

LEADING ARTISTS AND WRITERS DISCUSS IDENTITY AND RACE

2ND ANNUAL WEXNER CENTER DIRECTOR'S DIALOGUE ON ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE

"Blackness—like Malcolm X said about whiteness—is a state of mind. There is no consensus on what it means and each individual and generation has to renegotiate its meaning."—Glenn Ligon

Columbus, OH—Leading artists and writers come together at the Wexner Center on **Tuesday, April 10** to discuss the issues of cultural conflict, identity politics, and expressive freedom as part of ***Race Matters***, the 2nd Annual **Director's Dialogue on Art and Social Change**, free to the public. These issues are at the forefront of the current sociopolitical climate and the work of Glenn Ligon whose exhibition, *Some Changes*, is currently on view at the Wexner Center.

Panelists in *Race Matters* are visual artist and Columbus gallerist Talle Bamazi, visual artist and 2006–07 Wexner Center Residency Award recipient Kerry James Marshall, jazz pianist and composer Jason Moran, novelist and essayist Lynne Tillman, and columnist and Columbia University law professor Patricia Williams. Maurice Stevens, associate professor of comparative studies at Ohio State, moderates the discussion.

Notes Wexner Center Director Sherri Geldin, "The contemporary arts reflect and refract the forces that pulse through contemporary life—triggering fresh insights, vital conversations, and unique experiences among diverse audiences. In short, the arts can and do serve as catalysts for social change, in ways both obvious and subtle. We believe that the *Race Matters* panel discussion provides an exemplary Director's Dialogue program."

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR'S DIALOGUE

The *Director's Dialogue* series, made possible by a lead endowment gift from an anonymous donor, is designed to explore the crucial role of the arts as a springboard for discourse on contemporary issues and as a catalyst for social change. Building on a loose definition of "dialogue," each year's program convenes a conversation among multiple voices, drawing on the expertise of artists, academics, and opinion leaders in a variety of fields to address the most significant social issues of the day. The inaugural dialogue in 2006 was in connection with a screening of *The Gender Chip Project*.

GLENN LIGON: SOME CHANGES

On view through April 15, this internationally touring exhibition features Glenn Ligon's politically charged work in painting, video, and web-based projects. Ligon, a noted American artist who came to prominence in the 1980s, is known for his wry, edgy explorations of how our personal

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experiences and selves are formed at the intersection of race and nationality, gender and sexuality, and history and popular culture. The exhibition includes an on-site installation and Ligon's text-based works, which transform the words of such figures as James Baldwin and Richard Pryor into resonant, evocative images.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Wexner Center is located at 1871 N. High St. at 15th Ave. at The Ohio State University (wexarts.org). Parking is available in the Ohio Union Garage, entered from High Street, and at the South Campus Gateway parking garage, located one block east of North High Street between 9th and 11th Avenues.

EVENT SUPPORT

The Wexner Center's annual Director's Dialogue is made possible in part by a lead endowment gift from an anonymous donor.

EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Glenn Ligon: Some Changes is cocurated by Wayne Baerwaldt and Thelma Golden and is organized by The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery at Harbourfront Centre, Toronto.

With the generous support of The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Horace Walter Goldsmith Foundation, Peter Norton Family Foundation, Albert & Temmy Latner Foundation and Toby Devan Lewis. Additional support is provided by Hal Jackman Foundation, Judy Schulich, The Broad Art Foundation, Gregory R. Miller, The Drake Hotel, The Linda Pace Foundation and Dr. Kenneth Montague.

It is presented at the Wexner Center for the Arts with support from the Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation and Wexner Center members.

Accommodations are provided by The Blackwell Inn.

Media contact for images, interviews, or more information: Erik Pepple, epepple@wexarts.org or 614 688-3261

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