



nara roesler

isaac julien

lina bo bardi — a marvellous entanglement
photographs & collages

nara roesler são paulo

opening march 29

exhibition mar 29 – may 24, 2025

aesthetics of resistance: isaac julien, lina bo bardi, and the global south

Born and raised in London, one of the great centers of global capitalism, and active as a visual artist and filmmaker since the 1980s, Isaac Julien has always kept his gaze fixed on the margins, on marginalized groups, the colonized, and dissident bodies. In a way, he has always been attentive to the Global South—not necessarily in a geographical sense, but in a geopolitical one—whether in territories such as Saint Lucia (from where his parents emigrated), Jamaica, Burkina Faso, or China, or in the South that exists within the North itself, through Black and queer characters in Harlem, New York, in the hip-hop universe of England and the U.S., or the history of abolitionism and anti-racism in North America. With unique poetics and extreme aesthetic rigor, his highly impactful visual works also address issues of migration, gender, multiculturalism, and the need for a more harmonious dialogue among the various peoples in a world that is so vast and unequal.

It was precisely in the Global South, more specifically in Brazil, that Julien encountered another figure who, like him, was born in the North but dedicated her life to looking toward the South. At Sesc Pompeia, where he presented the exhibition *Geopoéticas* in 2012—which I had the pleasure of curating—the English artist came into close contact with the work of Lina Bo Bardi (1914-1992), an architect born in Rome who made Brazil her home and workplace. Despite being shaped by the European modernist movement, she immersed herself—like few others—in our cultural universe, with its great regional diversity, and transformed it into raw material and inspiration for a singular, Brazilian architecture, free from formalist constraints, with a strong social and democratic character.

It is from the encounter between the English artist's perspective and the work and thought of the visionary Italo-Brazilian architect that *A Marvellous Entanglement*, a 2019 work currently exhibited at Galeria Nara Roesler, emerges. With a body of work that breaks barriers and connects audiovisual media, dance, photography, music, theater, painting, and sculpture—always with special attention to spatial occupation and the installation

possibilities of his works—Julien was particularly captivated by Lina's use of public spaces. For this endeavor, he counted on the distinguished presence of actresses Fernanda Torres and Fernanda Montenegro, who portrayed Lina at different moments in her life, creating high-quality audiovisual records in São Paulo's MASP and Sesc Pompeia, as well as in Salvador, Bahia, at Solar do Unhão and Restaurante do Coatiy.

Thus, this is not a historical analysis or a critical commentary on the architect's production. Rather, it is a poetic work that continues Julien's research—both in his experimental approach to audiovisual language and in his political, social, and ethnic themes—and his interest in what he once called a "poetics of the political." It is no coincidence that the artist took inspiration from a phrase in which Lina states that linear time is merely a Western invention:

"(...) time is not linear; it is a marvellous entanglement where, at any moment, one may select points and invent solutions, with neither beginning nor end."

Julien, too, creates in his work an artistic entanglement in which the blending of languages, on one hand, and of cultures, on the other, does not occur arbitrarily, but with the precision of someone who points to original paths and devises unconventional solutions for the challenges of art and life in our South.

— Solange Farkas



Intimidade crítica / Critical intimacy
(Lina Bo Bardi — A Marvellous
Entanglement), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre gloss
edition of 6 + 1AP
90 x 110 x 7 cm
35.4 x 43.3 x 3 in





exhibition view lina bo bardi —
a marvellous entanglement
photographs & collages, 2025
Nara Roesler São Paulo, Brazil



Nara Roesler São Paulo is pleased to present *Lina Bo Bardi – A Marvellous Entanglement – Photographs & Collages*, the third solo exhibition by British filmmaker and artist Sir Isaac Julien (b. 1960) at the gallery. The show will feature photographs and collages—many of them previously unseen—that stem from the film *Lina Bo Bardi – A Marvellous Entanglement* (2019), which poetically explores the life, work, and legacy of the Italian-born Brazilian architect Lina Bo Bardi (1914–1992). Isaac Julien’s new collages – exhibited for the first time – use singular choice of colours to allude to different poetic and ecological motifs in Lina Bo Bardi’s work.



Revelações / Revelations (Lina Bo Bardi — A Marvellous Entanglement), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre gloss
edition of 6 + 1AP
90 x 130 x 7,5 cm
35.4 x 51.2 in



Sem começo nem fim /
Without beginning nor end
(Lina Bo Bardi —
A Marvellous Entanglement), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford galerie smooth
pearl renaissance-pollerwachs
edition of 6 + 1AP
180 x 240 x 7,5 cm
70.9 x 94.5 x 3 in





exhibition view *Lina Bo Bardi –
A Marvellous Entanglement*, 2019,
Victoria Miro, London, UK.



Simultaneously with the gallery exhibition, MASP – Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, will present the nine-screen video installation in its new annex, the Pietro Maria Bardi building for the first time in Brazil. This way, the audience can delve deeper into complementary aspects of Julien's work. Both in the film and in the photographs and collages, Bo Bardi is portrayed at different stages of her life by acclaimed Brazilian actresses Fernanda Montenegro and her daughter Fernanda Torres, where the actresses read texts adapted from her writings, immersing viewers in a narrative based on a quote by the architect: "Time is not linear, it is a marvellous entanglement where, at any moment, ends can be chosen and solutions invented, without beginning or end."

exhibition view *Lina Bo Bardi – A Marvellous Entanglement*, 2019, Victoria Miro, London, UK.

Um Maravilhoso Emaranhado
em verde esmeralda / A Marvellous
Entanglement in emerald green
(Lina Bo Bardi — A Marvellous
Entanglement), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre
gloss with foils on Dibond
edition of 3 + 1 AP
60 x 80 x 7,5 cm
23.6 x 31.5 x 3 in





*Um Maravilhoso Emaranhado
em azul / A Marvellous Entanglement
in blue (Lina Bo Bardi — A Marvellous
Entanglement), 2019*
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre
gloss with foils on Dibond
edition of 3 + 1 AP
60 x 80 x 7,5 cm
23.6 x 31.5 x 3 in







Um Maravilhoso Emaranhado
em azul atlântico / A Marvellous
Entanglement in atlantic blue
(Lina Bo Bardi — A Marvellous
Entanglement), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre
gloss with foils on Dibond
edition of 3 + 1 AP
60 x 80 x 7,5 cm
23.6 x 31.5 x 3 in



The work travels through some of Lina Bo Bardi's most iconic buildings, offering a meditation on her architectural legacy. The film is inspired by official histories and anecdotes about Bo Bardi's life. Lina arrived in Brazil after marrying Pietro Maria Bardi in the post-war period, where she encountered elements that profoundly shaped her professional practice and worldview, feeling compelled to apply the creative spirit of Brazilian popular cultures in her prolific and sophisticated production, which includes buildings, furniture, jewellery, and theatrical sets, as well as a powerful theoretical reflection.



*Um Maravilhoso Emaranhado /
A Marvellous Entanglement (Lina Bo Bardi —
A Marvellous Entanglement), 2019*
inkjet print on Ilford galerie smooth pearl
renaissance-pollerwachs facemounted
edition of 6 + 1 AP
180 x 240 x 7,5 cm
70.9 x 94.5 x 3 in



exhibition view *lina bo bardi*
— *a marvellous entanglement*
photographs & collages, 2025
Nara Roesler São Paulo, Brazil



Um Maravilhoso Emaranhado em bronze
/ A Marvellous Entanglement in bronze
(Lina Bo Bardi - A Marvellous Entanglement), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre
gloss with foils on Dibond
edition of 3 + 1AP
60 x 80 x 7,5 cm
23.6 x 31.5 x 3 in







exhibition view *lina bo bardi*
— *a marvellous entanglement*
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The filming took place in seven locations designed by the architect: four in Salvador (Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Coati Restaurant, Casa do Benin, and Teatro Gregório de Matos) and three in São Paulo (Museu de Arte de São Paulo [MASP], Sesc Pompeia, and Teatro Oficina). In the film, each of these places becomes a space for performances, interventions, reenactments, or reinventions of scenes that may have shaped the history and myths surrounding Lina Bo Bardi's architecture.

*Soluções inventadas / Solutions
invented (Lina Bo Bardi — A
Marvellous Entanglement)*, 2019
inkjet print on Ilford galerie smooth
pearl renaissance-pollerwachs
edition of 6 + 1 AP
180 x 240 x 7,5 cm
70.9 x 94.5 x 3 in



*Soluções inventadas em ouro /
Solutions invented in gold
(Lina Bo Bardi — A Marvellous
Entanglement), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre
gloss with foils on Dibond
edition of 3 + 1 AP
80 x 105 x 7,5 cm
31.5 x 41.3 x 3 in*





*Isso deve permanecer como é /
This must stay as it is (Lina Bo Bardi —
A Marvellous Entanglement)*, 2019
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre gloss
edition of 6 + 1 AP
110 x 135 cm x 7,5 cm
43.3 x 53.1 x 3 in



exhibition view *lina bo bardi*
— *a marvellous entanglement*
photographs & collages, 2025
Nara Roesler São Paulo, Brazil



*Soluções inventadas em prata /
Solutions invented in silver*
(Lina Bo Bardi — *A Marvellous
Entanglement*), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre
gloss with foils on Dibond
edition of 3 + 1 AP
80 x 105 x 7,5 cm
31.5 x 41.3 x 3 in



Emaranhados / Entanglements (Lina Bo
Bardi — *A Marvellous Entanglement*), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre gloss
edition of 6 + 1AP
90 x 110 x 7,5 cm
35.4 x 43.3 in





The production also features dancers from the Balé Folclórico da Bahia, who perform a dance by choreographer Zebrinha in front of the iconic wooden staircase of the Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia.



O que é um Museu, Ato II / What is a Museum, Act: II (Lina Bo Bardi — A Marvellous Entanglement), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre gloss
edition of 6 + 1AP
90 x 135 x 7,5 cm
35.4 x 53.1 x 3 in



Emaranhado epifítico / Epiphytic Entanglement
(Lina Bo Bardi — *A Marvellous Entanglement*), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre gloss
edition of 6 + 1AP
80 x 60 x 7,5 cm
31.5 x 23.6 x 3 in





Additionally, the Araká collective performs in the building that briefly housed the Coaty restaurant, located on Ladeira da Misericórdia, also in Salvador, and which will eventually host the headquarters of the cultural association Pivô in the city.



*Concreto após relâmpago /
Concrete after lightning
(Lina Bo Bardi — A Marvellous
Entanglement), 2019*
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre gloss
edition of 6 + 1AP
110 x 135 x 7,5 cm
43.3 x 53.1 x 3 in



*Ressurreição (Fantasmas) / Resurrection
(Ghosts) (Lina Bo Bardi — A Marvellous
Entanglement), 2019*
inkjet print on Ilford gold fibre gloss
edition of 6 + 1AP
90 x 110 x 7,5 cm
35.4 x 43.3 x 3 in





Almas belas, almas menos belas
/ Beautiful souls, less
beautiful souls (Lina Bo Bardi —
A Marvellous Entanglement), 2019
inkjet print on Ilford galerie smooth
pearl renaissance-pollerwachs
edition of 6 + 1 AP
180 x 240 x 7,5 cm
70.9 x 94.5 x 3 in



isaac julien

b. 1960, London, UK, where he lives and works

Sir Isaac Julien, RA (born 1960) is a critically acclaimed British artist and filmmaker. In 2018, Julien joined the faculty at the University of California Santa Cruz where he is a Distinguished Professor of the Arts and leads the Moving Image Lab together with Arts Professor Mark Nash.

Current and recent international solo exhibitions include: Isaac Julien, *Lessons of the Hour*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA, 2024; Isaac Julien: *What Freedom is to Me*, Bonnefanten Museum, Maastricht, Netherlands, 2024; K21, Dusseldorf, Germany, 2023; Tate Britain, London, UK, 2023; Lina Bo Bardi, *A Marvellous Entanglement*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, USA, 2023; *Lessons of the Hour*, Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Virginia USA, 2022-23; *Once Again... (Statues Never Die)*, Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia, USA, 2022; Lina Bo Bardi - *A Marvellous Entanglement*, Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, Charlotte, USA, 2022; *Lessons of the Hour*, McEvoy Foundation for the Arts, San Francisco, 2020-21; Lina Bo Bardi - *A Marvellous Entanglement*, MAXXI, Rome, Italy, 2020-21; *Western Union: Small Boats*, Neuberger Museum, New York, USA, 2020; *Looking for Langston*, Tate Britain, London, UK, 2019; *Playtime* at LACMA, Los Angeles, USA, 2019.

Julien is the recipient of The Royal Academy of Arts Charles Wollaston Award 2017, and a Kaiserring Goslar Award in 2022. He was granted a knighthood as part of the Queen's Honours List in 2022.

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selected solo exhibitions

- *Lessons of the hour: Frederick Douglas*, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA (2024)
- *Isaac Julien – Fantôme Afrique*, Ruby City, San Antonio, USA (2023)

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- *What Freedom is to me*, Tate Britain, London, UK (2023)
 - *Once Again... (Statues Never Die)*, Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia, USA (2022)
 - *Lessons of the Hour*, Metro Pictures; Memorial Art Gallery (MAG), New York, USA (2019)
 - *Western Union: Small Boats*, ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark (2018)
 - *To the End of the World*, Galerie Forsblom, Stockholm, Sweden (2018)
 - *Ten Thousand Waves*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói (MAC-Niterói), Niterói, Brazil (2016)

selected group exhibitions

- *Whitney Biennial 2024: Even Better than The Real Thing*, New York, USA (2024)
- *Black Diasporas: 21st Century Art and Poéticas*, LACMA, Los Angeles, USA (2023)
- *Thinking Historically in the Present – Sharjah Biennial 15*, Sharjah, UAE (2023)
- *Sweat*, Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany (2021)
- 57th Venice Biennale, Italy (2017)
- *Gallery*, Birmingham, UK (2017)
- *Coming Out: Sexuality, Gender and Identity*, Walker Museum, Liverpool; Birmingham Museum and Art, UK (2017)
- *The Shadow Never Lies*, Minsheng Museum, Shanghai, China (2016)
- Paris Triennial, France (2012)
- 7th Gwangju Biennial, South Korea (2008)

selected collections

- Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, USA
- Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
- Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA
- Tate Modern, London, USA
- SFMoMA, San Francisco, USA
- Young Museum, San Francisco, USA



Isaac Julien, London, 2023
by Tim Walker

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