

ISABELLA  
SEWART GARDNER  
MUSEUM

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Hilton Als Appointed New Visiting Curator for Performing Arts  
at Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum**



Pulitzer Prize-Winning Writer to Host First  
Event at the Gardner on October 10

Hilton Als. Photo by Ali Smith

**BOSTON (October 1, 2021)** – Hilton Als, Pulitzer Prize-winning writer and critic for *The New Yorker*, has been appointed the latest Visiting Curator for Performing Arts at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (ISGM). In this role, Als will create dynamic and engaging programs that include dramatic readings and performances, building on Isabella's legacy as a host of multi-disciplinary cultural experiences. Als's inaugural program - *On the Art of Performing: Actors and Musicians on Stage and in the Gardner Collection* - will take place October 10.

"We are delighted to have Hilton join the Museum as our new Visiting Curator for Performing Arts," says Peggy Fogelman, the Museum's *Norma Jean Calderwood Director*. "With his multifaceted career and depth of experience in writing, performance, curation, and teaching, Hilton will bring so many new perspectives to the Museum, our collections, and our audiences. I know that he will inspire far-reaching dialogues about art and its meanings."

Als's tenure will coincide with ISGM current Visiting Curator for Performing Arts, Helga Davis, an accomplished New York City-based performer, who was appointed to the role at the Gardner in 2018. As part of Davis's work for the Gardner's exhibition [Botticelli: Heroines + Heroes](#) in 2019, she

commissioned Als to write a short monologue based on his interest in the depiction of the black body in Botticelli's [The Story of Lucretia](#) (painted between 1496 and 1504).

"I am thrilled to collaborate with Hilton, one of the artists and thinkers about art I most admire," says George Steel, *Abrams Curator of Music* at ISGM. "His work covers music, theater, art, curating, poetry and prose, and the pleasure and perils of beauty—all topics that were very dear to Isabella Stewart Gardner herself. It feels like an ideal match!"

Als makes his debut as the Gardner's Visiting Curator for the Performing Arts in an intimate conversation with Wellesley College Associate Professor and art historian [Nikki A. Greene](#) on **Sunday, October 10, On the Art of Performing: Actors and Musicians on Stage and in the Gardner Collection**. During this discussion with Dr. Greene, Als will reflect on his own life and career in the arts. Also during this program, the two will explore the many remarkable depictions of dance, music, and theatre in the Museum's collection, works that were deeply personal to Isabella, in a celebration of creativity, craft, and imagination. Information about the program and ticket information is below.

Hilton Als became a staff writer at *The New Yorker* in 1994 and a theatre critic in 2002. He began contributing to the magazine in 1989, writing pieces for *The Talk of the Town* column. Before his tenure at *The New Yorker*, Als was a staff writer for the *Village Voice* and an editor-at-large at *Vibe*. Als edited the catalogue for the 1994-95 Whitney Museum of American Art exhibition, *Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary American Art*. His first book, *The Women*, was published in 1996. His most recent book, *White Girls*, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and the winner of the Lambda Literary Award in 2014, discusses various narratives of race and gender. He won the Pulitzer Prize for criticism in 2017.

In 1997, the New York Association of Black Journalists awarded Als first prize in both Magazine Critique/Review and Magazine Arts and Entertainment. He was awarded a Guggenheim for creative writing in 2000 and the George Jean Nathan Award for Dramatic Criticism for 2002-03. In 2016, he received Lambda Literary's Trustee Award for Excellence in Literature.

Als is an associate professor of writing at Columbia University's School of the Arts and has taught at Yale University, Wesleyan, and Smith College. He lives in New York City.

#### **About the Visiting Curator of Performing Arts at the Gardner**

Nationally-acclaimed musician and impresario George Steel was the Gardner Museum's first Visiting Curator for Performing Arts from 2017-2018. The ISGM's current Visiting Curator for the Performing Arts is accomplished New York City-based performer, Helga Davis, who was appointed in 2018. Davis' *City of Women II* will take place at the Gardner on October 28 (2021). Davis will curate her final program in this role in early 2022.

For more information on the previous Visiting Curators of Performing Arts, please click [here](#).

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#### **On the Art of Performing: Actors and Musicians on Stage and in the Gardner Collection**

Sunday, October 10, 1:30 pm

Calderwood Hall

Adults \$20

Seniors \$18

Students \$13

Members Free

University Members Free

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The Visiting Curator of Performing Arts is supported by the Barr Foundation ArtsAmplified Initiative and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The Museum receives operating support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which is supported by the state of Massachusetts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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*The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum - a magical creation of one woman's daring vision - invites you to awaken your senses and be transported. Modeled after a Venetian palazzo, unforgettable galleries surround a luminous courtyard and are home to masters such as Rembrandt, Raphael, Titian, Michelangelo, Whistler, and Sargent. The Renzo Piano wing provides a platform for contemporary artists, musicians, and scholars, and serves as an innovative venue where creativity is celebrated in all of its forms.*

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*Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum • 25 Evans Way Boston MA 02215 • Hours: Open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11 AM to 5 PM and Thursdays until 9 p.m. The Museum is open from 10 AM to 5 PM on Saturdays and Sundays. Closed Tuesdays. • Admission: Adults \$20; Seniors \$18; Students \$13; Free for members, children under 18, and all named "Isabella" • Advance reservations are required. Titian: Women, Myth & Power is included as part of general admission. • Please note: The Gardner follows the updated COVID guidance of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the City of Boston regarding mask wearing. Please see the website for current information • \$2 off admission with a same-day Museum of Fine Arts, Boston ticket • For information 617 566 1401 • Box Office 617 278 5156 • [www.gardnermuseum.org](http://www.gardnermuseum.org)*

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