

“Play and Loop II”

Curated by Nick Yu

Featured artists: Sophia Al-Maria, Patty Chang, Luke Ching Chin Wai, Hao Jingban, Isaac Julien, Jiang Zhi, Lai Lon Hin, Leung Chi Wo, Nira Pereg, Shen Xin, Victoria Sin, Angela Su, Pilvi Takala, Eason Tsang Ka Wai, Wang Bing, Wong Kit Yi, Ming Wong, Wong Wai Yin

30 June – 22 August 2020

Venue: Blindspot Gallery (15/F, Po Chai Industrial Building, 28 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Wong Chuk Hang, Hong Kong)
Opening Hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10:30 am to 6:30 pm (Sunday and Monday by appointment only); closed on public holidays

WEEK 6: Chase | Isaac Julien, Jiang Zhi

Perhaps we are beguiled by an incessant pursuit. Week 6, titled “Chase”, features Isaac Julien’s *Baltimore* (2003) and Jiang Zhi’s *In the Woods* (2018). Both works depict active scenes of roaming and pursuit, while mobilizing cinematic genres and iconographies to question the meaning of the pursuit itself. Unlike the heroes/heroines in a linear sequence of actions driven by personal and social injustice, which is central to blaxploitation and martial art films, here are people thrown into mysterious narratives, encountering spectres of the past and alien entities, and performing spectacular feats to unknowable ends.

Isaac Julien’s *Baltimore* is a single-channel 16mm film projection filmed in Baltimore, featuring Melvin Van Peebles, the veteran Black director and actor known for his work *Sweet Sweetback’s Baadasssss Song* (1971), a pioneering and revolutionary work that helped usher in the black empowerment movement and Blaxploitation cinema. In *Baltimore*, Van Peebles nonchalantly roams the halls of museum galleries, and engages in a cat-and-mouse shadowing of a bionic gun-wielding Foxy-Brown-type woman, in a parallel timeline. Shot in three institutions in the city, the Great Blacks in Wax Museum, the Peabody Library, and the Walters Museum, the mise-en-scène conveys a keen sensitivity to the representation of history, as well as a futurism directed towards an inexhaustible pursuit of truth. This pathos is most stunningly displayed in the final scene, when Van Peebles comes face to face to his own wax figure, which stands among the wax sculptures of other great Black men and women, against a background of classical Western paintings in the Walter Museum collection.



Jiang Zhi’s *In the Woods* depicts a group of buoyant youths entering a forest. Their exuberant celebration and youthful jouissance are quickly interrupted by the sudden attack of helium balloons, and a choreographed wuxia fighting ensues. These balloons take on a range of symbolism, from the vivacity of childhood imagination and Disney romance, to inauthentic fear and imagined hostility. That such childhood playthings become agents of vicious violence is a fateful betrayal of the promise of happiness.



About Play and Loop II

“Play and Loop II” is the second iteration of an eight-week screening programme at Blindspot Gallery, featuring works by 18 regional and international artists. Each week, video works by two artists will be featured and played continuously on loop during the opening hours of the gallery. The selected works congeal into weekly themes pertinent to our current state of affairs and being. Sedimenting, speculating and fantasizing, these weekly artwork pairings become navigation points between an unruly past and an uncharted future.

Screening Schedule:

Week 1 27.6 – 4.7	Heavy Hands	Pilvi Takala Leung Chi Wo	<i>The Stroker</i> (2018) <i>Sign</i> (2008)	15'16" 13'00"
Week 2 7 – 11.7	Still Dancing	Ming Wong Hao Jingban	<i>Next Year L'Année Prochaine 明年</i> (2016) <i>An Afternoon Ball</i> (2013)	17'40" 24'21"
Week 3 14 – 18.7	Daily Phobia	Patty Chang Nira Pereg	<i>Milk Debt Hong Kong, Jun 8, 2019</i> (2019) <i>67 Bows</i> (2006) <i>and Melancholy</i> (2009)	13'11" 5'51" 3'02"
Week 4 21 – 25.7	Going Away	Patty Chang Wong Kit Yi	<i>Shangri-La</i> (2005) <i>A River in the Freezer</i> (2017)	40'00" 25'25"
Week 5 28.7 – 1.8	Exile	Wang Bing Shen Xin	<i>Traces</i> (2014) <i>Strongholds</i> (2016)	29'00" 71'00"
Week 6 4 – 8.8	Chase	Isaac Julien Jiang Zhi	<i>Baltimore</i> (2003) <i>In the Woods</i> (2018)	11'56" 22'31"
Week 7 11 – 15.8	Stellar Contagion	Angela Su Sophia Al-Maria + Victoria Sin	<i>Cosmic Call</i> (2019) <i>BCE</i> (2019)	12'43" 9'43"
Week 8 18 – 22.8	Progress	Wang Bing Jiang Zhi	<i>Crude Oil</i> (2009) <i>The Nail</i> (2007)	14 hrs 85'15"
Also on view		Luke Ching Chin Wai Lai Lon Hin Eason Tsang Ka Wai Wong Wai Yin	<i>Screensaver: Sunsets</i> (2014) <i>Black Dream</i> (2019) <i>Music Box</i> (2018) <i>Housework No.3</i> (2016) <i>Clearing ten thorns</i> (2016)	39'07" 6'22" 8'16" 11'34" 1'33"

About Blindspot Gallery

Set up in 2010, Blindspot Gallery is a Hong Kong-based contemporary art gallery. The gallery began with a primary focus on contemporary photography and image-based art, and has evolved to include diverse media in contemporary art. The gallery represents both emerging and established artists, mainly from Hong Kong and the region but also beyond.

For enquiries and media interviews, please contact Ms. May Wong at 2517 6238 or by email info@blindspotgallery.com

Image Caption:

Isaac Julien, *Baltimore Series (Angela in Orange)*, 2003, digital print, 111.2 x 138 cm (Image courtesy of artist, Blindspot Gallery, Jessica Silverman and Victoria Miro)
Jiang Zhi, *In the Woods*, 2018, HD single channel video, 22"32" (Image courtesy of artist, and Blindspot Gallery)