

For Immediate Release

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Glenn Ligon wins 4th Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize



Glenn Ligon (L) and George Wein / Photo by Ray A. Llanos

NEW YORK, NY, November 2, 2009— The Studio Museum has awarded the 2009 Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize to Glenn Ligon. Director and Chief Curator Thelma Golden announced the award to over 700 supporters and friends, including George Wein, at the Museum's Gala 2009 on October 26.

Jazz impresario, musician and philanthropist George Wein established the Prize in 2006 to honor his late wife Joyce Alexander Wein, a woman whose life embodied a commitment to the power and possibilities of art and culture. Joyce was a dedicated Trustee of The Studio Museum in Harlem and was deeply involved with philanthropy and the arts throughout her life. Inspired by Joyce's lifelong support of living artists and envisioned as an extension of the Studio Museum's mission to support experimentation and excellence in contemporary art, the Wein Prize recognizes and honors the artistic achievements of an African-American artist who demonstrates great innovation, promise and creativity, and includes an unrestricted monetary award of \$50,000. Previous recipients include Nadine Robinson (2008), Trenton Doyle Hancock (2007) and Lorna Simpson (2006).

A distinguished panel consisting of Eungie Joo, Director and Curator of Public Programs, the New Museum; Carter Foster, Curator of Drawings, the Whitney Museum of American Art; Nancy L. Lane, Trustee and Chair, Acquisition Committee, The Studio Museum in Harlem; and Naomi Beckwith, Assistant Curator, the

Studio Museum, met in September to select just one winner from a competitive pool of candidates recommended by nominators nationwide.

“In receiving this prize, which is so much in the spirit of both Joyce and George’s longtime support for the arts,” said Glenn Ligon, “I realized that while I sometimes take for granted the things that I do in my studio, other people think deeply about, appreciate and cherish the work I make. I am honored.”

A New York-based conceptual artist, Ligon has a wide-ranging art practice in multiple media, including text-based painting, neon, print, installation and video. His work engages social and personal histories, memory, and the ways in which groups and individuals are represented—revealing the complexities and subtleties of social constructs of race, language, sexuality and gender.

Born in the Bronx in 1960, Ligon received a BA from Wesleyan University in 1982. In addition to *Stranger*, his 2001 solo exhibition at The Studio Museum in Harlem, he has had solo museum exhibitions at the Power House, Memphis (2008); the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2000); the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1996); and the Kunstverein München, Germany (2001). His work has been included in numerous national and international group shows, including Documenta XI, Kassel, Germany (2002); the Venice Biennale (1997); and the Whitney Biennial (1991, 1993).

Ligon’s work is represented in many public collections, including those of The Studio Museum in Harlem; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Tate Modern, London; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. In addition, he has received numerous awards and recognitions for his work, including the Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant (1997) and two National Endowment for the Arts grants (1982, 1989).

ABOUT THE STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM

The Studio Museum in Harlem is a contemporary art museum that focuses on the work of artists of African descent locally, nationally and globally, as well as work that has been inspired and influenced by African-American culture, through its exhibitions, Artist-in-Residence program, education and public programming, permanent collection, and archival and research facilities.

The Studio Museum in Harlem is committed to serving as a unique resource in the local community, and in national and international arenas, by making artworks and exhibitions concrete and personal for each viewer. The Museum provides a context within which to address the contemporary and historical issues presented through art by artists of African descent.



Photo: Ray A. Llanos

Since opening in a rented loft at Fifth Avenue and 125th Street in 1968, the Studio Museum has earned recognition for its catalytic role in promoting the works of artists of African descent. The Museum’s Artist-in-Residence program has supported over ninety graduates who have gone on to highly regarded careers. A wide variety of education and public programs have brought the African-American experience alive for the public by means of lectures, dialogues, panel discussions and performances, as well as interpretive programs, both on- and off-site, for students and teachers. The exhibitions program has also expanded the scope of art historical literature through the production of scholarly catalogues, brochures and pamphlets.

The Studio Museum’s permanent collection contains over 1,600 works, including drawings, pastels, prints, photographs, mixed-media works and installations. It is comprised of works created by artists during their residencies, as well as pieces given to the Museum to create an art-historical framework for artists of African descent. Featured in the collection are Terry Adkins, Romare Bearden, Skunder Boghossian, Robert

Colescott, Melvin Edwards, Richard Hunt, Hector Hyppolite, Serge Jolimeau, Lois Mailou Jones, Jacob Lawrence, Norman Lewis, Philome Obin, Betye Saar, Nari Ward and Hale Woodruff, among others. The Museum also is the custodian of an extensive archive of the work of photographer James VanDerZee, the quintessential chronicler of the Harlem community from 1906 to 1984.

The Studio Museum in Harlem is supported, in part, with public funds provided by the following government agencies and elected representatives: The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation; Assemblyman Keith L. T. Wright, 70th A.D.; New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency; Institute of Museum and Library Services; the National Endowment for the Arts; Council Member Inez E. Dickens, 9th C.D. and Speaker Christine Quinn and the New York City Council.



ADDRESS

The Studio Museum in Harlem is located at 144 West 125th Street, between Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard and Lenox Avenue. Subway: A, B, C, D, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 to 125th Street. Bus: M-2, M-7, M-10, M-100, M-101, M-102 or BX-15.

ADMISSION

Suggested donation: \$7 for adults, \$3 for students (with valid id) and seniors. Free for children 12 and under. The first Saturday of every month is free for everyone. Sundays are now free at the Studio Museum, thanks to generous support from Target.

HOURS

The Museum is currently closed for installation and will reopen on November 12, 2009. The Museum is open Wednesday through Friday, and Sunday from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m., and from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. The Museum is closed on Monday, Tuesday and major holidays. Phone: 212.864.4500. Fax: 212.864.4800. www.studiomuseum.org.

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