

## Press Release

*Justin Williams*  
*Castles Out of Grass*

44, rue Quincampoix

*Justin Williams*  
*Castles Out of Grass*June 27  
July 25, 2026

42, rue Quincampoix

*Ernest T.*  
*Devenez un artiste*  
*admiré*June 27  
July 25, 2026

When I was a youngster, I used to sleepwalk.

From time to time, my parents would notice me wandering around our house at night, climbing the stairs, standing in the kitchen or outside in the garden. When they found me, I was never quite aware of what I was doing. Yet something *had been done*. In that strange space between wakefulness and sleep, I had performed actions one normally only does when awake, even though my mind was in a state of slumber. My very mode of existence was in a form of interzone—a sort of borderland. Or, to put it differently, I was travelling in in-between worlds. And interestingly, when I awoke, I never felt as if I had been doing so alone. Instead, I always had the *uncanny feeling* of having met people along the journey.

Now, if you combine this odd habit of mine with the fact that my mother is a psychologist, you might possibly discover the reason as to why, later in life, I became intensely interested not only in dreams, but also in that liminal zone between wakefulness and sleep. As my mother taught me, Sigmund Freud saw unconscious desires hidden behind dreams, Jacques Lacan saw dreams as being structured around signifiers, while Carl Jung saw them as filled with archetypes—i.e. broadly shared images and symbols deriving from our collective unconscious. It was especially the latter of these ideas that intrigued me—and not least how Jung envisaged the hypnopompic state, literally the borderland between the unconscious and conscious, as particularly creative to the emergence of such archetypal images and figures.

These fascinations of mine probably explain why, years later, after encountering him through friends in Paris, I found myself at once baffled and intrigued by the work of Justin Lee Williams. At first, I found it difficult to describe, but as I was walking home from his studio, I realized that, *once again*, I felt as if I had entered a similar kind of borderland or inter-zone—although on this occasion I had been fully awake. Seeing his paintings, I had the feeling of being immediately surrounded by scenes, shapes and silhouettes that struck me as *strangely familiar and yet unfamiliar* at the same time. I somehow felt as if I knew these figures all too well—and then again, not at all. Exactly, I thought, as I reached my flat: it was as if I had crossed paths with all these figures beforehand, in some distant dream.

A short while ago, I learned that Justin L. Williams had entitled one of his recent paintings *To Sleep Walk One's Self into Another Man's Voice* (2025). It made good sense to me because, when confronted with his work, I felt as if I had been journeying on the thresholds of different realms of existence. To me at least, this instability is what is always at stake in Justin L. Williams' painting. Somehow *bordering* on the abstract, these paintings, like few others, manage to *represent in-between worlds*, prompting a (re)encounter with *familiarly unfamiliar characters* and thereby evoking Freud's idea of the "uncanny"—that peculiar sensation of something being at once recognisable and yet disturbingly alien. Or, put in related terms: archetypal motifs so vivid that they compel you to question whether these figures, landscapes and settings are utterly real or entirely imaginary—or whether they exist in an intermediary realm.

Such tropes of in-betweenness also reside at the heart of *Deceased Estate*, in

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Opening  
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from 11am to 8pm

which Justin L. Williams sets out to investigate spaces, places and people existing in a transitional state or period. That travelling through different times and worlds goes hand in hand is surely something we are all painfully experiencing today, at a moment when our world suddenly feels *both familiar and yet so unfamiliar*. That's the thing: have our generations ever experienced a period in history that has felt so *liminal*? Has Antonio Gramsci's quip: "The old world is dying and the new world struggles to be born: now is the time of monsters" ever felt so close to reality? And, consequently, hasn't the *whole world become somewhat uncanny* today? I believe so. And if there is a grain of truth to this hypothesis, then we cannot underestimate the importance of a painter trying to come to grips with the deceased state this leaves us all in. And why? Because twenty years after my own sleepwalking came to an end, we all seem to be doing exactly the same thing today.

Nikolaj Schultz

Sociologist, PhD, Assistant Professor at Aarhus School of Architecture and Associate Researcher at Sciences Po-Paris, Nikolaj Schultz (DK) is co-author of *On the Emergence of an Ecological Class* with Bruno Latour (Polity Books, Cambridge, 2022) and author of *Land Sickness* (Polity Books, 2023). His work is acclaimed by leading intellectuals such as e.g., Dipesh Chakrabarty, Slavoj Zizek and Emanuele Coccia, and it has inspired artists and curators such as George Rouy, Fontaines D.C. and Hans Ulrich Obrist.