 75**

Christopher Kulendran Thomas, *Peace Core (sphere)*, 2024 (center), multichannel video (color, sound, infinite duration), custom software, hardware, and rotating steel structure, 63 × 63 × 63 inches (160 × 160 × 160 cm). Installation view, *Christopher Kulendran Thomas: Safe Zone*, Wiels, Brussels, 2024–25 © Christopher Kulendran Thomas. Photo: Andrea Rossetti

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NEW YORK, August 18, 2025—Gagosian is pleased to announce *Peace Core*, an exhibition by Christopher Kulendran Thomas, opening at the gallery's Park & 75 location in New York on September 4, 2025. This is the artist's first solo exhibition in the United States. A gallery dedicated to Kulendran Thomas's work will be on view starting September 2 at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, with other major presentations of his work taking place this winter at the New Museum, New York; K21 museum, Düsseldorf, Germany; the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney; and as part of the 14th Taipei Biennial.

For much of the past decade, Kulendran Thomas has been using artificial intelligence tools to question the myths of Western individualism. His paintings metabolize the colonial art history that came to dominate in Sri Lanka after his family, who are Tamil, left escalating ethnic violence there. The artist often exhibits these paintings with video installations that fuse propaganda and counterpropaganda into a speculative vortex of alternate histories.

The exhibition takes its name from its centerpiece, *Peace Core (sphere)* (2024), a video work of infinite duration that continually auto-edits American television footage first broadcast in the moments before the world-changing events of September 11, 2001. Originally presented as part of Kulendran Thomas's recent exhibition at Wiels Contemporary Art Centre in Brussels, and realized together with his

longtime collaborator Annika Kuhlmann, this work is juxtaposed with six paintings that depict a largely undocumented massacre on the beaches of Mullivaikkal, Sri Lanka, that was perpetrated in 2009 in the geopolitical aftermath of the "War on Terror" and went largely unwitnessed by the outside world. Painted by hand, ambiguous figures merge with their surroundings through allusive, expressionistic brushwork. Lacking documentary evidence, Kulendran Thomas imagined these scenes by engaging with the visual language of the colonial history that precipitated the violence they depict—a visual language often seen as synonymous with artistic freedom, but which has also been deployed by the West as a form of soft power.

Produced collaboratively with the artist's studio team, Kulendran Thomas's paintings are composed using a neural network "trained" on the work of many of Sri Lanka's most celebrated artists, who were influenced by the canonical modernisms that European settlers brought to the island. The paintings' uncannily familiar yet alien compositions are enlivened by expressive gestures that slip across art historical timelines. While seeming to embody the fiction of the individual encoded into that canon, they paradoxically also channel a networked collective consciousness, gently subverting the essentialist ideas at the core of identity politics, the kind of politics that tore apart the artist's family homeland.

The six canvases on view are illuminated by *Peace Core*'s revolving sphere of twenty-four screens suspended in the center of the gallery. Evocative of a newsroom, a trading floor, or video art of the 1980s, the spherical constellation streams television footage that was first broadcast live twenty-four years ago. This footage and accompanying sound are endlessly remixed and reedited in real time by an AI algorithm trained on the compositional methods of "vaporwave" music from the 2010s and the editing style of early "corecore" videos on TikTok, circa 2022, in which seemingly arbitrary music and video are combined for emotional affect.

Bathed in the warm glow of a perpetually suspended illusion of innocence, Kulendran Thomas's exhibition moves fluidly through multiple eras of art history and media technology, subtly confronting our linear conception of time and the attendant ideas of contemporaneity and originality that structure not only artistic value, but also Western consciousness itself. Juxtaposing two historical mediums of soft power, painting and television, it also brings together two "ground zeros"—one that was broadcast live to billions and another that occurred in its aftermath, unseen by the rest of the world. Merging automation and virtuosity, Kulendran Thomas's practice does not seek one unified cultural voice but operates instead through hybridity and tension, reflecting perhaps a diasporic condition of fractured belonging, a kind of freedom in dislocation.

Gagosian will host a conversation between Kulendran Thomas and Joshua Citarella within the exhibition on Thursday, September 4, at 5:30pm, followed by an opening reception from 6 to 8pm.

Peace Core was originally commissioned by Wiels, Brussels; Artspace, Sydney; and FACT Liverpool, England.

Christopher Kulendran Thomas's work is held in significant public collections, including The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Recent solo exhibitions include *Another World*, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, and KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2022–23); *FOR REAL*, Kunsthalle Zürich (2023); and *Safe Zone*, Wiels, Brussels (2024–25, traveled to FACT Liverpool, England, 2025). Kulendran Thomas is a cofounder of EARTH.net, New York and Los Angeles.

#ChristopherKulendranThomas

CHRISTOPHER KULENDRAN THOMAS
Peace Core
Opening reception: Thursday, September 4, 6–8pm
September 4–October 18, 2025
Park & 75, 821 Park Avenue, New York

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