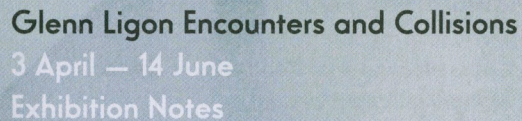


Nottingham Contemporary



From letter to Beauford Delaney

I am writing because I am curating a show titled Encounters and Collisions, and it juxtaposes my work with the work of many other artists. I have been in touch with a gallery here in New York that has a sublime portrait of Baldwin you made in the '50s as well as a yellow abstraction that would work perfectly in the exhibition. I am including these pieces in the show not only because of the crucial place Baldwin occupies in our lives – I've seen numerous portraits you painted of him, and his essay Stranger in the Village is the basis of a major cycle of paintings

I have created – but also because your figurative and abstract work finds deep inspiration in jazz and the blues, an inspiration Baldwin and I also share. In your paintings, the line between figuration and abstraction is always porous. That has inspired a similar fluidity in my paintings, which often turn text (a kind of figuration, I suppose) towards abstraction. To tease out that connection is one of the things Encounters and Collisions aims to do.



Beauford Delaney, James Baldwin, c.1955
Collection of halley k harrisburg and Michael Rosenfeld