



When Home Won't Let You Stay: Migration through Contemporary Art  
Written by ICA  
September 25, 2019



Isaac Julien, *Western Union: small boats*, 2007. Three-channel video installation, 35mm film transferred to DVD/HD (color, 5.1 surround sound, 18:22 minutes). Dimensions variable. Installation view, Galería Helga de Alvear, Madrid, 2008. Courtesy the artist; Metro Pictures, New York; and Victoria Miro, London/Venice. © Isaac Julien.

International artists respond to the migration, immigration, and displacement of peoples today, in works ranging from personal accounts to poetic meditations.

*When Home Won't Let You Stay: Migration through Contemporary Art* considers how contemporary artists are responding to the migration, immigration, and displacement of peoples today. We are currently witnessing the highest levels of movement on record—the United Nations estimates that one out of every seven people in the world is an international or internal migrant who moves by choice or by force, with great success or great struggle. *When Home Won't Let You Stay* borrows its title from a poem by Warsan Shire, a Somali-British poet who gives voice to the experiences of refugees. Through artworks made since 2000 by twenty artists from more than a dozen countries — such as Colombia, Cuba, France, India, Iraq, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, South Korea, the

United Kingdom, and the United States – this exhibition highlights diverse artistic responses to migration ranging from personal accounts to poetic meditations, and features a range of mediums, including sculpture, installation, painting, and video. Artists in the exhibition include Kader Attia, Tania Bruguera, Isaac Julien, Hayv Kahraman, Reena Saini Kallat, Richard Mosse, Carlos Motta, Yinka Shonibare, Xaviera Simmons, and Do-Ho Suh, among others. A fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition, with an essay by Eva Respini and Ruth Erickson and texts by prominent scholars Aruna D’Souza, Okwui Enwezor, Thomas Keenan, Peggy Levitt, and Uday Singh Mehta, among others. This exhibition is organized by Ruth Erickson, Mannion Family Curator, and Eva Respini, Barbara Lee Chief Curator, with Ellen Tani, Assistant Curator.