

JUPITER

Independent New York 2024

Milo Matthieu | Booth 708

May 9 – May 12, 2024

Spring Studios | 50 Varick Street, New York, NY 10013



New York – May 2, 2024 – Jupiter is pleased to present a large-scale installation by Haitian-American artist **Milo Matthieu** at Independent New York from May 9-12, 2024. Comprising of a 26 ft painting and two bronze-cast sculptures connected by a long rope that demarcate a barrier between the audience and the work, the artist's presentation highlights the tension between the vibrant Black diasporic community within which he grew up and the exclusionary structures of systemic racism that have sidelined such communities in the United States.

Drawing inspiration from Gordon Park's iconic 1956 photograph *Segregation in the South*, which depicted children peering longingly through a chainlink fence at a country fair at which they were not welcome, Matthieu inverts the relationship between the viewer and the object of desire in his installation. Here, Matthieu's monumental painting of a semi-abstracted cityscape replete with cars, buildings, signs, pedestrians, and a bright pop of yellow daffodils amongst an otherwise black and white composition, is positioned akin to the country fair—a dizzying, joyous spectacle where anything is possible. But the artist bars viewers from approaching and fully immersing themselves in his composition by tying a rope between two identical sculptures of entwined individuals a few feet in front of the wall on which it hangs. In this setting, viewers are denied access to contemporary culture and its privileges, just as the young Black children were in Park's photograph.

This very mode of deliberate segregation and the disadvantages that it imposes, particularly on people of color, serves as the central preoccupation of Matthieu's work. In developing the concept for this site-specific installation at the fair over the past few months, Matthieu has however found that it's the invisible as opposed to physical barriers that are the most insidious, saying "as I dove deeper, I recognized that these barriers transcend physical constructs; they are subtle and intangible, empowered by systemic oppression and legislation."

From discriminatory housing practices like redlining to biased educational policies such as the criminalization of teaching critical race theory in public schools, and the continual erasure of historical narratives, these barriers manifest in multifaceted ways across the U.S. They impede the growth and progress of entire communities, stifling potential. It is consequently less a literal illustration of exclusion that Matthieu lays bare, as viewers can of course easily walk around the sculptures to view his painting, but rather the feeling of alienation, prohibition, and trenchant discrimination that he subtly coaxes to the surface. Spanning the entire wall—practically edge to edge—on which it's displayed under a low hanging ceiling, Matthieu's painting evokes the

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oppressive weight of metaphorical ceilings, those racialized spaces of confinement and neglect that they engender, which inhibit Black communities past and present—from the segregated South to the artist’s own diasporic family enclave in Queens, New York—from actualizing their upward mobility and aspirations.

About the Artist

Milo Matthieu (b. 1990, Los Angeles, CA) graduated from Ramapo College of New Jersey in 2013 and has had solo exhibitions at M+B Gallery, Los Angeles; Sorry We’re Closed, Brussels; Kravets Wehby Gallery, New York; The Cabin LA, Los Angeles. He has been featured in group exhibitions at the Historic Hampton House, Miami; Ross-Sutton Gallery, New York; Blum & Poe, Los Angeles; Richard Heller Gallery, Los Angeles; Beers Gallery, London; V1 Gallery, Copenhagen; and most recently at Library Street Collective, Detroit. Matthieu currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Caption: Milo Matthieu, *Echoes of the past*, 2024, Oil on bronze and rope, Each: 48 by 32 by 20 in. 121.9 by 81.3 by 50.8 cm. (MM031) ©Milo Matthieu. Photo by Alexa Hoyer. Courtesy of the artist and Jupiter, Miami Beach, FL.

Press Inquiries: info@jupitercontemporary.com