

LUHRING AUGUSTINE TRIBECA

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Jason Moran
The Sound Will Tell You
Luhring Augustine Tribeca
January 16 – February 27, 2021

Luhring Augustine is pleased to announce *The Sound Will Tell You*, a presentation of new works on paper by Jason Moran, which marks the gallery's second exhibition with the artist. Internationally renowned as a jazz pianist and composer, Moran's interdisciplinary and often collaborative visual art practice mines the history of music, and its social, cultural, and political subtexts.

To create these vibrant and textured works, Moran places a sheet of Japanese Gampi paper on a piano and records his various attacks on the keys. The motion of his hands is tracked in layered lines of saturated pigment, and washes of color spill across the compositions, tracing the pull of gravity, or charting the creases and natural fibers of the paper. Recalling traditions of gestural abstraction and automatic drawing, these works are the material record of Moran's private performances. Moody and abstract, they convey the physicality of a musical phrase, investigating a new vocabulary of representing acoustics in visual form. Recurring hues of blue run throughout the works: a metaphorical color with meanings and associations ranging from expressions of melancholy, references to musical "blue notes" and the Blues, a symbol of healing and harmony in North Africa, to Egyptian Blue, the first synthetic pigment in ancient times, whose formula was re-discovered by the prominent African American scientist George Washington Carver in the early twentieth century.

Moran made all of the works in this exhibition in 2020 during the global Covid-19 pandemic. In response to the anxieties of this period, the complexity and saturation of the compositions intensified as the months of the pandemic wore on. A further resonance developed in the works in the wake of the killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, and the outcry that followed. This shift manifests in a series of vertical pink drawings in which the blue pigment appears to rise upwards, the abstract forms evoking the image of a smoke signal or the shape of a Black Lives Matter fist. In these works, the keys on the page appear as marchers and protesters, and Moran's syncopations emit distinct voices.

Coinciding with the opening of our exhibition *The Sound Will Tell You*, Moran will release a new solo piano recording by the same title. Please visit Moran's website for further details and updates: <https://jasonmoran.bandcamp.com/>

Jason Moran (Houston, TX, 1975) is a Jazz pianist, composer, and artist. He was named a MacArthur Fellow in 2010 and is the Artistic Director for Jazz at The Kennedy Center. His activity includes recordings and performances with masters of the form including Charles Lloyd, Bill Frisell, and the late Sam Rivers, as well as his work with his trio The Bandwagon (with drummer Nasheet Waits and bassist Tarus Mateen) that has resulted in a profound discography for Blue Note Records and his own label Yes Records. The scope of Moran's partnerships and music-making with venerated and iconic visual artists is extensive: he has collaborated with such major figures as Adrian Piper, Joan Jonas, Glenn Ligon, Stan Douglas, Adam Pendleton, Lorna Simpson, and Kara Walker. Commissioning institutions of Moran's work include the Walker Art Center, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Dia Art Foundation, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Harlem Stage, and Jazz at Lincoln Center. In 2018, Moran had his first solo museum exhibition at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN, which traveled to the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA; Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY. A monographic publication accompanied the exhibition.

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