

THE
NEW
SCHOOL

...e, Nor discovery have I made, Nor will I be able to leave behind me any wear
poet of the Soul. The pleasures of heaven are with me and the pains of hell

For Comrades and Lovers, 2015
GLENN LIGON

Tim Marshall, Provost

with curators Silvia Rocciolo and Eric Stark

and The New School Art Collection Advisory Group
celebrate the installation of

a permanent site-specific commission
for the Event Café at The New School's University Center

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2015

GLENN LIGON

For Comrades and Lovers, 2015

Neon

April 29, 2015, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

Remarks at 6:30 p.m.

by

Tim Marshall

Glenn Ligon

and special guest Carl Hancock Rux,
performance artist, poet, novelist

A panoramic sweep of violet neon light across the Event Café, Glenn Ligon's New School commission is the artist's most ambitious neon work since he began experimenting with the medium in 2005. Ligon continues his explorations of desire, identity, and society through a re-reading of the great American poet Walt Whitman. The artist has set passages from *Leaves of Grass* in fluid calligraphic neon script, re-framing Whitman's meditations and transforming one of the university's most striking architectural spaces into a celebration of poetry.

At once deeply personal, public, and politically charged, *For Comrades and Lovers* invites us to explore the poetics of the encounter—the encounter with ourselves, our longings and endeavors, our temporality, and our place in the world.

Whitman created a new space in which to consider the American experiment, and over one hundred and fifty years after its publication, the poems in Leaves of Grass continue to echo throughout the culture. The quotes in this piece are reflective of a space of encounter and transience, a restless space that in Whitman's poems is characteristic of the space of the city. —Glenn Ligon



Glenn Ligon (b. 1960) lives and works in New York. He earned his BA from Wesleyan University and studied in the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program. Throughout his career, he has conducted an incisive exploration of American history, literature, and society, producing a body of work that builds on the legacies of modern painting and more recent conceptual art. A midcareer retrospective of Ligon's work, *Glenn Ligon: America*, organized by Scott Rothkopf, opened at the Whitney Museum of American Art in March 2011 and traveled around the country. Ligon has been the subject of many solo museum exhibitions nationally and internationally. *Glenn Ligon: Encounters and Collisions*, a curatorial project organized with Nottingham Contemporary and Tate Liverpool, opened in April 2015. Ligon's awards and honors include a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship and the Studio Museum's Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize. His work is part of the collections of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, and many other museums in the United States and abroad. Ligon's work will be included in the 2015 Venice Biennale, curated by Okwui Enwezor.

Carl Hancock Rux is an American poet, novelist, singer-songwriter, essayist, and theater/performative artist. He has received a number of awards, including the Herb Alpert Award in the Arts, the Bessie Award, and the OBIE Award. His archives are housed at the Billy Rose Theater Division of the New York Public Library, the Archives of American Art, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Film and Video/Theater and Dance Library of the California Institute of the Arts.

ART COLLECTION

The New School has a longstanding tradition of supporting the creation of art in public spaces, beginning in 1931 with works by Mexican artist José Clemente Orozco, American artist Thomas Hart Benton, and Ecuadoran artist Camilo Egas commissioned for the landmark Joseph Urban building. The New School Art Collection also includes site-specific works by Gonzalo Fonseca, Sol LeWitt, Dave Muller, Martin Puryear and Michael Van Valkenburgh, Brian Tolle, and Kara Walker.

The New School Art Collection was established in 1960 with a grant from the Albert A. List Foundation. The collection has grown to approximately 2,000 primarily postwar and contemporary works of art by some of the most innovative and creative artists of our time. Installed throughout the university campus, they transform the public spaces into lively forums for exploring contemporary art, offering the New School community a rare opportunity to live and engage with art on a daily basis and making it a distinctive part of the educational experience.

The New School's University Center, designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), is the first building commissioned for The New School since the Joseph Urban building was erected at 66 West 12th Street in 1931. The new building houses Tishman Auditorium, Arnhold Forum Library, flexible classrooms, study and social spaces, a cafeteria, and a dormitory. Newly commissioned works for the university center by Alfredo Jaar, Rita McBride, and Glenn Ligon carry forward The New School's tradition of incorporating site-specific works of art within the university's public spaces.

To learn more about the New School Art Collection, visit newschool.edu/artcollection.