

# THE GRAMSCI MONUMENT.

# NEWSPAPER



[www.gramsci-monument.com](http://www.gramsci-monument.com)

"A periodical, like a newspaper, a book, or any other medium of didactic expression that is aimed at a certain level of the reading or listening public, cannot satisfy everyone equally; not everyone will find it useful to the same degree. The important thing is that it serve as a stimulus for everyone; after all, no publication can replace the thinking mind."  
Antonio Gramsci  
(Prison Notebook 8)



July 30th, 2013 - Forest Houses, Bronx, NY

The Gramsci Monument-Newspaper is part of the "Gramsci Monument", an artwork by Thomas Hirschhorn, produced by Dia Art Foundation in co-operation with Erik Farmer and the Residents of Forest Houses

WELCOME HOME TO  
THE FOREST HOUSING  
NATIVE GLENN LIGON



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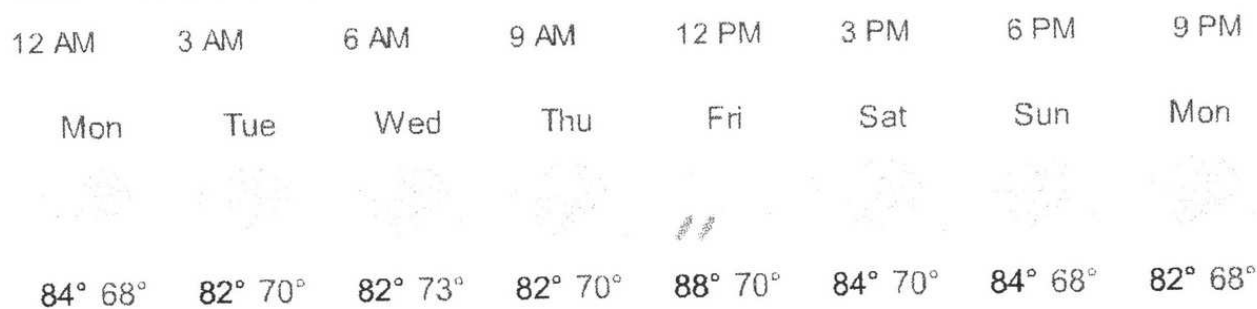
Bronx, NY 10456

Tuesday  
Partly Cloudy

 **82** °F | °C

Precipitation: 0%  
Humidity: 52%  
Wind: 7 mph

Temperature	Precipitation	Wind
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# Glenn Ligon

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Glenn Ligon** is an American conceptual artist whose work explores race, language, desire, sexuality, and identity.<sup>[1]</sup> Ligon engages in intertextuality with other works from the visual arts, literature, and history, as well as his own life.



## Glenn Ligon

<b>Born</b>	1960 Bronx, New York
<b>Nationality</b>	American
<b>Field</b>	Conceptual Art
<b>Training</b>	Wesleyan University

## Early life and career

Ligon was born in 1960 in the Bronx. At the age of 7, his divorced, working-class parents got a scholarship for him and his brother to attend Walden School.<sup>[2]</sup> Ligon graduated from Wesleyan University with a B.A. in 1982. After graduating, he worked as a proof-reader for a law firm, while in his spare time he painted in the abstract Expressionist style of Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock.<sup>[3]</sup> In 1985, he participated in the Whitney Museum of American Art's Independent Study Program.<sup>[4]</sup> He currently lives and works in New York City.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Work

Ligon works in multiple media, including painting, neon, video, photography, and digital media such as Adobe Flash for his work *Annotations*. Ligon's work is greatly informed by his experiences as an African American and as a gay man<sup>[6]</sup> living in the United States.

## Painting



Although Ligon's work spans sculptures, prints, drawings, mixed media and even neon signs, painting remains a core activity. His paintings incorporate literary fragments, jokes, and evocative quotes from a selection of authors, which he stencils directly onto the canvas by hand.<sup>[7]</sup> In 1989, he mounted his first solo show, "How It Feels to Be Colored Me," in Brooklyn.<sup>[8]</sup> This show established Ligon's reputation for creating large, text-based paintings in which a phrase chosen from literature or other sources is repeated over and over, eventually dissipating into murk. *Untitled (I Am a Man)* (1988), a reinterpretation of the signs carried during the Memphis Sanitation Strike in 1968 — made famous by Ernest Withers's photographs of the march —, is the first example of his use of text.<sup>[9]</sup>

Ligon gained prominence in the early 1990s along with a generation of artists like Lorna Simpson, Gary Simmons, and Janine Antoni.<sup>[10]</sup> In 1993, Ligon began the first of three series of gold-colored paintings based on Richard Pryor's groundbreaking stand-up comedy routines from the 1970s. The scatological and racially charged jokes Ligon depicts speak in the vernacular language of the street and reveal a complex and nuanced vision of black culture.<sup>[11]</sup> In 1994, the art installation *To Disembark* was shown at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C. The title alludes to the title of a book of poetry by Gwendolyn Brooks. "To Disembark" functions in both works to evoke the recognition that African Americans are still coping with the remnants of slavery and its ongoing manifestation in racism.<sup>[12]</sup> In one part of the installation, Ligon created a series of packing crates modeled on the one described by ex-slave Henry "Box" Brown in his "Narrative of Henry Box Brown who escaped from Slavery Enclosed in a Box 3 Feet Long and 2 Wide." Each crate played a different sound, such as a heartbeat, a spiritual, or contemporary rap music. Around each box, the artist placed posters in which he characterized himself, in words and period images, as a runaway slave in the style of 19th century broadsheets circulated to advertise for the return of fugitive slaves.<sup>[13]</sup> In another part of the exhibition, Ligon stenciled four quotes from a Zora Neale Hurston essay, "how it feels to be colored me," directly on the walls: "I feel most colored when I am thrown against a sharp white background," "I remember the very day that I became colored," "I am not tragically colored," and "I do not always feel colored." Ligon found Hurston's writing illuminating because she explores the idea of race as a concept that is structured by context rather than essence.<sup>[14]</sup>

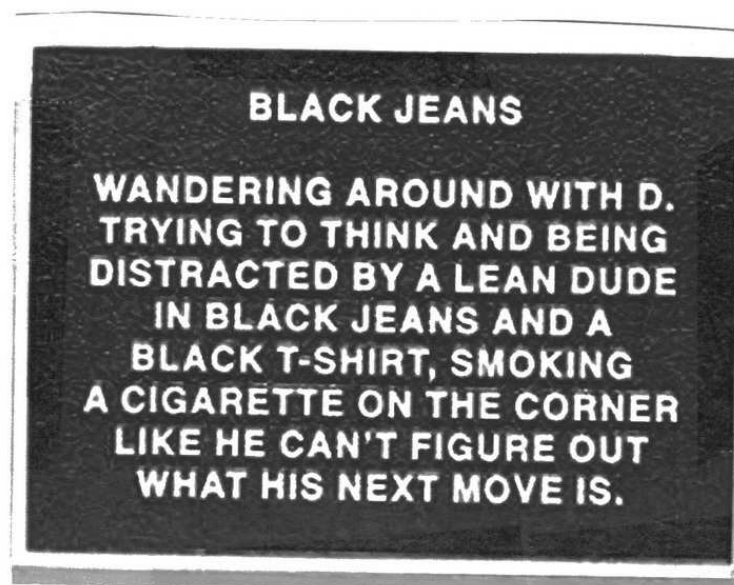
In *A Feast of Scraps* (1994–98), he inserted pornographic and stereotypical photographs of black men, complete with invented captions ("mother knew," "I fell out" "It's a process") into albums of family snapshots including graduation photographs, vacation snapshots, pictures of baby showers, birthday celebrations, and baptisms, some of which include the artist's own family. Like almost all of Ligon's art, this project draws out the secret histories and submerged meanings of inherited texts and images.<sup>[15]</sup>

For *Notes on the Margin of the Black Book* (1991–93),<sup>[16]</sup> Ligon separately framed 91 erotic photographs of black males cut from Robert Mapplethorpe's 1988 "Black Book," installing them in two horizontal rows. Between them are two more rows of small framed typed texts, 78 comments on sexuality, race, AIDS, art and the politically inflamed controversy over Mapplethorpe's work launched by then-Texas Congressman Dick Army.<sup>[17]</sup>

Another series of large paintings was based on children's interpretations of 1970s black-history coloring books.

### Neon works

Since 2005, Ligon has made neon works. *Warm Broad Glow* (2005), Ligon's first exploration in neon, uses a fragment of text from *Three Lives*, the 1909 novel by American author Gertrude Stein. Ligon rendered the words "negro sunshine" in warm white neon, the letters of which were then painted black on the front.<sup>[18]</sup> In 2008, the piece was selected to participate in the Renaissance Society's group exhibit, "Black Is, Black Ain't",<sup>[19]</sup> and appeared on the Whitney Museum's facade in 2011.<sup>[20]</sup> Other neon works are derived from neon sculptures by Bruce Nauman; *One Live and Die* (2006) stems from Nauman's *100 Live and Die* (1984), for example.<sup>[21]</sup>



## Film

In 2009, Ligon completed short film based on Thomas Edison's 1903 silent film *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Playing the character of Tom, Ligon had himself filmed re-creating the last scene of Edison's movie, which also provided his film's title: "The Death of Tom." But the film was incorrectly loaded in the hand-crank camera that the artist used so no imagery appeared on film. Embracing this apparent failure, Ligon decided to show his film as an abstract progression of lights and darks with a narrative suggested by the score composed and played by jazz musician Jason Moran.<sup>[22]</sup>

## Exhibitions

Ligon's work has been the subject of exhibitions throughout the United States and Europe. Recent solo exhibition include the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2001); the Kunstverein München, Germany (2001), the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2000); the St. Louis Art Museum (2000); the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia (1998); and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1996).<sup>[23]</sup> A first survey of Ligon's work opened at The Power Plant in Toronto in June 2005 and traveled to the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh; Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston; Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus; Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery in Vancouver, and the Mudam in Luxembourg. The first comprehensive mid-career retrospective devoted to Ligon's work was held at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth in 2011.<sup>[24]</sup> Group shows in which Ligon has participated include the Whitney Biennial (1991 and 1993), Biennale of Sydney (1996), Venice Biennale (1997), Kwangju Biennale (2000), and documenta 11 (2002).<sup>[25]</sup>

## Collections

Ligon's work is represented in many public collections including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia; the Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Tate Modern, London; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. In 2012, the National Gallery of Art in Washington bought the painting *Untitled (I Am a Man)* (1988).<sup>[26]</sup>

In 2012, Ligon was commissioned to create the first site-specific artwork for the New School's University Center building, designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, on the corner of 14th Street and Fifth Avenue in Greenwich Village. The work will feature about 400 feet of text from Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* rendered in pink neon lights, running around the top of a wall in the center's first-floor café.<sup>[27]</sup>

## Recognition

In 2005, Ligon won an Alphonse Fletcher Foundation Fellowship for his art work. In 2006 he was awarded the Skowhegan Medal for Painting. In 2010, he won a United States Artists Fellow award.<sup>[28]</sup>

In 2009, President Barack Obama added Ligon's 1992 *Black Like Me No. 2*, on loan from the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, to the White House collection, where it was installed in the President's private living quarters.<sup>[29]</sup> The text in the selected painting is from John Howard Griffin's 1961 memoir *Black Like Me*, the

account of a white man's experiences traveling through the South after he had his skin artificially darkened. The words "All traces of the Griffin I had been were wiped from existence" are repeated in capital letters that progressively overlap until they coalesce as a field of black paint.<sup>[30]</sup>

## Art market

On the occasion of Ben Stiller and David Zwirner's "Artists For Haiti" charity auction at Christie's in 2011, Jennifer Aniston set a record prize for Glenn Ligon's work by purchasing his *Stranger #44* (2011).<sup>[31]</sup> At \$450,000, Aniston beat Ligon's previous record of \$434,500 for *Invisible Man (Two Views)* (1991), realized at Sotheby's in September 2010.<sup>[32]</sup>

Ligon is represented by Regen Projects<sup>[33]</sup> in Los Angeles; Luhring Augustine in New York; and Thomas Dane Gallery in London.<sup>[34]</sup>

# A TEXT FROM THOMAS HIRSCHHORN

## Unshared Authorship

In doing my work in public space and furthermore, in doing works involving residence on location such as the upcoming "Gramsci Monument", I am confronted with the question of 'authorship'.

### Unshared Authorship

Consequently I want to propose a new kind of authorship: the Unshared Authorship.

This means that me, the artist, am the author of the "Gramsci Monument", I am entirely and completely the author, regarding everything about my work. As author - in Unshared Authorship -

I don't share the responsibility of my work nor my own understanding of it, that's why the term:

'Unshared'. But I am not the only author! Because the Other, the one who takes the responsibility of the work also, is - equally - author. The Other can be author, completely and entirely, in his/her understanding of the work and regarding everything about the work. That's why again, the term: 'Unshared'. Unshared Authorship is a statement, it's an assertion, it's offensive and it's a 'hard' term in opposition to the 'soft' term 'collaboration'. 'Unshared' stands for clearness, for a decision, for the 'non-exclusive', for the opening toward 'co-existence'. 'Unshared' means saying yes to complexity, and implies multiplication, not division. Today's issues about claim for 'responsibility' come from those 'shared responsibilities', which push you to the 'I am not responsible for this, I am only responsible for that!' excuses. Unshared Authorship - we could also say "Unshared Responsibility" - allows to take the responsibility for what I am not responsible for. Furthermore Unshared Authorship allows to be author even when I am not the 'author', this is the essential, this is the new.

### Equality

I believe in Universality and in the universal power of art to transform each human being. Other words for 'Universality' are 'Equality', the 'Non-Exclusive Audience', 'Truth', 'The One World' or 'Justice'. Other words for 'Belief' are 'Resistance', 'Intensity', 'Movement' or 'Creation'. I want to confront my 'Belief' with reality - through my work and I want to be engaged with art in absolute equality. 'Belief' and 'Equality' are both constitutive for art. The 'Belief' is to be absolutely convinced of this, to follow it as a decision, as a hope, and to use it as a weapon, as an affirmation. I cannot understand the skeptical, the disappointed, the resigned, the cynical, the critical - nothing can be done when there is no belief in equality. Belief in equality is a strength, it's active and it's a resistance to objectivity or neutrality. With a part of dream and innocence, the notion of Unshared Authorship can build, throughout 'equality' and 'non-exclusivity', a basis to engage directly 'The Other'. There is no artwork - that stands as such - based on inequality or exclusivity.

### The Other

The only possibility to encounter the Other is 'as equal'. This is not easy and is being avoided by today's many circumstances, conditions and contexts. To resist this I must allow myself 'equality', I must authorize myself to assert 'being equal'. This means establishing a relation with the Other out of my belief in equality. This means concerning the "Gramsci-Monument", that in order to encounter the residents of possible sites that will host my work, I need to follow my belief in equality without forcing an attitude, remaining truthful to myself. Should equality not be the most obvious thing? 'Unshared' is the contrary of unequal. To act in Unshared Authorship is an act of emancipation and of self-understanding that doesn't require response. To establish a contact with the Other - through art - must be something "given", something essential, something absolute. It is a necessity for any artistic 'fieldwork'. For the "Gramsci-Monument", I am doing this alone and solitarian, because I am convinced that the only possible contact with the Other can happen 'One to One'. This is not self-enclosure or a romantic attitude. Only a 'One to One' contact can create a dialogue or even a confrontation with the Other.

### 'I' or 'me':

I have always understood 'me' or 'I' - which I use often and with no bashfulness - as something already including the Other. The Other, the reality, the world - my own world also - should be included within 'I' and 'me'. I'm not first nor last expressing this, but the term 'unshared' in Unshared Authorship - enlarges the entire dimension of 'I' and 'me'. I want to do everything to use art as a tool for involving the Other - throughout my work. That is the problem, and the challenge, and why I love so much to do a work of art. I

want to do a work in which the affirmation : the Other is included in 'me' and in 'I', takes a form. This is my competence as an artist.

# AMBASSADOR'S CORNER NOTE # 21 BY YASMIL RAYMOND



Although it was written in haste on a scrap of paper, the note retained the desire for a practical outcome that is typical of a letter. "You must help me best friend because I don't know English well," read the opening sentence. "If I get a best friend every day, he/she speak me every day in English, we lecture together one day. I [will] understand English well. IR[S] tell me about it." The author of the note is a recent immigrant to New York, a resident of Forest Houses and a regular visitor to the monument. The note came into being in the middle of a conversation in which he was trying to explain his situation, namely, his determination to learn English. It goes without saying, fully aware of the pitfalls of well-meaning platitudes, that it is from such a common aspiration that a reconceptualization of the "monument" starts. The condition of possibility of such a form arises from the activation of empathic action that designates new kinds of friendship in the conquest of indifference.

# A DAILY LECTURE FROM MARCUS STEINWEG

30th Lecture at the Gramsci Monument, The Bronx, NYC: 30th July 2013

WHAT IS A PROBLEM?

Marcus Steinweg

A problematic statement and a problematic concept move along the watershed between what is and what is not, between presence and absence. "I call a concept problematic which contains no contradiction and also hangs together with other knowledge as a limitation of given concepts, but whose objective reality cannot be recognized in any way", Immanuel Kant writes. Kant's example for such a problematic concept is of course the *Ding an sich*, the thing in itself. "The concept of a *noumenon*, i.e. of a thing which is supposed to be thought not at all as an object of the senses, but as a *Ding an sich* merely by pure understanding, is not at all contradictory because it cannot be maintained that sensuousness is the only possible kind of intuition. Furthermore, this concept is necessary in order not to extend sensuous intuition over things in themselves and thus, in order to restrict the objective validity of sensuous knowledge, (for the rest, to which sensuous intuition does not reach, are called noumena precisely because with them one indicates that this knowledge cannot extend its territory over everything that understanding can think). [...] The concept of a noumenon is therefore merely a *limiting concept* in order to restrict the pretensions of sensuousness and is therefore only of negative use."<sup>1</sup> The negative use of the concept of noumenon has the function of curtailing the over-extension of sensuousness to intelligibility, which also means drawing a limit between the order of space-time and the zone X which is the world or the non-world of the noumena.

It is indispensable to know that this limit is itself already problematic because, beyond the world of the phenomena, no second, in some sense higher world begins, for instance, in the shape of a factually existing realm of ideas. To open the subject to the noumenon does not mean to promise it another world. On the contrary, it means to orient it toward its world, the one and only, to confront it in the here-and-now of its space-time immanence with the radical limitedness of its order which is the universe of finitude. But this confrontation with the familiar universe demands at the same time the opening up of human subjectivity to the domain of an unfamiliarity which is the domain of the *Ding an sich*. Raised to an ontological level, the thing in itself is not simply the negative side of the phenomenon. Rather, it indicates the efficiency of an element 'present' only in the mode of absence which, by marking something beyond the sphere of phenomena, indicates the coincidence of this beyond with the limit itself. Accordingly, already Kantian thinking can be understood as a thinking of immanence because it radically contests the positivity of the nonetheless efficient noumenon.

From here, a relationship between Kant's thinking and Blanchot's can be established. The step or transgression to the noumenon is equally unavoidable (it has always already taken place) as it is impossible (because it has long since taken place and in this sense cannot be caught up with). It is a *pas au-delà*, a non-step into nothingness.<sup>2</sup> It opens up the problematic or simply paradoxical thinking of a relation without relation (*rapport sans rapport*) which characterizes perhaps the most general trait of Blanchotian ontology. It pulls and pulls over the thinking subject to the incommensurable by insisting on the *constitutive* (even though *regulative* in Kantian terminology!) relatedness of the subject to that which by definition is unavailable to it. That is the meaning of the dictum about metaphysics as a natural capacity, this originary self-transgression and self-surpassing of the finite subject to the dimension of the infinite which Blanchot calls the exterior (*dehors*) and Deleuze & Guattari, following Nietzsche, call *becoming*, *chaos* or the *untimely*.

<sup>1</sup> Immanuel Kant *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* B. 310f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Maurice Blanchot *Le pas au-delà* Paris 1973.



# How It Feels to Be Colored Me

by Zora Neale Hurston (1891 - 1960)

<sup>1</sup> I am colored but I offer nothing in the way of extenuating circumstances except the fact that I am the only Negro in the United States whose grandfather on the mother's side was *not* an Indian chief.

<sup>2</sup> I remember the very day that I became colored. Up to my thirteenth year I lived in the little Negro town of Eatonville, Florida. It is exclusively a colored town. The only white people I knew passed through the town going to or coming from Orlando. The native whites rode dusty horses, the Northern tourists chugged down the sandy village road in automobiles. The town knew the Southerners and never stopped cane chewing when they passed. But the Northerners were something else again. They were peered at cautiously from behind curtains by the timid. The more venturesome would come out on the porch to watch them go past and got just as much pleasure out of the tourists as the tourists got out of the village.



<sup>3</sup> The front porch might seem a daring place for the rest of the town, but it was a gallery seat for me. My favorite place was atop the gatepost. Proscenium box for a born first-nighter. Not only did I enjoy the show, but I didn't mind the actors knowing that I liked it. I usually spoke to them in passing. I'd wave at them and when they returned my salute, I would say something like this: "Howdy-do-well-I-thank-you-where-you-goin'?" Usually automobile or the horse paused at this, and after a queer exchange of compliments, I would probably "go a piece of the way" with them, as we say in farthest Florida. If one of my family happened to come to the front in time to see me, of course negotiations would be rudely broken off. But even so, it is clear that I was the first "welcome-to-our-state" Floridian, and I hope the Miami Chamber of Commerce will please take notice.

<sup>4</sup> During this period, white people differed from colored to me only in that they rode through town and never lived there. They liked to hear me "speak pieces" and sing and wanted to see me dance the parse-me-la, and gave me generously of their small silver for doing these things, which seemed strange to me for I wanted to do them so much that I needed bribing to stop, only they didn't know it. The colored people gave no dimes. They deplored any joyful tendencies in me, but I was their Zora nevertheless. I belonged to them, to the nearby hotels, to the county--everybody's Zora.

<sup>5</sup> But changes came in the family when I was thirteen, and I was sent to school in Jacksonville. I left Eatonville, the town of the oleanders, a Zora. When I disembarked from the river-boat at Jacksonville, she was no more. It seemed that I had suffered a sea change. I was not Zora of Orange County any more, I was now a little colored girl. I found it out in certain ways. In my heart as well as in the mirror, I became a fast brown--warranted not to rub nor run.

<sup>6</sup> But I am not tragically colored. There is no great sorrow dammed up in my soul, nor lurking behind my eyes. I do not mind at all. I do not belong to the sobbing school of Negrohood who hold that nature somehow has given them a lowdown dirty deal and whose feelings are all but about it. Even in the helter-skelter skirmish that is my life, I have seen that the world is to the strong regardless of a little pigmentation more or less. No, I do not weep at the world--I am too busy sharpening my ovster

<sup>7</sup> Someone is always at my elbow reminding me that I am the granddaughter of slaves. It fails to register depression with me. Slavery is sixty years in the past. The operation was successful and the patient is doing well, thank you. The terrible struggle that made me an American out of a potential slave said "On the line!" The Reconstruction said "Get set!" and the generation before said "Go!" I am off to a flying start and I must not halt in the stretch to look behind and weep. Slavery is the price I paid for civilization, and the choice was not with me. It is a bully adventure and worth all that I have paid through my ancestors for it. No one on earth ever had a greater chance for glory. The world to be won and nothing to be lost. It is thrilling to think--to know that for any act of mine, I shall get twice as much praise or twice as much blame. It is quite exciting to hold the center of the national stage, with the spectators not knowing whether to laugh or to weep.

<sup>8</sup> The position of my white neighbor is much more difficult. No brown specter pulls up a chair beside me when I sit down to eat. No dark ghost thrusts its leg against mine in bed. The game of keeping what one has is never so exciting as the game of getting.

<sup>9</sup> I do not always feel colored. Even now I often achieve the unconscious Zora of Eatonville before the Hegira. I feel most colored when I am thrown against a sharp white background.

<sup>10</sup> For instance at Barnard. "Beside the waters of the Hudson" I feel my race. Among the thousand white persons, I am a dark rock surged upon, and overswept, but through it all, I remain myself. When covered by the waters, I am; and the ebb but reveals me again.

<sup>11</sup> Sometimes it is the other way around. A white person is set down in our midst, but the contrast is just as sharp for me. For instance, when I sit in the drafty basement that is The New World Cabaret with a white person, my color comes. We enter chatting about any little nothing that we have in common and are seated by the jazz waiters. In the abrupt way that jazz orchestras have, this one plunges into a number. It loses no time in circumlocutions, but gets right down to business. It constricts the thorax and splits the heart with its tempo and narcotic harmonies. This orchestra grows rambunctious, rears on its hind legs and attacks the tonal veil with primitive fury, rending it, clawing it until it breaks through to the jungle beyond. I follow those heathen--follow them exultingly. I dance wildly inside myself; I yell within, I whoop; I shake my assegai above my head, I hurl it true to the mark yeeeeooww! I am in the jungle and living in the jungle way. My face is painted red and yellow and my body is painted blue. My pulse is throbbing like a war drum. I want to slaughter something--give pain, give death to what, I do not know. But the piece ends. The men of the orchestra wipe their lips and rest their fingers. I creep back slowly to the veneer we call civilization with the last tone and find the white friend sitting motionless in his seat, smoking calmly.

<sup>12</sup> "Good music they have here," he remarks, drumming the table with his fingertips.

<sup>13</sup> Music. The great blobs of purple and red emotion have not touched him. He has only heard what I felt. He is far away and I see him but dimly across the ocean and the continent that have fallen between us. He is so pale with his whiteness then and I am so colored.

<sup>14</sup> At certain times I have no race, I am me. When I set my hat at a certain angle and saunter down Seventh Avenue, Harlem City, feeling as snooty as the lions in front of the Forty-Second Street Library, for instance. So far as my feelings are concerned, Peggy Hopkins Joyce on the Boule Mich with her gorgeous raiment, stately carriage, knees knocking together in a most aristocratic manner, has nothing on me. The cosmic Zora emerges. I belong to no race nor time. I am the eternal feminine with its string of beads.

<sup>15</sup> I have no separate feeling about being an American citizen and colored. I am merely a fragment of the Great Soul that surges within the boundaries. My country, right or wrong.

<sup>16</sup> Sometimes, I feel discriminated against, but it does not make me angry. It merely astonishes me. How can any deny themselves the pleasure of my company? It's beyond me.

<sup>17</sup> But in the main, I feel like a brown bag of miscellany propped against a wall. Against a wall in company with other bags, white, red and yellow. Pour out the contents, and there is discovered a jumble of small things priceless and worthless. A first-water diamond, an empty spool, bits of broken glass, lengths of string, a key to a door long since crumbled away, a rusty knife-blade, old shoes saved for a road that never was and never will be, a nail bent under the weight of things too heavy for any nail, a dried flower or two still a little fragrant. In your hand is the brown bag. On the ground before you is the jumble it held--so much like the jumble in the bags, could they be emptied, that all might be dumped in a single heap and the bags refilled without altering the content of any greatly. A bit of colored glass more or less would not matter. Perhaps that is how the Great Stuffer of Bags filled them in the first place--who knows?



How It Feels To Be Colored Me  
Artistic Piece by Glenn Ligon

# WHAT'S GOING ON?

## FEED BACK

### whitewall

#### Dia Presents Thomas Hirschhorn's Gramsci Monument



##### Thomas Hirschhorn

Gramsci Monument, 2013  
Forest Houses, Bronx, New York  
Courtesy Dia Art Foundation  
Photo by Romain Lopez

**Antonio Gramsci**, an Italian political theorist of the early 20th-century, reemerges in **Thomas Hirschhorn's** *Gramsci Monument* this summer thanks to **Dia**. The fourth and final in his series of monuments, the *Gramsci Monument* recognizes Hirschhorn's belief that his, "love for Antonio Gramsci is the love of philosophy, the love of the infinitude of thought. It is a question of sharing this, affirming it, defending it, and giving it form."

The monument itself is an outdoor pavilion built by residents of **Forest Houses**. The location was chosen after two years of collaboration with the **New York City Housing Authority** and meetings at several different housing sites. Hirschhorn says of his early experiences with Forest Houses, "I was challenged and taken seriously. These were the real encounters between me and the Other—and one can easily understand that without these encounters, no decision regarding a possible location can be taken."

By involving local residents and using ordinary materials, the exhibition becomes a truly "public space." As with other projects, Hirschhorn chose the exhibition space "based on [his] love for a "non-exclusive audience," thus inviting an unexpected crowd to take part. Some of his works have been presented in more traditional galleries and museums, but Hirschhorn often uses spaces such as sidewalks and vacant lots.

The pavilion acts as an archive and library on the topic of Antonio Gramsci. In addition, the pavilion houses a theater, radio station and newspaper. With help from the **Fondazione Istituto Gramsci in Rome**, **Casa Museo di Antonio Gramsci in Ghilarza**, Italy, the **John D. Calandra Italian American Institute** and, of course, the local residents, each day the monument hosts a series of lectures and workshops.

The *Gramsci Monument's* involvement with the local residents takes it beyond the term "monument" or Gramsci's Marxist politics. Hirschhorn says, "My decision to do *Gramsci Monument* does not come from an understanding of the philosopher Antonio Gramsci, rather it comes from my understanding of art and my belief that art can transform."

The exhibition is open to the public through September 15, 2013.

By Sarah Bochicchio

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# WHAT'S GOING ON?

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## FEED BACK

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I'm Just Walkin'

### Day 504

The Gramsci Monument

May 17th, 2013



It was quite a surprise to come across this massive wooden pallet structure standing in the middle of the South Bronx's Forest Houses. As it turns out, this is the early stages of [Thomas Hirschhorn's Gramsci Monument](#), a tribute to [Antonio Gramsci](#), the Marxist Italian political theorist and philosopher. Residents of the housing project have been [hired to build the monument](#), which will eventually consist of "a bridge and a series of 'houses' that will include a library, theater platform, workshop area, lounge, Internet corner, and the Gramsci Bar, which will be run by local residents." The whole thing is scheduled to open on July 1st and run until September 15th. You can find much more information on the monument's [official website](#). (That's Mr. Hirschhorn sitting at the edge of the pallet-platform, by the way.)

## RESIDENT OF THE DAY



ROSIE ROBINSON