



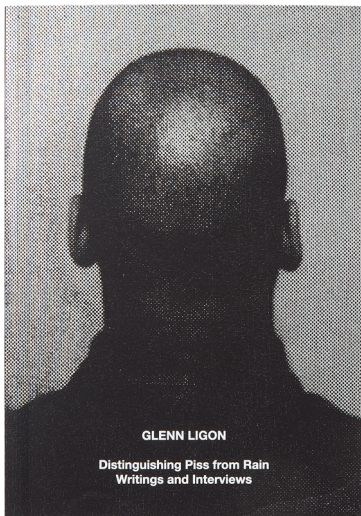
HAUSER & WIRTH PUBLISHERS

Press Release

Book Release: 'Glenn Ligon: Distinguishing Piss from Rain; Writings and Interviews'

An expansive and generously illustrated volume featuring incisive reflections on race, art and contemporary culture by one of the greatest artists working today.

To be released on 30 July 2024



"Glenn Ligon is among the great artists of our time or any time. Words are among the materials he knows how to wield with irony, wit, multivalence, and directness. In this brilliant collection of his essays and interviews, Ligon's polyphony speaks out with a resonance sharpened by acuity and hilarity, and with an intellectual luminousness that continues to determine how I see the world."—Wayne Koestenbaum

"What a delight—to read the artwork in the world through Glenn Ligon's brilliant, incisive eye."—Saidiya Hartman

"Ligon gives us much feeling with few words. What else is there to do when you read him but exclaim 'Boop!' or audibly exhale?"
—Thomas (T.) Jean Lax

'Glenn Ligon: Distinguishing Piss from Rain; Writings and Interviews' brings together key writings by and interviews with Glenn Ligon in one volume for the first time since his sold-out 2011 anthology 'Yourself in the World'. This publication, the latest from Hauser & Wirth Publishers, presents a collection of both polemical and personal writings and interviews in an accessible paperback volume, with 100 illustrations. Over 400 pages, this book provides the fullest picture yet of the artist and his ongoing evaluation of the art and politics of our time.

Best known for his landmark text-based paintings, Ligon draws on the influential words of leading 20th-century cultural figures, including James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison, Zora Neale Hurston, Gertrude Stein and Richard Pryor, constructing work that centers Blackness within the historically white backdrop of the art world and culture at large. Ligon's work has been examining race, history, sexuality and culture in America since his emergence as an artist in the late 1980s. Early in his career, Ligon started to incorporate text into his paintings, using the stenciled words that would become a hallmark of his oeuvre.

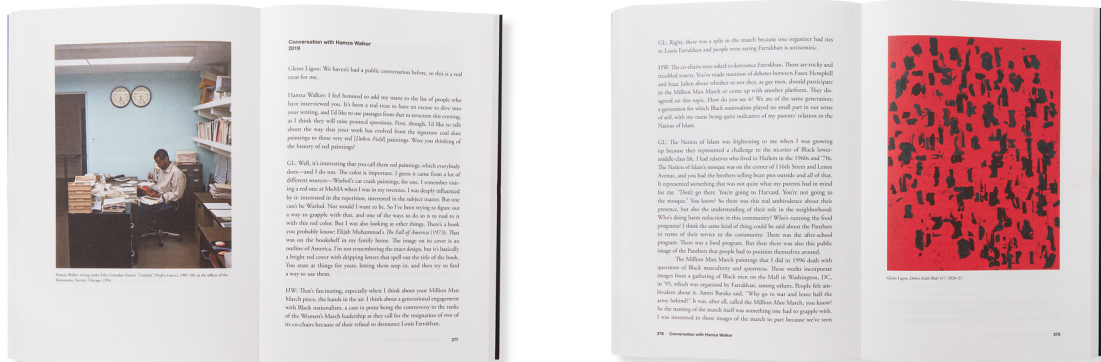
Ligon started writing in the early 2000s. The first of the historical texts in this book, 'Black Light: David Hammons and the Poetics of Emptiness' was published in Artforum in 2004 and established his renown as an 'artist who writes.' Other essays engage with, or respond to, the work of peers such as Julie Mehretu, Chris Ofili and Lorna Simpson, amongst others, and reveal Ligon's deep engagement with artists who came before him, including Philip Guston, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, and Andy Warhol. More recently he has been a guest on podcasts with



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the likes of Helga Davis and Ben Luke, edited transcripts of which are also included in addition to interviews with Thelma Golden, Byron Kim and others. With a foreword by Thomas (T.) Jean Lax and a preface by the artist, the publication showcases Ligon's virtuosic combinations of razor-sharp insight with anecdotal and biographical details.

To celebrate the release of 'Distinguishing Piss from Rain,' Ligon will be in conversation with writer Dr. Kellie Jones and artist Julie Mehretu in The Cooper Union's historic Great Hall in New York on 1 October 2024, with readings from the book by legendary performer Helga Davis. This event is co-sponsored by The Cooper Union School of Art.



About the artist

Glenn Ligon (born 1960) is an American conceptual artist whose work pursues a pointed exploration of American history, literature and society, across bodies of work that build critically on the legacies of modern painting and conceptual art. Important solo exhibitions include 'Post-Noir,' Carre d'Art, Nîmes, France (2022); 'Call and Response,' Camden Arts Centre, London, UK (2014); his mid-career retrospective, 'America,' Whitney Museum of American Art, New York NY (2011); and 'Some Changes,' The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto, Canada (2005). In 2021, he was inducted as a member into the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

From 20 September 2024 to 2 March 2025, the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, UK, will host a solo show of Ligon's works. Alongside paintings, sculptures and prints, the exhibition, titled 'All Over the Place,' presents a series of site-specific interventions curated by the artist throughout the museum, aimed at peeling back the layers of history and meaning to reveal a new perspective on the collection.

'Glenn Ligon: Distinguishing Piss from Rain; Writings and Interviews'

Release date: 30 July 2024

Edited by James Hoff. Introduction by Thomas (T.) Jean Lax. Text by Glenn Ligon

English; softcover

16.5 x 24 cm, 400 pages

ISBN: 978-3-906915-88-3

\$38 / £32 / €35 / HKD 325 / CHF 35 UK/ Europe release date: 17 June 2024 US/ROW



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About Hauser & Wirth Publishers

In keeping with Hauser & Wirth's artist-centric vision, Hauser & Wirth Publishers works to bring readers into the universe of artists and behind the scenes of their practices. From publishing artists' writings and exceptional exhibition-related books to commissioning new scholarship and pursuing the highest levels of craft in design and bookmaking, Hauser & Wirth Publishers creates vital, lasting records of artists' work and ideas, forging critical gateways to the cultural discourse they inspire.

Through its Oral History Initiative, Hauser & Wirth Publishers is building an enduring record of artists' voices for future generations. Additionally, the imprint publishes Ursula magazine, a bi-annual print and digital periodical that features essays, profiles, interviews, original portfolios, films and photography by thought-provoking writers and artists from around the world.

Across its dedicated bookstores in the U.S. and Europe, Hauser & Wirth Publishers complements and amplifies the artist's voice by hosting a robust slate of special programs, including talks, panels, readings and learning initiatives that engage a variety of audiences and communities.

Publishing has been a cornerstone of Hauser & Wirth's activity since the gallery's founding in 1992. Its publishing activities steadily flourished through partnerships with imprints such as Hatje Cantz, JRP|Ringier, Snoeck, Steidl, Thames & Hudson and Yale University Press before the establishment of Hauser & Wirth Publishers, with headquarters in New York and Zurich.

Hauser & Wirth Publishers' titles are distributed worldwide via Distributed Art Publishers, Interart and Buchhandlung Walther König.



For additional information, please contact:

Francesca Cosslett, Hauser & Wirth
francescacosslett@hauserwirth.com

www.hauserwirth.com/publishers
[@hauserwirth](https://www.instagram.com/hauserwirth)

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