

PRESS RELEASE

## John Timberlake We Are History

28 June – 30 August 2014

(Closed 16 – 23 July)

Wednesday – Saturday 11am-5pm

The exhibition will also be open for Open House London on 20-21 September

Preview: Friday 27 June 6-8.30pm as part of SLAM Fridays

Looking upriver from Vauxhall towards the new US Embassy Gardens, above the broad sweep of the Thames hang unusual clouds.

The plumes are strangely out of step with the busy regeneration scene below. The perspectival position suggests that the target may have been High Wycombe, former home of RAF Bomber Command...

***We Are History*** combines a number of Timberlake's recurrent subjects with themes of staging and re-staging in a large-scale work conceived specifically for Beaconsfield.

As with his concurrent practice in photography and drawing, Timberlake's engagement with painting has for many years revolved around those forms where painting plays a supplementary role. In the case of *We Are History*, the painting exists as a staged backdrop.

Forced perspective and use of the cut-out revisits an intimate historical relationship between diorama and emergent photographic forms in the context of Beaconsfield's location, site of popular dioramas and painted backdrops staged at Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens throughout photography's infancy.

But to revisit, post Cold War, a painterly visualisation of the phantasm of nuclear conflict might also be read as perverse nostalgia for both the ostensible reassurances of a former global balance of terror, and a mode and medium that is perennially being declared outmoded.

Timberlake says, "The phrase 'We Are History' poses the question of who (or what) is speaking - the traditional cinematic apocalypse survivor? – the objects in the gallery, 'speaking' as an index of human agency? - or a hybrid assemblage of both?" Visitors with cameras are encouraged to photograph themselves within the installation.

**Friday 25 July from 6pm: John Timberlake in conversation**

Free. This event forms part of SLAM Fridays – the late night opening of galleries in South London.

### PRESS ENQUIRIES

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