MOCAD presents Arthur Jafa: 
*Love is The Message, The Message is Death* Detroit Premiere 
Artist Reception + Talk with Greg Tate 
On view September 21 2017–October 22 2017


**ARTHUR JIFA: LOVE IS THE MESSAGE, THE MESSAGE IS DEATH**
September 21, 2017 – October 22, 2018

Detroit, September 2017 — Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD) presents acclaimed artist, filmmaker and cinematographer Arthur Jafa’s *Love is The Message, The Message is Death*. Shown publicly for the first time last year at Gavin Brown’s enterprise in New York, the single-channel video was selected by *New York Times* art critic Roberta Smith as one of the best gallery
Andrea Scott of the *New Yorker* remarked "Jafa's 'Love' disrupts the whitewashing of American culture with a black-centric view, one that is traumatic, ecstatic, and long overdue." As socially pertinent as it is visually arresting, the video will screen at 1086 Bellevue Street, an offsite location on the eastside of Detroit.

An artist reception will be held on Thursday, September 21, 2017 from 7 to 9pm. Free and open to the public, the evening will include family style dinner, DJs, and drinks.

Bringing art to nontraditional spaces and places in Detroit, Arthur Jafa’s presentation in a building off of Bellevue, near Martin Luther King High School, examines what it means to live in America in 2017. Jafa edits scenes of black leaders, musicians, singers, dancers and athletes—the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Barack Obama, Jimi Hendrix, Nina Simone, LeBron James — as well as church soloists and choirs, together with videos of police harassment and brutality against black men, women and children. Jafa mixes the found footage with footage he has shot himself creating wide ranging and poignant references that confront the status quo narrative. The video is set to Kanye West's rap-gospel, *Ultralight Beam*.

A schedule of public programs will accompany the exhibition. The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated book featuring stills from Jafa's video essay *Love is The Message, The Message is Death*, with texts by Greg Tate and Christina Sharpe.

This book was published by Gavin Brown's enterprise on the occasion of Arthur Jafa's exhibition from November 12 through December 18, 2016.

Please join us for the Arthur Jafa + Greg Tate talk at MOCAD on Saturday, September 23 at 1PM. This talk is free and open to the public.

Jafa has collaborated with directors ranging from Spike Lee (*Crooklyn*, 1994) to John Akomfrah (*Seven Songs for Malcolm X*, 1993) and artists including Kara Walker and Fred Moten. He has also been recognized for his work on the Solange Knowles videos, *Don't Touch My Hair* and *Cranes in the Sky* (2016). Explaining his favorite medium, Jafa has said: “Film is one of the few things, particularly in the theatrical context, that takes up as much space as architecture but like music is fundamentally immaterial.”

This installation is organized by Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit and Gavin Brown's enterprise and curated by Executive Director Elysia Borowy-Reeder.

MOCAD exhibitions and public programs are supported by the A. Alfred Taubman Foundation. The Ford Curatorial Fellows are supported by the Ford Foundation. MOCAD Operations are supported by Masco Corporation, Erb Family Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs the J. Christopher and Anne Reyes Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional funding for programming and educational initiatives is provided by the Edith S. Briskin/Shirley K. Schlafer Foundation.
The exhibition is offsite and open Fridays from 1-7pm, Saturdays from 12-5pm, or by appointment. To schedule an appointment, call MOCAD at 313.832.6622.

**Artist Reception**
Thursday, September 21, 7 to 9pm
1086 Bellevue Street, Detroit, MI, 48207
Free and open to the public

**Related Exhibition Program**
**TALK: GREG TATE + ARTHUR JADA**
Saturday, September 23, 1pm
Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit
Admission: Free ($5 suggested donation)

Arthur Jafa and cultural critic Greg Tate discuss Jafa’s recent work, Detroit’s 1967 Rebellion, and the current political climate.

**About Arthur Jafa**
Arthur Jafa was born in Tupelo, Mississippi and raised in Clarksdale. He studied Architecture and Film at Howard University from 1978 to 1982. He is a principal member, along with Malik Hassan Sayeed and Elissa Blount Moorhead, of TNEG™, a film company. He has directed numerous films: *Slowly This* (1995), *Smile* (1997), *Black Millennium* (1999), *Tree* (2000), *Yellowjacket* (2001), *Deshotten 1.0* (2009), and *Dreams Are Colder Than Death* (2014), selected for the 2014 New York Film Festival. His cinematography includes: *Daughters of the Dust* directed by Julie Dash (1991), winner of the cinematography award at the 1992 Sundance Film Festival; *Seven Songs for Malcolm X* directed by John Akomfrah (1993); *Crooklyn* directed by Spike Lee (1994); *A Litany for Survival: Audre Lorde* directed by Ada Gay Griffin and Michelle Parkerson (1995); *Conakry Kas* directed by Manthia Diawara (2005); *Meet the Eye* directed by Aida Ruiiova (2009); *Shadows of Liberty* directed by Jean-Philippe Tremblay (2012); *The Start Up* directed by Salim Akil (2014); and *In the Morning* directed by Nefertite Nguvu (2014). His writing has been published in various publications such as *Black Popular Culture*, edited by Gina Dent (1992), and *Everything But the Burden*, edited by Greg Tate (2003).
About Greg Tate

Greg Tate is a writer, musician and cultural provocateur who lives on Harlem’s Sugar Hill and whose books include Flyboy In The Buttermilk (1992) and Everything But The Burden —What White People Are Taking From Black Culture (2004). His most recent is Flyboy 2: The Greg Tate Reader (Duke University Press 2016). Tate has also led the Conducted Improv big band Burnt Sugar The Arkestra Chamber since 1999 and is a proud member of Howard University’s Bison Nation. He has taught at Yale, Columbia, Brown and Williams colleges and universities This Fall he will begin teaching a class at Princeton called The Loud And Proud Musicology of Amiri Baraka.

Editor’s note: Installation images will be available after the exhibition opens on September 21, 2017. Please check with MOCAD before publishing. Interviews are available upon request.

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The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD) is an innovative addition to Detroit's vibrant Midtown neighborhood, and functions as a hub for the exploration of emerging ideas in the contemporary arts. As a non-collecting institution, MOCAD is responsive to the cultural content of our time, fueling crucial dialogue, collaboration, and public engagement. The Museum is located between the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Detroit Institute of the Arts, Wayne State University, and the College for Creative Studies. The cavernous 22,000 square foot building, a former auto dealership, has been simply renovated to maintain its raw historic character. MOCAD’s ambitious series of public programs includes lectures, musical performances, films, literary readings and educational activities for area youth. Mobile Homestead, by late artist Mike Kelley, is a permanent art work located on the grounds of the Museum. It is both a public sculpture and a private, personal construction – based on the artist’s childhood home on Palmer Road in Westland. The ground floor serves as a community event space by and for a diverse public, as Kelley intended. MOCAD is generously supported by individual members, private and corporate foundations, and government agencies. More information can be found at mocadetroit.org.