

Press Release

Jimmy Robert

Éclipser

Aug 28th - Oct 26th, 2025

Barakat Contemporary presents *Éclipser*, the first solo exhibition in Korea of Jimmy Robert (b. 1975, Guadeloupe). Traversing performance, photography, video, sculpture, and text, Robert's practice is grounded in an ongoing inquiry into identity, visibility, and the politics of representation. In particular, he questions the ways in which queer and racialized bodies have been positioned and marginalized within the production of both historical and contemporary images. Working with fragile materials such as paper in dialogue with his own body, Robert uses movement and gesture to interweave body, medium, space, and language. In doing so, he unsettles the power dynamics between looking and being looked at, while disrupting the ocular-centric conventions of art history.

This exhibition presents a selection of Robert's major works from the 2000s to the present, alongside a new video-performance, *Éclipser* (2025). In his earlier works, Robert combined divergent media and materials—film, photo-installation, text—into installations that destabilized the conventional modes of production and reception attached to each medium, placing his own body and those of his intimates at the center. *Untitled (Sebastien)* (2006) and *Untitled (Michael)* (2006), for example, portray his brothers before military enlistment, exploring the institutions and masculinity. Here, the wooden components simultaneously function as display devices and sculptural elements, supporting or even substituting the photograph and the body.

Robert's body appears at times as the direct agent of performance, and at other times as a photographic subject or as a trace left behind in objects. In *Plié I* (2020), the artist's seated figure is presented in a fan-like folded paper form. In French, *plié* means both "to bend, to fold" and the basic ballet movement. Here, paper intersects with bodily movement, and through this fragile yet infinitely malleable material, fluid meanings emerge.

Since the film *L'éducation Sentimentale* (2005), Robert has also maintained a deep engagement with the legacies of art history. Borrowing its title from Gustave Flaubert's 1869 novel, the work reenacts Dutch performance artist Bas Jan Ader's *Fall* series (1970-1971), interposing in the narrative by rescuing the falling body. This is not a mere homage but

an active intervention into art history by subjecting his own body to similar conditions. Through imitation and gentle interception, Robert has sustained a dialogue that spans past and present with figures such as Yvonne Rainer, Yoko Ono, General Idea, and Marcel Duchamp.

His new work, *Éclipser*, extends this trajectory. At once video and performance, the work traces, through touch, the archive of Theresa Hak Kyung Cha (1951–1982), summoning her presence into the present. In the film, Robert, wearing gloves, caresses materials from Cha’s archive. This act is more than an archival study; it opens a moment where the body of the present meets the artistic legacies of the past. In this invocation of an impossible encounter, Robert explores how artistic memory can be learned and expanded.

Such bodily interventions also resonate in *Brown Leatherette* (2002), where Robert, dressed in material akin to that of the faux-leather sofa on which he slowly crawls, physically endures the friction of surface against surface. The body, half-absorbed into the background, accentuates texture and resistance through movement, revealing a sensory crossing of space, surface, and body that extends beyond vision to touch and contact.

The exhibition title *Éclipser* means “to obscure” or “to cause an eclipse” in French. Though a verb, in English, its form may be seen as a noun ending in “-er.” This oscillation between verb and noun echoes Robert’s artistic stance, while also inviting one to imagine the celestial trajectory of occlusion and penumbra. The term signifies not a simple disappearance, but rather the emergence of new forms and rhythms in the act of being obscured, and the latent possibilities arising from unseen intervals. Folding, concealing, and layering paper, images, bodies, and language, Robert generates a third space where meaning arises from the friction of material and corporeal textures.

Overview of the Exhibition

1. Date

- August 28th - October 26th, 2025
- 10:00 - 18:00 | Tuesday - Sunday

2. Address

- 58-4, Samcheong-ro, Jongno-gu, Seoul, Korea

3. Inquiry

- contemporary@barakat.kr
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1. About the Artist

Jimmy Robert (b. 1975, Guadeloupe)



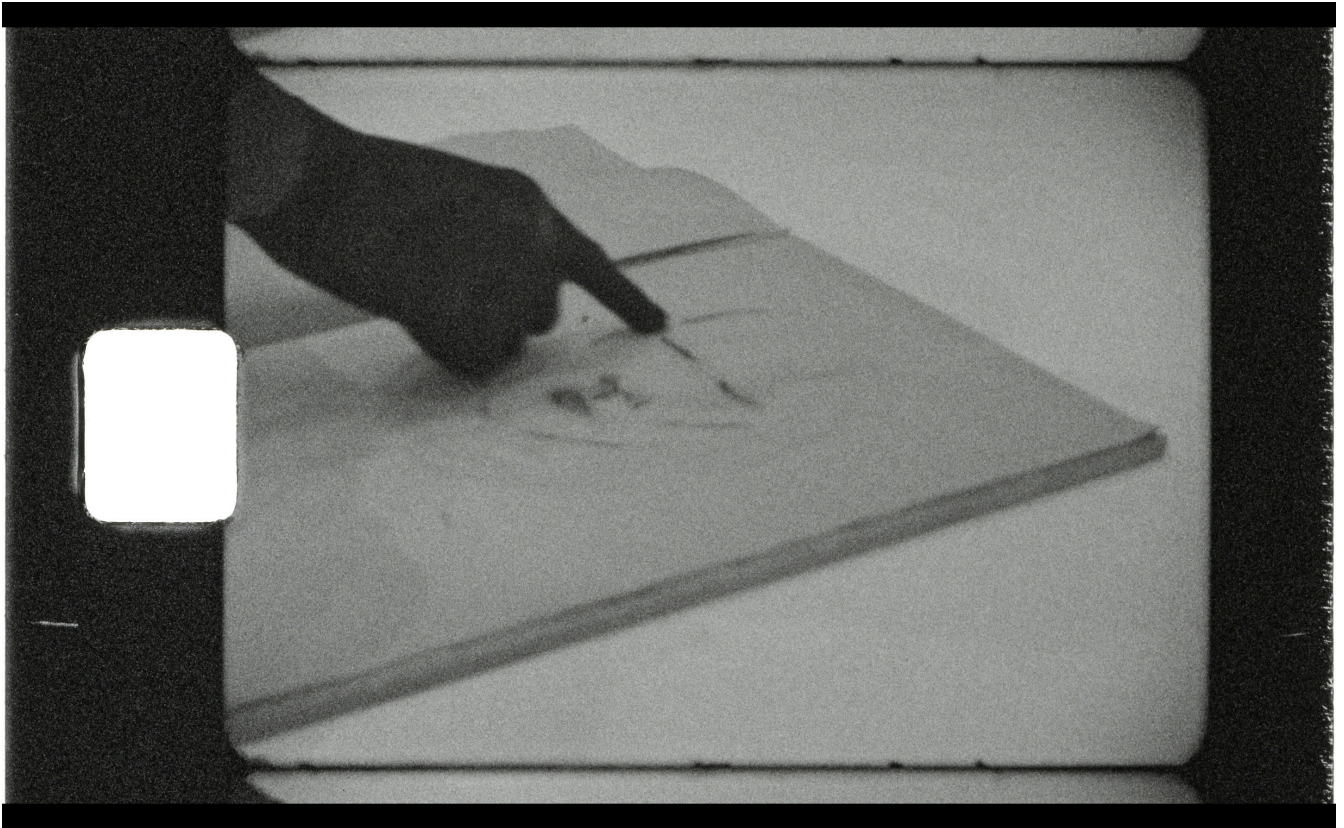
Portrait image of Jimmy Robert, 2025. Image courtesy of Barakat Contemporary.

Jimmy Robert works across photography, performance, and video, creating installations that explore the tensions between image and body, language and space. His practice centers on issues of Black bodily representation, identity, and visibility, often questioning the instability of representation itself and the structures of visual narrative. Robert frequently places his own body at the core of his work, using movement, gesture, and materials that are delicate or prone to tearing and creasing, such as paper. In doing so, the body becomes more than something to be seen. It acts as a medium through which systems of perception and recognition within society are exposed and reimagined. His work draws from a wide range of artistic and literary influences, including the nouveau roman literature of Marguerite Duras and the practices of artists such as Bas Jan Ader, Yvonne Rainer, Yoko Ono, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, General Idea, and Ian White. These are not simply historical references but artists whose work and lives have intersected with Robert's own cultural and social context. Rather than quoting them, he enters into a dialogue with their legacies, extending their approaches through his own visual and performative language.

He was educated at Goldsmiths College in London and the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam. Currently, he lives between Paris and Berlin, where he is also a professor of sculpture and performance at the Universität der Künste. Robert held a mid-career survey that toured Nottingham Contemporary, UK; Museion, Bolzano; and CRAC Occitanie, Sète (2020-2022). Robert also has had solo exhibitions at institutions such as Moderna Museet Malmö, Malmö, Sweden (2023); Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Baden-Baden, Germany (2022); Künstlerhaus Bremen, Bremen, Germany (2022); The Hunterian, Glasgow, Scotland (2021); La Synagogue de Delme, Delme, France (2016); Museum M, Leuven, Belgium (2017); Power Plant, Toronto, Canada (2013); Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago IL (2012); and Jeu de Paume, Paris, France (2012). Robert has participated in group exhibitions including the Aichi Triennale (2022), Ural Industrial Biennial (2021), Chicago Architecture Biennial (2019), Berlin Biennale (2014, 2008), and Gwangju Biennale (2008). He has presented large-scale performances at the KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin (2019), Performa 17 in New York (2017), Centre d'Art Contemporain in the Synagogue de Delme, France (2016), MoMA in New York (2014), and the Tate Britain, UK (2004).

His work is held in public collections including The Hunterian in Scotland, The Hepworth Wakefield in England, the Stedelijk Museum in the Netherlands, the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, Centre national des arts plastiques and FRAC Île-de-France in France, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Walker Art Center in the United States.

2. Selected Works



Jimmy Robert, still image of *Éclipse*, 2025

Single-channel video, colour, sound, and performance. Video: 7 min 36 sec

Image courtesy of Barakat Contemporary and the artist.

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The works appearing in the film are:

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha: *Art Practice - Untitled ~ Sketchbook - Drawings, Correspondence, Notes, Poems, Journal - 1974.*, 1974; A Strathmore Shelburne sketchbook with 11 loose sheets of paper with typewritten and handwritten text. The sketchbook is spiral bound, 78 pages.; 12 x 10 in.; University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive; Gift of the Theresa Hak Kyung Cha Memorial Foundation



Jimmy Robert, *Untitled (Sebastien)*, 2025
Archival inkjet print, beech wood plank, 50x50 cm (print); 150x15x1 cm (plank)
Image courtesy of Barakat Contemporary

2. Selected Works



Jimmy Robert, *Brown Leatherette*, 2002

Super8 film transferred to 16mm film, colour, silent. 5 min 55 sec

Image courtesy of Barakat Contemporary

3. Installation views



Installation view of *Jimmy Robert: Éclipser*, 2025, Barakat Contemporary, Seoul, Korea.

Image courtesy of Barakat Contemporary.



Installation view of *Jimmy Robert: Éclipser*, 2025, Barakat Contemporary, Seoul, Korea.

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