



Adam Pendleton

Adam Pendleton, a central figure in contemporary American art, is known for paintings that have redefined the boundaries of abstraction. Upending linear compositional logic, Pendleton's paintings are created through a distilled layering of gesture, fragment, and form. Each painting comes to life through expressionistic flourishes, stark contrasts, and subtle uses of material, tone, and finish, combined with a precision reminiscent of minimal and conceptual art. In 2008, he began to define his working method as Black Dada, a critical framework for exploring the relationship between Blackness, abstraction, and the historical avant-gardes—for which he is now widely recognized.

Pendleton's painting process begins on paper, where he explores the full breadth of mark-making. He layers paint, spray paint, ink, and watercolor, integrating fragmentary text and geometric forms, often using stenciling techniques. These works on paper are photographed and then combined through a screen-printing process. Blurring distinctions between painting, drawing, and photography, the resulting paintings are a tangible manifestation of his belief in painting as a powerful "visual and conceptual force."

*Adam Pendleton: Love, Queen* continues at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, through 2027. In 2026, Pendleton presents solo exhibitions at the Langen Foundation, Neuss, Germany; the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam; and the Philadelphia Art Museum.

In 2024, Pendleton was honored with the Rosenthal Family Foundation Award for Painting from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Recent solo and group exhibitions include *Adam Pendleton: Love, Queen*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC (2025–2027); *Sweeter than Honey: A Panorama of Written Art*, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2025–2026); *Imagining Black Diasporas: 21st-Century Art and Poetics*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2024–2025); *Adam Pendleton: Blackness, White, and Light*, mumok—Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna (2023–2024); *Adam Pendleton: To Divide By*, Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, MO (2023–2024); *Whitney Biennial 2022: Quiet as It's Kept*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (2022); *Adam Pendleton: These Things We've Done Together*, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (2022); and *Adam Pendleton: Who Is Queen?*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY (2021–2022).

Pendleton's work is held in numerous public collections, including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond; the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Tate, London; and the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich.



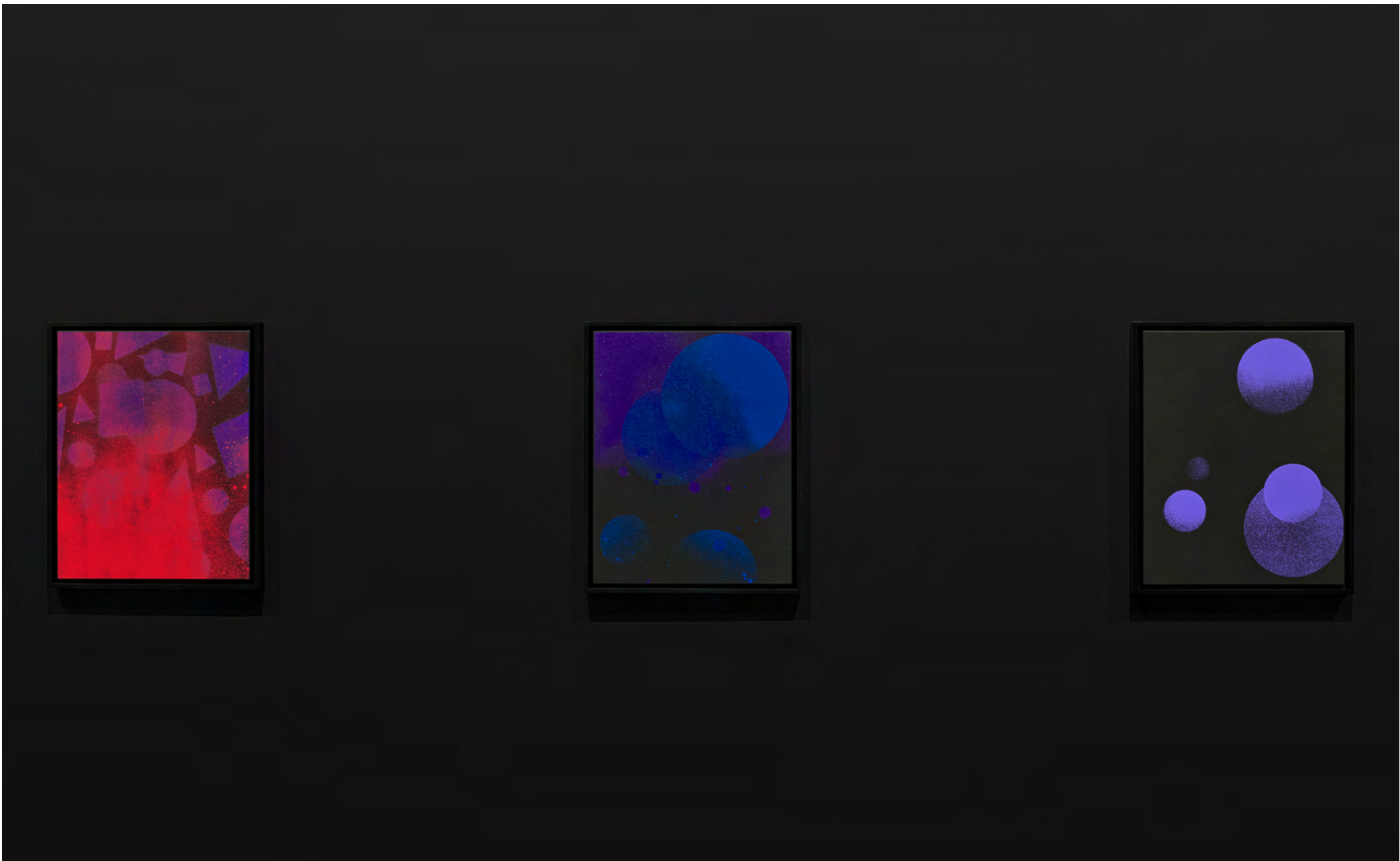
Installation view Adam Pendleton, *Black Dada (D)*, 2024 in *Adam Pendleton: Love, Queen* at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, 2025-2027 | Courtesy of the artist and Pace Gallery | © Adam Pendleton | Photo Andy Romer



Installation view *Adam Pendleton: Love, Queen* at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, 2025-2027 | © Adam Pendleton | Photo Peio Erroteta



Installation view *Adam Pendleton: Love, Queen* at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, 2025-2027 | © Adam Pendleton | Photo Peio Erroteta



Installation view *Adam Pendleton: Love, Queen* at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, 2025-2027 | © Adam Pendleton | Photo Peio Erroteta



Installation view *Adam Pendleton: Love, Queen* at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, 2025-2027 | © Adam Pendleton | Photo Peio Erroteta



Installation view *Adam Pendleton: Blackness, White, and Light*  
at Mumok, Vienna, 2023 | Photo Klaus Pichler



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Installation view *Adam Pendleton: Who Is Queen?* at The  
Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2021  
Photo Andy Romer



Installation view *Adam Pendleton: Who Is Queen?* at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2021 | Photo Andy Romer



Installation view *Adam Pendleton: Who Is Queen?* at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2021 | Photo Andy Romer



**Adam Pendleton Celebrates Poetry, Wildness and Black Resistance  
Frieze, September 22, 2021**

**Terence Trouillot**

‘Poetry is exploring ideas with intention, not direction,’ Adam Pendleton tells me as he walks me through the build of his latest exhibition, ‘Who Is Queen?’ – a large-scale installation featuring sound collage, video, painting and sculpture – six weeks ahead of its opening at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA). Pendleton often speaks in absolutes that are, at times, quite opaque yet irresistibly intriguing. This sentence, however, struck me as a perfect metonym for the artist’s practice – which spans bookmaking, drawing, painting, performance, sculpture and video – a dynamic *mélange* of expressive gestures and experimentalism grounded in research and executed with laser precision and focus. The phrase also helps explain, perhaps, who he is: not only as an artist, but as a person. It even gives insight into his diction: Pendleton speaks slowly, judiciously, with a cadence that is both considered and lyrical. ‘I see paintings as documents of marks,’ he tells me during my visit to his studio in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, on a grey summer day, ‘like bruises and scratches. They represent an understanding of how we are living through these inflictions – the poetics of being.’

Pendleton’s tone is often serious: his work deals with important social issues, looking at the nexus of race and politics within the history of art. At the same time, he is unapologetically married to his craft. He works exhaustively, with one eye constantly on the next project: ‘I don’t know what to do when I’m not working, so I’m always looking for something to do. I eat and work. I don’t really know what to do outside of making art.’ He tells me this with a smile, followed by his guttural laughter: ‘This is all pleasure to me.’ Beyond his gravitas, Pendleton is charming, jovial and lighthearted. Much like his work, he is difficult to pigeonhole. As he is quick to point out: ‘I don’t think we speak in one tenor or tone: we all have this sense of multiplicity.’

Installation view *Adam Pendleton: Who Is Queen?* at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2021 | Photo Andy Romer

Multiplicity is at the core of Pendleton's thinking about art and life. But his medium of choice is language, in all its permutations – be it text, sound, image, movement or space. His work straddles the liminal expanse where language both begins and ceases to function, all through the lens of a Black ontology.

At MoMA, the sound component of 'Who Is Queen?' layers a recording of Amiri Baraka reading a selection of poems – among them 'Not a White Shadow but Black People Will Be Victorious (For Black Arthur Blythe)' – originally delivered at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis in 1980, over Hahn Rowe's composition 'Yellow Smile' (1994) and phone recordings of a 2014 solidarity protest in New York, following the police murder of 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson. In its construction, the piece is inspired by pianist Glenn Gould's *Solitude Trilogy*, a series of three-hour radio documentaries produced for the Canadian Broadcast Company between 1967 and 1977. Gould's documentaries employed what he dubbed the 'contrapuntal' method: a technique borrowed from music in which independent melodies are played simultaneously. In *Solitude Trilogy*, however, independent voices are layered over each other; the result being a polyphony of monologues reflecting on Canada's most remote areas. As Pendleton describes it, Gould 'layered these voices to create a total

work, a total form'.

In 'Who Is Queen?', the contrapuntal action is also attributed to interplay between the different components of the exhibition: singular works – representative of different voices in harmony and, perhaps at that time, in discordance with each other – are brought together to form a whole. Here, Pendleton conceives of exhibition as musical and visual score, while also disavowing the idea of Blackness (and Black resistance) as a homogenous entity.

In 2000, after graduating early from high school, Pendleton left his hometown of Richmond, Virginia, to study art in Pietrasanta, Italy, with the aspiration of becoming an artist. In 2002, at the age of 18, after many months of sending slides of his work to New York galleries, he moved to Brooklyn. Around that time, Pendleton began paintings that incorporated text, using words as a visual form of abstraction in a way that has come to characterize his works on canvas. Soon afterwards, dealer Kazuko Miyamoto – an assistant to Sol LeWitt at the time – included Pendleton's work in a group show at Gallery Onetwentyeight in New York. (LeWitt purchased Pendleton's painting by exchanging it for one of his own pieces.) Over the course of a string of US solo shows, he came to draw increasingly from African American poetry and literature in his text-based works, imbuing run-of-the-mill phrases

from Toni Morrison, for instance, with what Ken Johnson, in a 2005 review for *The New York Times*, described as 'romantic urgency'. Then, in 2007, he presented *Revival* – a large-scale performance comprising a 30-person gospel choir, jazz pianist Jason Moran and Pendleton as a secular preacher – commissioned by Performa. Pendleton's abstract, lyrical sermon included fragments from political speeches by Jesse Jackson and Larry Kramer, among others. Emotional and powerful, *Revival* was his first foray into performance and brought him international attention, while also solidifying a process deeply entrenched in the research of Blackness, social movements and the poetics of resistance.

I first met Pendleton in 2017, following the release of his book *Black Dada Reader*, an anthology bringing together conceptual and political texts from the European avant-garde and the Black arts movement of the 1960s. The publication grew out of an in-studio document that Pendleton used to conceptualize his own ideas around 'Black dada' – a notion borrowed from Baraka's poem 'Black Dada Nihilismus', published in *The Dead Lecturer* (1964). In 2008, Pendleton wrote a manifesto called 'Black Dada' and produced a suite of paintings that featured different letters from the eponymous phrase over LeWitt's cubes ('Black Dada', 2008–ongoing).

But it wasn't until 2012, after starting a two-year artist residency at MoMA, that he came to further flesh out his ideas. In the museum's archive, Pendleton researched the artist-led magazine *Avalanche* (1970–76) and, in 2014, presented 'Supposium' with poet Joan Retallack: a convening partly inspired by Plato's Symposium (c.370 BCE), which invited Anne Carson, Sandi Hilal, Peter Krapp and Fred Moten, along with Pendleton and Retallack, to participate in playful thought experiments beginning with the word 'suppose'. He also amassed a collection of texts that would later form *Black Dada Reader*: a theoretical juxtaposition of ideas that dislodges our linear understanding of art history, finding a through-line between the European avant-garde and Black radical thought. For Pendleton, Black dada is 'a way to talk about the future while talking about the past'.

In 2017, Pendleton began discussions with Stuart Comer, MoMA's chief curator of media and performance, about creating an installation that would take up the museum's Marron Atrium. At his studio in late July, the artist showed me an exquisite maquette, detailing a floor-to-ceiling scaffold made from charcoal-painted wood and featuring eight speakers, a dual projector and screen, light sculptures, paintings and one textile work inspired by Malcom X's 1964 speech 'The Ballot or the Bullet'. He played me the sound component on a Bluetooth speaker. Rowe's dizzying melody filled the room while Baraka's voice slowly amplified – his tenor a remarkable baritone that reverberated as he delivered each line with great gusto. Behind him, the shouts from protestors – the call and response 'Whose streets? Our streets!' – transported me to the summer of 2020, when millions took to the streets across the globe in response to the police murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and many more.

Installation view *Adam Pendleton: Who Is Queen?* at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2021 | Photo Andy Romer



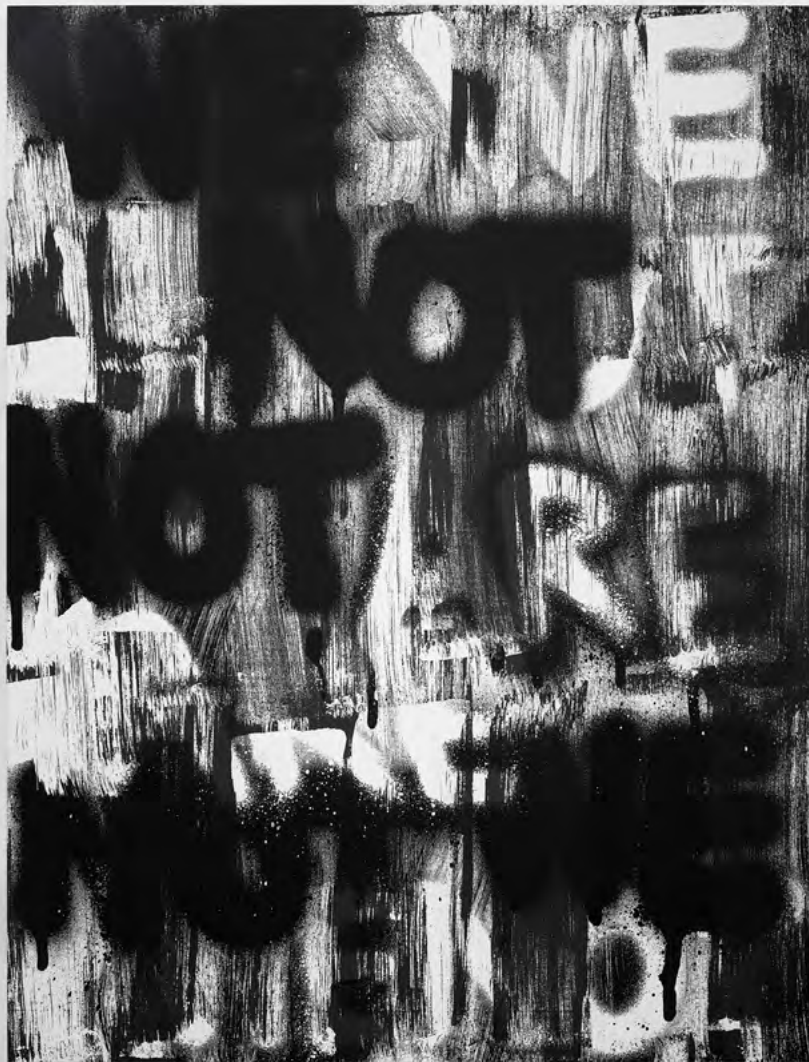
I imagine Pendleton's polyvocal soundscape expanding across MoMA's cavernous atrium, reaching the halls of the galleries that surround it. I hope it does. Pendleton later tells me that the piece is algorithmically programmed to layer the tracks differently as the recordings loop, creating a unique composition each time. The work will also incorporate conversations between writers, thinkers and musicians – including Joshua Chambers-Letson, Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Jack Halberstam, Michael Hardt, Susan Howe, Matana Roberts, Ruby Sales, Lynne Tillman and Simone White – throughout the run of the exhibition.

Pendleton started painting at a very young age in the basement of his family home and the medium and its process remain at the core of his artmaking. Developing an obsession with a particular word or phrase – such as 'we are not' in *Untitled (WE ARE NOT)* (2020–21) – Pendleton spray paints the phrase ad nauseum in various iterations until, from the sheer act of repetition, the words begin to lose meaning, holding space for something purely abstract and almost unrecognizable as text. 'I guess I am drawn to these fields of illegibility,' he explains. He then takes high-resolution photographs of the spray-paint originals and manipulates them on Photoshop before printing the image on large canvases, primed

with black gesso. Pendleton likes to refer to this moment as a 'translation'. The works are inspired in part by Glenn Ligon's text paintings and Martin Barré's spray-paint tableaux, but they evoke a unique tension and harmony between the media of drawing, photography and painting. In the studio, I took a moment to ask Pendleton about the significance of the exhibition's title. 'I had this language in my mind in the form of a question,' he replies. 'In some way, the question is turned towards me, but also towards all of us at the same time. Very much at the heart of this exhibition is this tension between the individual and the collective and how that space is negotiated and articulated. How we live, essentially.' As always with Pendleton's use of language, the phrase is meant to retain and lose its meaning. However, the word 'queen' has a particular charge: both as a colloquialism for a queer man and as feminist counterpoint to the patriarchy. 'Who Is Queen?' is a question about who is powerful and who is powerless.

Over the course of our conversation, the artist refers to Halberstam's introduction to *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* (2013) by Moten and Stefano Harney. In it, Halberstam describes the journey of Max, the child protagonist of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963), who leaves his home and family to live on an island filled

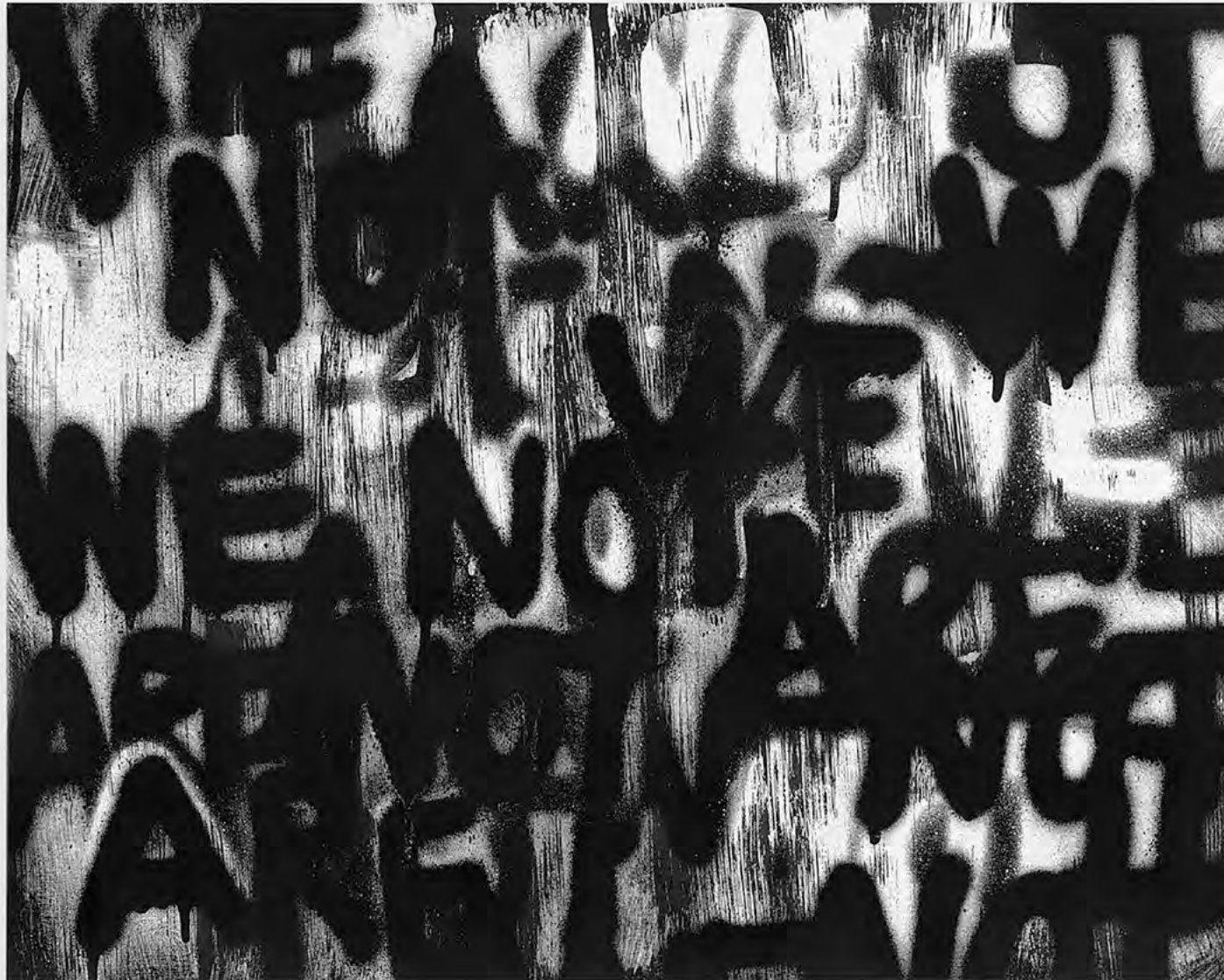
with frightening beasts. Halberstam likens the 'wild beyond' to the undercommons: a space for Black, Indigenous and queer folk that goes beyond the existing (oppressive) structures of society. For Pendleton, Halberstam's 'theories of the wild [act] as a kind of mechanism to rethink social, political and visual formations – trying to maintain a radical dimension of queerness – to queer something, to make strange'. Perhaps Pendleton is coyly asking: 'Who is the queen of the wild?' Halberstam appears in the video component of 'Who Is Queen?', filmed in a way reminiscent of Pendleton's video portraits of Yvonne Rainer (*Just Back from Los Angeles*, 2016–17) and Ishmael Houston-Jones (*Ishmael in the Garden*, 2018). Another film captures images of the Robert E. Lee statue in Pendleton's hometown of Richmond caked in graffiti. As I make my way through the MoMA atrium where 'Who Is Queen?' is being installed, I am aware of how precarious the structures look, how high they are and how much I want to climb them, move through the nooks and crannies. The space is indeed wild, an environ of great solemnity, but also desolate and eerie – an 'un/place' as Halberstam observes in *Wild Things: The Disorder of Desire* (2020), 'where the people who are left outside of domesticity reside [...] an anticommunity of wildness.'



**Untitled (WE ARE NOT), 2020**

silkscreen ink on canvas

244 × 175 cm



**Untitled (WE ARE NOT), 2019–2020**

silkscreen ink on canvas

244 × 305 cm



Installation view of *As Heavy As Sculpture* in “*Grief and Grievance: Art and Mourning in America*” at New Museum, New York, 2021



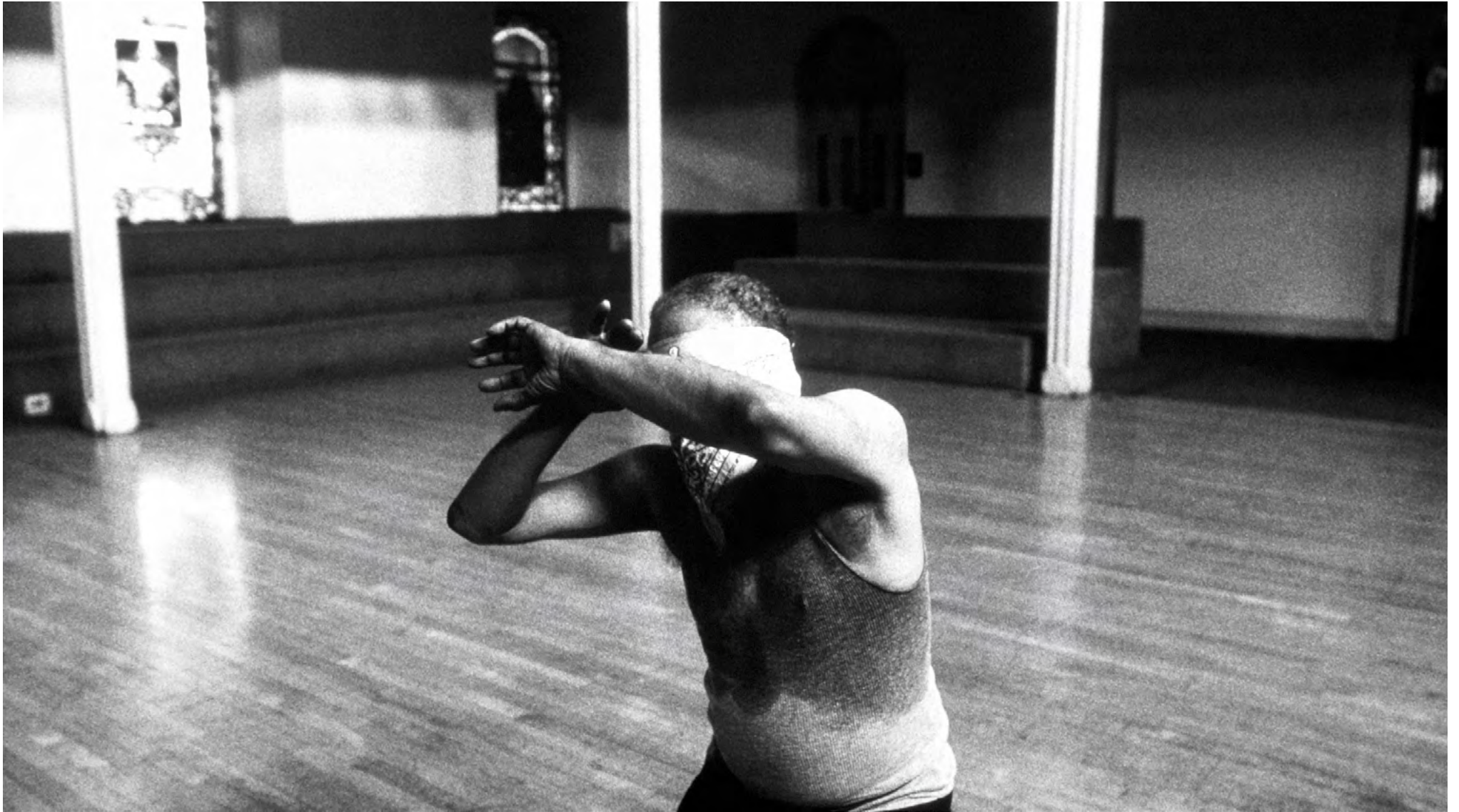
Installation view of *As Heavy As Sculpture* in "Grief and Grievance: Art and Mourning in America" at New Museum, New York, 2021



**Ishmael in the Garden: A Portrait of Ishmael Houston-Jones, 2018**

black-and-white and color video

24' 25''



**Ishmael in the Garden: A Portrait of Ishmael Houston-Jones, 2018**

black-and-white and color video

24' 25"

**Adam Pendleton Examines the  
Multiplicity of Blackness  
*Hyperallergic*, May 2, 2017  
Diana Sette**

CLEVELAND — Adam Pendleton’s *Becoming Imperceptible* at Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Cleveland offers a refreshing juxtaposition of often-segregated art histories and their cultural counterparts, presenting a multiplicity of perspectives that provide insights into our interconnectedness and future possibilities. Pendleton describes his work as Black Dada, a title he borrowed from the poem “Black Dada Nihilismus” by Amiri Baraka (who was known as LeRoi Jones at the time of its publication). In his Black Dada Manifesto, Pendleton describes the movement as “a way to talk about the future while talking about the past.” Particularly in *Becoming Imperceptible*, Pendleton’s work examines what blackness is, how it relates to our humanity, and how our understanding of a history of blackness impacts our understanding of the present and, in turn, our collective capacity for change.

*Becoming Imperceptible* was organized by the Contemporary Art Center New Orleans

and traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver before coming to Cleveland. The artist’s fragmented displays recontextualize European, African, and American aesthetic and cultural movements, from Minimalism and Dada to Black Lives Matter, specifically looking at blackness as a material to be reshaped and explored, a multiplicity that is simultaneously a color, an idea, an identity, a method, and a political movement.

Pendleton’s fragmentation of black images reflects blackness as incomplete, in motion, and the artist works to disrupt space that presents a logic of identity related to blackness. For example, the *Black Dada* series of silkscreens on canvas appropriate and fragment Sol LeWitt’s “Incomplete Open Cubes” onto segmented, striped black canvases and evoke “black” through the isolated letters “B,” “A,” and “K.” The sheen of the deep, dark black reflects light in a way that makes the letters and color gradients barely discernable, depending upon your viewing perspective.

The multiplicity of blackness as both color and concept is most strongly presented by the contrast between the three Black Dada works hanging on a stark white wall,

and the lone Black Dada painting hanging elsewhere, with “Black Lives Matter #3 (wall work)” (2015) in the background. These contrasting backgrounds present wildly different experiences of blackness, with one sticking out dramatically and the other camouflaged nearly to the point of invisibility, making the viewer reconsider how they understand blackness in context. The words “Black Lives Matter” as a background slow down potential reactions to the text, forcing a reconsideration of its meaning in relation to the other images and language interacting with it.

This multiplicity in representation is reified in “My Education: A Portrait of David Hilliard” (2011–14), in which the former Black Panther leader’s straightforward narrative becomes a layered and complex history through a three-channel video presenting simultaneous perspectives. “Untitled (1958)” (2016) is a détournement of the representation of the Civil Rights movement. In the center walks Martin Luther King Jr. accompanied by two other Civil Rights leaders, but the iconic photograph is broken down into nine parts, with illegible words written over the image. The fragmented work suggests that the narrative is incomplete, and the piece’s

reflective Mylar background invites self-recognition, self-reflection, and a multiplicity of perspectives.

The text from which Pendleton drew the show's name defines "becoming imperceptible" as "the event for which there is no immediate representation." Pendleton chooses to break down and fragment representations of blackness, because for him, becoming imperceptible where there is no immediate representation creates the potential for arriving at a totally new understanding. What might be possible if we consider blackness in a new way?

The black and white single-channel film *Just Back from Los Angeles: A Portrait of Yvonne Rainer* is the most powerful piece in the show. It documents an exchange, both unscripted and scripted, between Rainer and Pendleton during a meeting at the Ridgeway Diner in NYC's Chelsea neighborhood. One of the most moving parts of the film is when Rainer reads a text Pendleton prepared for her that mixes words from Stokely Carmichael, Malcolm X, Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, antiwar poet Ron Silliman, and Rainer's own published works. Laid over fragmented images of Pendleton and Rainer sitting in the classic '50s diner

and Rainer's 1966 minimalist dance "Trio A" is the Silver Harps's gospel song "I Am Saved" and Rainer & Pendleton's voices. The film travels through multiple periods of time and encourages deep contemplation of the past, present, and potential future of civil rights in the US. Listening to Rainer's steady, slow reading, particularly of Taylor's description of police killings of John Crawford III, Michael Brown, Tanisha Anderson, and Tamir Rice, while watching her, a white woman, dancing in black, arms behind her back, rolling on the floor — it creates an alienated and moving experience of the brutality and trauma being plainly described. Rainer concludes by reading her own words: "I remember the breathlessness of the lifting section ... I remember ... you grinning at the pleasure we had." Viewing the film in Cleveland, the site of several of the police killings described, amplifies the work's urgency and potency, creating a simultaneously overwhelming and transcendental experience.

The film breaks down cohesive narratives of segregated histories and reveals them in connection with one another. The tenderness of Pendleton and Rainer engaging in an exercise called "arm drop" — where they hold each other's arms, drop them, and

grab them again in different positions — visually reinforces the interconnectedness, tenderness, and generosity required to move forward and create something new. The film ends powerfully and with reverence as the gospel song drops out and Rainer continues moving deliberately, in silence.

In Deleuze and Guattari's words, "the Becoming-Imperceptible is an eruption of desire for the future which reshapes the present ... flooding the present by possible futures." James Baldwin reminds us that "if [history] were in the past, it would not matter ... History is the present." Pendleton's works present the profound ambiguity of the present by creating revised histories, encouraging us to devise new vocabularies that speak to and question the present with an understanding of interconnectedness and an encouragement for inquiry.



Exhibition view *Manifesto: Art x Agency* at Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, USA, 2019



Exhibition view *Adam Pendleton: what a day was this* at Lever House, New York, 2018



Exhibition view *Adam Pendleton: what a day was this* at Lever House, New York, 2018

## Beyond Words

*Wall Street Journal Magazine*, March 2018

Ted Loos

When an artist captures a cultural moment just so, it's like a lightning bolt -there's a crackle in the air, a blinding flash, and the clouds part. At just 34, Brooklyn-based artist Adam Pendleton has proved himself capable of generating such phenomena.

Over the past decade, Pendleton's conceptual take on race in America has drawn attention and stirred discussion across the country. Last year, he had solo shows at the Baltimore Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland and Pace Gallery in Palo Alto, California.

This year, Pendleton is showing a body of work that demonstrates the range of his artistic practice: a video project at MIT's List Visual Arts Center, a multiwork exhibition at Manhattan's Lever House on view until June and an especially powerful new private installation in the offices of Emerson Collective, the philanthropist Laurene Powell Jobs's nonprofit. "Adam is a kind of citizen-poet", says Powell Jobs, one of his many influential advocates. "His work has beauty, power and raw energy".

Over coffee near his studio in the Sunset Park neighborhood, Pendleton shows the kind of interest in language you'd expect from someone who deploys words as a tool in his art, which frequently takes the form of graphic, collage-based paintings in black-and-white. If you mention that there are a lot of high-profile African-American artists dealing with race right now, he will politely but firmly correct you: "Everyone's talking about race." But he's not doctrinaire about his

Exhibition view *Adam Pendleton: shot him in the face* at Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK, 2017



**Dada Dancers (large study), 2017**

silkscreen ink on Mylar

138 × 107 cm

[www.pedrocera.com](http://www.pedrocera.com)

project, or art making in general. “When someone I don’t know asks me what I do, I often say, ‘I make things that go on the wall,’” he says. In fact, Pendleton’s gift is partly his ability to digest and transmit ideas that are already out there.

Pendleton first came to notice at Performa, the New York performance art biennial, in 2007. He delivered an impassioned soliloquy about politics and language accompanied by a live gospel choir, moving some to tears. He was 23 at the time. The next year, he embarked on a body of work called Black Dada, still the framework and source of his art to this day.

Black Dada began as a series of paintings and as an old-fashioned manifesto, in the form of a witty, 13-page epic poem, that references some of his touchstones, including the slain activist Malcolm X and the conceptual art icon Sol LeWitt. “Black Dada is a way to talk about the future while talking about the past,” he writes. Pendleton doesn’t think he invented the conversation that he’s a part of. “It is a continuum,” he says, “but it doesn’t only move forward; it moves backwards and sideways, too.”

Though he works in many media, much of his visual work starts as collage, and he has a canny eye for juxtapositions that recalls one of his idols, Jasper Johns. “Already in his incredibly youthful career, he has managed to land on a graphic language that is unimpeachably his own,” says Christopher Bedford, the director of the Baltimore Museum of Art. The museum tapped him for its board, making him among the youngest museum trustees around. “He bides his time, reaches a conclusion and then commands the room” is Bedford’s summation of Pendleton’s approach in meetings.

For the Emerson Collective commission, Pendleton designed a floor-to-ceiling panel for the main space at the headquarters in Palo Alto, California. Unveiled in January, the project is covered with pages from Malcolm X’s famous 1964 “The Ballot or the Bullet” speech. On top of that, Pendleton placed 11 dense and layered works, whose words and letters collide and mix—somewhat mysteriously, inviting the viewer to engage and decipher them—punctuated with culturally resonant images like African mask or a page from a monograph of the Dada movement. Powell Jobs, the widow of Apple’s Steve Jobs, loves the way the brainy work energizes the workspace at Emerson: “Adam creates an environment to dream what’s possible.”

These days, Pendleton works almost exclusively in black-and-white, which might make the casual observer think that the choice is meant to evoke racial categories. “That’s not how I arrived here,” he says, now standing in his studio and looking down at images of collages on the floor, which will eventually turn into silkscreens. (The actual collage work he does in a separate room, away from his two assistants.) “I found that color was becoming a distraction.”

Pendleton grew up in Richmond, Virginia. His mother was a schoolteacher who had a library with books by Adrienne Rich and Toni Morrison; his father was a contractor who played jazz on the side.

As a young teenager he spent hours in his basement, painting with cheap materials from Home Depot. “I was sort of always preoccupied with projects that I would create for myself, which is exactly what I do today, you know?” he says, laughing.

Being gay and black gave him a useful outsider's perspective. "When you're sort of outsider's perspective. "When you're sort of off to the side, you supply yourself with something that long term is ultimately more productive," he says. (Pendleton is now married to a food entrepreneur, and they live in Brooklyn's Fort Greene.)

In 2002, he completed a two-year independent artist's study program in Pietrasanta, Italy, but he doesn't have a bachelor's degree or an M.F.A. as so many young art stars do today. "He's not an academically trained artist," says Laura Hoptman, a curator at the Museum of Modern Art who was an early champion of his work when she was at the New Museum. She thinks it's part of why he speaks to everyone: "The nonparochial nature of it is what makes his work so great."

Hoptman says Pendleton's "masterpiece" is the video *Just Back from Los Angeles: A Portrait of Yvonne Rainer* (2016-17), the same piece that was recently presented at the List Center. As he often does, Pendleton approached the project with radical simplicity: He sat down in a diner with Rainer, the pioneering dancer and choreographer, and just talked. "The chemistry they had as strangers, that was so moving," says Hoptman of the mind-meld that resulted despite the differences in age, gender and race.

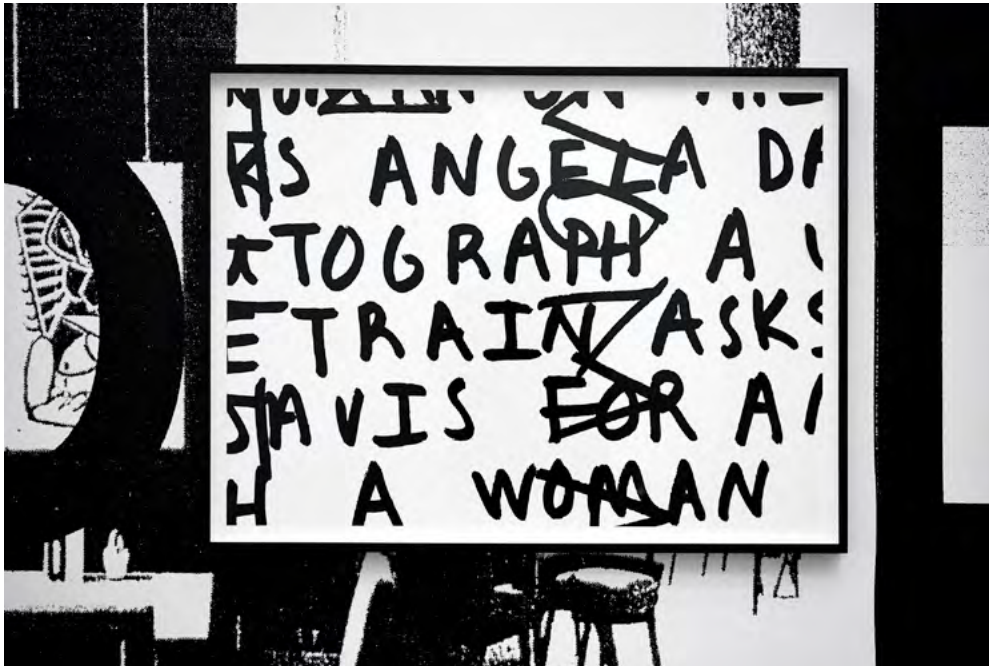
Pendleton adds, "It was an unlikely encounter with an unlikely outcome that neither of us planned. We had a sincere interaction with each other on different levels, a strange brew that by luck, by chance, got captured." Luck helps, but *Portrait* owes its success to Pendleton's gift for harnessing such moments, and his cultivation of conditions that encourage them to thrive.

Collectors have taken notice. At Christie's New York auction last fall—in the same sale that became famous for selling a Leonardo da Vinci for an all-time record price of \$450 million—a 2012 Pendleton piece, *Black Dada (K)*, got the prestigious first-lot position and sold for \$225,000, almost four times its high estimate.

Pendleton is conscious that he has a platform that was denied to black artists of previous generations who are only now getting their proper due, such as Alma Thomas and Jack Whitten. "They are people who continued to make work even when no one was looking," he says. "In my work, there's this attitude of 'take it or leave it,' but also 'take what you need,'" he adds. "I think it gets lost that a lot of what I actually do is look and listen, rather than scream and shout."



Exhibition view *Adam Pendleton: shot him in the face* at Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK, 2017



Exhibition view *Adam Pendleton: shot him in the face* at Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK, 2017



**My Education: A Portrait of David Hilliard, 2011-2014**

three-channel black-and-white video

9' 19"

Installation view *Adam Pendleton* at Pace Gallery, New York, 2014



**My Education: A Portrait of David Hilliard, 2011-2014**

three-channel black-and-white video

9' 19"

Installation view *Adam Pendleton* at Pace Gallery, New York, 2014

**Adam Pendleton's Black Dada Reader**  
**FlashArt Online, September 18, 2017**  
**Yaniya Lee**

The assembled texts in Adam Pendleton's Black Dada Reader (2017) are varied, difficult and niche in all the weirdest ways. Black Dada is a theoretical proposition, "a way to talk about the future while talking about the past," the American artist explains in his manifesto. The poets and artists and literary theorists he selects each deconstruct, in their own way, the significance of both representation and language.

Although at first writings by the likes of Hugo Ball, W.E.B. Du Bois, LeRoi Jones, Ron Silliman and Gertrude Stein seem discordant alongside artist projects by Ad Reinhardt, Adrian Piper, William Pope.L, Sun Ra and Thomas Hirschhorn, under the general concept of Black Dada they function well because of how they inform one another. It is implied that in conjunction their ideas offer an approach to understanding Black Dada as a concept.

The nearly four-hundred-page hardcover book is an expanded version of a 2011 spiral-bound zine of photocopied texts Pendleton brought together to contextualize his work. This new version

is organized into parts. It opens with several original essays by critics and curators presenting different interpretations of Black Dada and how it informs Pendleton's performance, video, painting and photographic collage. Then the "FOUNDATIONS," "LANGUAGE" and "ARTIST'S POSITIONS" sections round out a broad foundation of influences and exemplars of the concept.

Pendleton is concerned with black life and the absurdity of our present grammars of being. "It has been said that the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house, but what about the people the master treated as tools? That is, the 'tools' that were themselves capable of practicing abstraction, those three-fifths?" Pendleton asks in his afterword. "Black Dada is the name I borrow for the immanent historical possibility of this transformation: Black for the open-ended signifier projected onto resisting objects, Dada for yes, yes, the double affirmation of their refusal." In many ways Dada allows a reconsideration of traditional "identity politics" discourses, which have been so inextricably tied to representation. Pendleton wants an afro-conceptualism. He suggests the subject-self can shift away from objecthood through abstraction, that politics are in fact an implicit part of abstraction.

In a very straightforward way, Black Dada Reader provides a theoretical background for engaging with Pendleton's practice. By selecting the texts and outlining what Black Dada came from and can be, the artist deftly shapes an emergent concept.



**OK DADA OK BLACK DADA OK, 2018**  
silkscreen ink and spray paint on canvas  
213 x 152 cm



**three scenes/the voice, 2017**  
performance at Frieze New York, 2017



**three scenes/the voice, 2017**  
performance at Frieze New York, 2017



**Just Back from Los Angeles: A Portrait of Yvonne Rainer, 2016-2017**

single-channel black-and-white video

13' 51"

**'Radical Juxtapositions': Adam Pendleton and Yvonne Rainer in an Exchange of Memory and Motion.**

**Art News, January 11, 2017**

**Angela Brown**

Of all the words and images rushing through ceaseless streams of data—news bytes, obituaries, tweets, pictures—which kinds of documents matter? In his videos, paintings, and writings, Adam Pendleton reaches into the stream and grasps at fragments, combining them in ways that elude categorization and address complexities that are often overlooked.

On Monday night at Anthology Film Archives in New York, Pendleton premiered his latest video portrait: *Just Back From Los Angeles: A Portrait of Yvonne Rainer*. Presented by the Performa Institute, this is the third in a series of video portraits, following *Lorraine O'Grady: A Portrait* (2012) and *My Education: A Portrait of David Hilliard* (2011-2014). The one with Rainer, notably, is the only video in which Pendleton himself can be seen. This was at Rainer's request, the audience learned at a Q&A afterward, and it transformed the work from a portrait to a resonant document of exchange—of ideas, words, tears, and histories.

In the video, projected in stark black and white, Rainer and Pendleton sit across from one another at the classic Ridgeway Diner on Sixth Avenue near 20th Street in Manhattan. She orders a turkey burger and fries ("Why not?," she says, granting herself permission). He orders spanakopita (a Greek kind of spinach pie). They discuss their

50-year age difference and the fact that they have met only twice before. The vantage shifts between three cameras, offering close-ups of Rainer's hands, the diner counter lined with silverware, and views through an outside window of Pendleton mirroring Rainer's arm movements. At one point, Pendleton asks Rainer to read an assemblage of found texts he had prepared in advance: accounts of Rainer's life and work, descriptions of the killing of Trayvon Martin and Eric Garner, and critical essays that inform Pendleton's work.

Reading slowly, in a steady voice, Rainer's eyes fill with tears. "That is an impressive document," she says when she finishes, clearly moved. "Thank you for reading it," Pendleton replies, with reverence. Shortly after, they stand and hold each other's arms, drop them, and grab them again in different positions—in an exercise called Arm Drop, which Rainer created with Steve Paxton. Having just returned from Los Angeles, where she spent hours in a gallery improvising with old friends, Rainer was reminded of Arm Drop and, with it, a nostalgic wave of memories. The video ends with footage of Rainer's famous 1966 dance Trio A. Pendleton paired the dance with "I Am Saved," a song from a gospel compilation titled *This May Be My Last Time Singing*. Then, Rainer's calculated motions continue on, in silence.

The screening at Anthology was followed by a conversation between the artists and moderated by curator Adrienne Edwards, who arranged for Rainer and Pendleton to work together. When asked what she thought of the video, Rainer said she couldn't believe that three hours of conversation could be condensed so poignantly into 14 minutes. And she was amazed that Pendleton could breathe this new life into *Trio A*, which she referred to as "an old warhorse."

Pendleton described his process: poring over Rainer’s writings in *The Mind Is a Muscle* for references to music, memory, and film, and then putting the quotations to work alongside writings from his self-published collection of essays *The Black Dada Reader*, including “The Pitfalls of Liberalism” by Stokely Carmichael and a work by Malcolm X that reads “They’re beginning to see what they used to only look at.”

Pendleton referred to his process as a series of “radical juxtapositions,” a term coined by Susan Sontag to describe Allan Kaprow’s “Happenings” in 1960s New York and which Rainer uses in reference to her own films. Edwards asked about the political nature of this thinking, and Rainer explained that she switched from dance to film in the ’60s because of a split between her aesthetic rebellions in dance and her activism against the Vietnam war and for women’s rights. She turned to film, she said, “in order to address the split.” Considering this in relation to Pendleton’s video, she mentioned the way that ordinary things—like eating a turkey burger or “going to Trader Joe’s”—happen on the same screen, and in the same reality, as news reports of police brutality and war.

Pendleton said such parallel occurrences are essential to his work and that revealing their intersections—through video as well as in his two-dimensional works—is his response to absurdity and violence. He does not worry about clarity, he said, because he finds a certain freedom in illegibility. Moving issues of race, class, and society into realms of abstraction allows them to accumulate new vocabularies and, therefore, to enter peoples’ minds with more pertinence, more urgency. Considering the abstraction of primary documents becomes a radical move.

Edwards—whose recent group show at Pace Gallery, “Blackness in Abstraction,” alluded in part to this abstract radicality—brought up how both Rainer’s and Pendleton’s work relates to Dada, in that they obscure some meanings in order to free others. Both artists’ juxtapositions act as gauges of history, it seemed, and their interaction suggests that the past is never dormant. “I hope, as artists,” Pendleton said calmly, “we are creating documents that matter.”



**Just Back from Los Angeles: A Portrait of Yvonne Rainer, 2016-2017**

single-channel black-and-white video

13' 51"

Installation view at Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, USA, 2017



**My Education: A Portrait of David Hilliard, 2011-2014**

three-channel black-and-white video

9' 19"

Installation view at Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, USA, 2016



**Untitled (Code Poem), 2016**

concrete

dimensions variable

Installation view at City Hall Park, New York



**Black Lives Matter / Millions March  
NYC protest at Untitled (Code Poem)**  
City Hall Park, New York, August 1, 2016





Installation view at Belgian Pavilion at 56th Venice Biennale, 2015



**System of Display, E (MEMORIES/Heinz Loew, primary three-dimensional design elements, 1928), 2012**

silkscreen ink on plexiglass and mirror

25 × 25 × 8 cm

Installation view at Belgian Pavilion at 56th Venice Biennale, 2015

**Black Lives Matter #4 (wall work), 2015**

adhesive vinyl

dimensions variable



Exhibition view *Ecstatic Alphabets/Heaps of Language* at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2012



**The Revival, 2007**

performance at Performa 07, New York, 2007



**Untitled, 2009**

performance at Artists Space, New York, 2009



**Untitled, 2009**

performance at Artists Space, New York, 2009

Adam Pendleton  
Richmond, Virginia, USA, 1984  
Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York

#### Education

2000 Artspace Independent Study Program, Pietrasanta, Italy

#### Solo Exhibitions (selection)

2026 Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (upcoming)  
*Adam Pendleton: Can I Be?*, Langen Foundation, Neuss, Germany

2025 *Adam Pendleton: spray light layer emerge*, Pace Gallery, Berlin  
*Who Owns Geometry Anyway?*, Friedman Benda, New York, USA  
*Adam Pendleton: Love, Queen*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC

2024 *An Abstraction*, Pace Gallery, New York, USA  
*Adam Pendleton x Arlene Shechet*, Pedro Cera, Madrid  
*These Gestures Towards You*, Galerie Max Hetzler, London

2023 *The Trembling Museum*, Hunterian Art Gallery, University of Glasgow, Scotland  
*Adam Pendleton: To Divide By*, Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, USA  
*Adam Pendleton: Blackness, White, and Light*, Mumok, Vienna

2022 *Adam Pendleton: Toy Soldier*, Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich  
*Adam Pendleton - In Abstraction*, Pace Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland  
*These Things We've Done Together*, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal, Canada

2021 *Who Is Queen?*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York

2020 *Adam Pendleton: Begin Again*, David Kordansky Gallery,

Los Angeles, USA  
*Adam Pendleton: Elements of Me*, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, USA

*Adam Pendleton*, Le Consortium, Dijon, France

2019 *Adam Pendleton: These Elements of Me*, Pace Gallery, Seoul, South Korea  
*Adam Pendleton: Who We Are*, Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin  
*NO THING: Adam Pendleton and William Pope. L.*, Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich

2018 *Liam Gillick Adam Pendleton / Adam Pendleton Liam Gillick*, Galerie Eva Presenhuber, New York  
*Adam Pendleton: Our Ideas*, Pace Gallery, London  
*Adam Pendleton: New Works*, Galeria Pedro Cera, Lisbon  
*Adam Pendleton: what a day was this*, Lever House, New York  
*Adam Pendleton*, MIT Visual Arts Center, Boston, USA

2017 *Adam Pendleton: shot him in the face*, Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK; KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin  
*Front Room: Adam Pendleton*, Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, USA

2016 *Midnight in America*, Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich, Switzerland  
*Adam Pendleton: Becoming Imperceptible*, Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, Cleveland, Ohio; Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans, New Orleans; Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, Denver, USA  
*Whole Fragments*, Parra & Romero, Ibiza, Spain

2015 *Adam Pendleton: New Work*, Pace Gallery, London

2014 Pace Gallery, New York  
*Adam Pendleton: Selected Works*, Shane Campbell Gallery, Lincoln Park, USA  
*Adam Pendleton: Selected Works*, Travesía Cuatro, Guadalajara, Mexico  
*Joan Jonas & Adam Pendleton*, Galeria Pedro Cera, Lisbon

2012 *Adam Pendleton: I'll Be Your*, Pace Gallery, London

- 2011 *Adam Pendleton: New Black Dada Paintings*, Galeria Pedro Cera, Lisbon  
*Adam Pendleton: the women*, Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago, USA  
*Adam Pendleton: Radio (ONE)*, Salina Art Center, Salina, USA
- 2010 *Adam Pendleton: BAND*, The Kitchen, New York  
*Adam Pendleton: BAND*, Illingworth Kerr Gallery, Calgary, Canada  
*Adam Pendleton: chandelier across cognition generates glow linguistic signals perception*, Galeria Pedro Cera, Lisbon
- 2009 *Adam Pendleton: EL T D K Amsterdam: Part I: three scenes (performance)*, Kunstverein, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; *Part II: grey-blue grain (exhibition)*, Kunstverein, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; *Part III: BAND (film screening)*, de Appel, Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
*Adam Pendleton: EL T D K*, Haunch of Venison, Berlin, Germany
- 2007 *Adam Pendleton: Rendered in Black and Rendered*, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, USA
- 2005 *Gorilla, My Love*, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, USA  
*Deeper Down There*, Yvon Lambert, New York
- 2004 *Being Here*, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, USA;  
Wallspace Gallery, New York
- Group Exhibitions (selection)
- 2026 *Adam Pendleton + Antoni Tàpies*, Alfonso Artiaco, Naples, Italy  
*Ewa Partum: Contemplating Art, Contemplating Love*, Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow, Poland  
*Winter Selections*, Pace Prints, New York, USA
- 2025 *Sweeter than Honey: A Panorama of Written Art*, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, Germany  
*Summer Selections*, Pace Prints, New York, USA  
*The Shape of Things to Come*, Efié Gallery, Dubai  
*Brand X Editions: Innovation in Screenprinting*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania, USA
- Pace: 65 Years: Part I, II & III*, Pace Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland  
*Visual Rhythms: A Global Tapestry of Contemporary and Modern Art*, Gary Nader Art Centre, Miami, USA  
*Wall Works & Sculptures*, Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich  
*On Paper*, Galerie Max Hetzler, London
- 2024 *Imagining Black Diasporas: 21st-Century Art and Poetics*, LACMA, Los Angeles, USA  
*ScrawlSpace*, The 8th Floor, New York, USA  
*The Phantom Of Liberty*, Anozero'24 Bienal de Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal  
*A Dark Hymn: Highlights from the Hill Collection*, Hill Art Foundation, New York, USA
- 2023 *Drawing Triennial 2023: All That Lies Between*, The Norwegian Drawing Center, Oslo  
*In Defense of Symbolic Value: Artistic Procedures in the Resort*, Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin  
*The Culture: Hip Hop and Contemporary Art in the 21st Century*, Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore. Traveled to Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, Frankfurt (2024); Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio, USA (2024); Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, Missouri, USA (2024) Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada (2024-2025) 2022 *Whitney Biennial 2022: Quiet as It's Kept*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
- 2021 *Grief and Grievance: Art and Mourning in America*, New Museum, New York
- 2020 *Artists for New York*, Hauser & Wirth, New York, USA  
*Drawing 2020*, Gladstone Gallery New York, USA  
*To Be Determined*, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, USA  
*Chewing Gum IV*, Pace Gallery, Hong Kong  
*Mapping the Collection*, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany

- 2019 *Yesterday's Tomorrow: Selections from the Rose Collection, 1933–2018*, Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, USA  
*If on a winter's night a traveler*, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel  
*David Adjaye: Making Memory*, Design Museum, London  
*Manifesto: Art x Agency*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, USA
- 2018 *LeWitt, Nevelson, Pendleton Part II*, Pace Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland  
*DPAM Collects: Happy Little Trees and Other Recent Acquisitions*, DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, USA
- 2017 *Public Movement: On Art, Politics, and Dance*, Moderna Museet, Malmö, Sweden  
*Art of Rebellion: Black Art of the Civil Rights Movement*, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, USA  
*Sonic Rebellion: Music as Resistance*, Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Detroit, USA  
*I am you, you are too*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, USA  
*How to Live Together*, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna  
*The Arcades: Contemporary Art and Walter Benjamin*, The Jewish Museum, New York
- 2016 *Lorraine O'Grady: Initial Recognition*, Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Sevilla, Spain  
*The Eighth Climate (What does art do?)*, 11th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, South Korea  
*The Revolution Will Not be Gray*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, USA  
*The Language of Things*, Public Art Fund, City Hall Park, New York  
*Blackness in Abstraction*, Pace Gallery, New York  
*New Visions*, Tensta Konsthall, Spanga, Sweden
- 2015 *Now? NOW!*, Biennial of the Americas, Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, Denver, USA  
*Sharon Hayes, Tony Lewis, Adam Pendleton, Andrea Rosen* Gallery, New York
- 2014 *Personne et les autres*, Belgian Pavilion, 56th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy  
*Adventures of the Black Square: Abstract Art and Society 1915–2015*, Whitechapel Gallery, London  
*Radical Presence: Black Performance in Contemporary Art*, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, USA; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, USA; Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Houston, USA  
*The Disappearance of the Fireflies*, Collection Lambert, Avignon, France  
*Love Story – Anne and Wolfgang Titze Collection*, 21er Haus and Winter Palace, Vienna  
*Body Language*, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York  
*Civil Rights, Void*, Derry, Ireland
- 2013 *The 30th Biennial of Graphic Arts: Interruption*, International Centre of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana  
*Warhol Ones*, Half Gallery, New York  
*After Hours 2: Murals on the Bowery*, Art Production Fund, in partnership with The New Museum, New York
- 2012 *Ecstatic Alphabets/Heaps of Language*, Museum of Modern Art, New York  
*Heart to Hand*, Swiss Institute, New York  
*La Triennale, Intense Proximity, 2012*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris  
*Phantom Limb*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, USA
- 2011 *A Promise is a Cloud*, Public Art Fund, MetroTech Center, Brooklyn, New York  
*Fifth Contour Biennial*, Mechelen, Belgium  
*Never Odd or Even*, Grimmuseum, Berlin
- 2010 *Greater New York*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York  
*Quadruple–Consciousness*, Vox Populi Gallery, Philadelphia, USA

- Collected. Reflections on the Permanent Collection*, Studio Museum Harlem, New York
- Self as Disappearance*, Centre d'Art Contemporain, La Synagogue de Delme, Delme, France
- Desire*, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, USA
- Afro-Modernism: Journeys through the Black Atlantic*, Tate Liverpool, Liverpool, UK
- From Then to Now*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, USA
- It Is Written*, Centre Pompidou-Metz, Metz, France
- 2009 *A Generational: Younger Than Jesus*, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York
- Talk Show*, ICA, London
- Black Hole*, Kunsthalle Andratx, Mallorca, Spain
- Encodings: Artists in Residence, 2008-2009*, Studio Museum Harlem, New York
- Cargo*, Autocenter, Berlin
- Constellations: Paintings from the MCA Collection*, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago, USA
- Infinitesimal Eternity*, Yale University School of Art, New Haven, USA
- The one hundred and sixty-third floor: Liam Gillick Curates the Collection*, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago, USA
- Hey Hey Glossolalia: The Eroticism of Pedagogy*, Performa 09, New York
- 2008 *Hey Glossolalia*, Creative Time, New York
- After 1968: Contemporary Artists and the Civil Rights Legacy*, High Museum of Art, Atlanta, USA
- Object, The Undeniable Success of Operations*, Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam, Amsterdam
- The Future as Disruption*, The Kitchen, New York
- Freeway Balconies*, Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin
- Manifesta 7*, Trento-South, Tyrol, Italy
- Perform History II*, U-TURN Quadrennial for Contemporary Art, Arhus, Denmark
- Manifesto Marathon*, Serpentine Gallery, London
- Matter of Fact: Aftermath*, Galeria Vermelho, Sao Paulo, Brazil
- 2007 *Sympathy for the Devil: Art and Rock and Roll Since 1967*, Musée d'art contemporain de Montreal, Montreal, Canada; Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, Miami, USA; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago, USA
- Commemorating Thirty Years, Part III, 1991-2007*, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, USA
- Resistance Is...*, The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
- 2006 *Message Personnel*, Yvon Lambert, Paris
- Interstellar Low Ways*, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, USA
- R3: Reading, Ritin, Rithmetic, 30 Years Later*, Castle Gallery, Inverness, UK
- Please Love Me*, Walker's Point Center for the Arts, Milwaukee, USA
- Figures de l'acteur: Le paradoxe du comédien*, Collection Lambert, Avignon, France
- 2005 *Frequency*, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York
- Double Consciousness: Black Conceptual Art Since 1970*, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, USA
- 2004 *When Contemporary Art Speaks*, Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art, Indianapolis, USA
- Optimo: Manifestations of Optimism in Contemporary Art*, Marfa Ballroom, Marfa, USA
- Black Milk: Theories on Suicide*, Marvelli Gallery, New York
- Seven More (Things We Like)*, Conner Contemporary Art, Washington, USA

Performances and Film Screenings (selection)

- 2017 *three scenes/the voice*, Frieze New York Projects, Randall's Island, New York, USA  
*Just Back from Los Angeles: A Portrait of Yvonne Rainer*, Performa video commission premiere at Anthology Film Archives, New York, USA
- 2011 *BAND*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, USA
- 2010 *Three Scenes Variation One*, Gardner Museum of Art, Boston, USA
- 2009 *Three Scenes*, Kunstverein Amsterdam, Amsterdam  
*Hannah Weiner: An Argument for Black Dada*, Institute of Contemporary Art, London  
*BAND*, Toronto International Film Festival, Toronto, Canada
- 2007 *The Revival*, Performa 07, Weiss Studio, New York, USA

Artists' Books

- 2021 *Pasts, Futures, and Aftermaths: Revisiting the Black Dada Reader*, DABA and Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther und Franz König, 2021  
*As Heavy As Sculpture*, D.A.P., 2021
- 2020 *Elements of Me*, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2020
- 2018 *Anthology*, Zucker Art Books, 2018
- 2016 *Black Dada Reader*, Mousse, 2016
- 2011 *Radio*, Salina Arts Center, 2011  
*i/on interiors*, Galeria Pedro Cera, 2011
- 2010 *grey-blue grain*, Kunstverein, 2010

Publications and catalogues (selection)

- 2025 *Adam Pendleton: An Abstraction*, Pace Publishing, New York, USA, 2025
- 2024 *Adam Pendleton: To Divide By*, Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, Missouri, 2024

- Adam Pendleton: *Blackness, White, and Light*, Walther König, Cologne, Germany, 2024
- 2022 *Adam Pendleton: These Things We've Done Together*, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 2022
- 2021 *Who Is Queen?: A Reader*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2021
- 2020 Adrienne Edwards, Andréa Picard, Alec Mapes-Frances, *Adam Pendleton*, Phaidon, London and New York, 2020
- 2019 *Adam Pendleton: Who We Are*, Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin, 2019  
*No Thing: Pope. L*, Adam Pendleton, Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich, 2019
- 2018 *Adam Pendleton: Our Ideas*, Pace Gallery, London, 2018  
*Fired Up! Ready to Go!*, Rizzoli Electa, New York, 2018  
 Pendleton, Adam: "Suppose to Choose". *The Suppositium: Thought Experiments & Poetical Play For Difficult Times*, Litmus Press, Brooklyn, New York, 2018
- 2017 Adam Pendleton, *Black Dada Reader*, Koenig Books, London, 2017
- 2016 Adrienne Edwards, *Blackness in Abstraction*, Pace Gallery, New York, 2016  
 Andrea Andersson, Naomi Beckwith, Kitty Scott and Stephen Squibb, *Adam Pendleton: Becoming Imperceptible*, Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans, Siglio Press, New York, 2016
- 2015 Iwona Blazwick and Magnus Af Petersens, *Adventures of the Black Square: Abstract Art and Society 1915-2015*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, 2015, p. 157  
 Katerina Gregos and Vincent Meessen, *Personne et les autres*, Mousse Publishing, 2015
- 2014 *Love Story*, The Anne & Wolfgang Titze Collection Vienna, Verlag für Modern Kunst Nürnberg, Vienna, 2014, pp. 226-227
- 2013 *Radical Presence, Black Performance in Contemporary Art*, Houston

- Contemporary Art Museum, Houston, 2013, pp. 94–95  
*Interruption: 30th Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts*, Black Dog Publishing, Ltd., London, 2013, pp. 166–169
- 2012 Suzanne Hudson, *Adam Pendleton: I'll be your*, Pace Gallery, London, 2012  
 Laura Hoptman, *Ecstatic Alphabets/Heaps of Language*, *Bulletins of The Serving Library* no. 3, Sternberg Press and Dexter Sinister, Berlin and New York, 2012, p. 192
- 2010 Tanya Barson and Peter Gorschlüter, *Afro-Modern: Journeys through the Black Atlantic*, Tate Liverpool, Liverpool, 2010  
*Desire*, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, 2010  
 Elizabeth Gwinn and Lauren Haynes, *Re: Collection*, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, 2010  
 Klaus Biesenbach, Connie Butler and Neville Wakefield, *Greater New York*, MoMA P.S.1, New York, 2010
- 2009 *Encodings: Artists in Residence, 2008–2009*, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, 2009  
 Lauren Cornell, Massimiliano Gioni, Laura Hoptman, *The Generational: Younger Than Jesus*, Steidl, Göttingen, 2009, pp. 588–591  
*Younger Than Jesus Artist Directory: The Essential Handbook to a New Generation of Artists*, Phaidon, London and New York, 2009  
 Nicola Lees, *Serpentine Gallery Manifesto Marathon*, König, London, 2009
- 2008 Jeffrey D. Grove, *After 1968*, High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2008  
 Mark Beasley, *Hey Hey Glossolalia*, Creative Time and Freeway Balconies/Deutsche Guggenheim, New York, 2008  
*Manifesta 7, The European Biennial of Contemporary Art*, Silvana, Milan, 2008
- 2007 Dominic Molon, Bob Nickas and Richard Hell, *Sympathy for the Devil: Art and Rock and Roll since 1967*, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago, 2007
- The Revival*, Performa 07, Weiss Studio, New York
- 2005 Valerie Cassel Oliver and Franklin Simans, *Double Consciousness: Black Conceptual Art Since 1970*, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Houston, Texas, 2005  
 David Drogin, *Frequency*, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, 2005
- Public Collections (selection)
- Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, USA  
 Amorepacific Museum of Art, Seoul  
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney  
 Baltimore Museum of Art and Written Art Collection, Basel, Switzerland  
 Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, USA  
 Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, USA  
 Centro de Art Mayo CA2M, Madrid  
 Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, USA  
 Collection Lambert, Avignon, France  
 Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, USA  
 Danjuma Collection, Surrey, England  
 DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, USA  
 Deji Art Museum, Nanjing, China  
 Fundación Canaria para el Desarrollo de la Pintura, Gran Canaria, Spain  
 Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA  
 Kistefos Museum, Jevnaker, Norway  
 Lever House, New York, USA  
 Long Museum, Shanghai, China  
 Longlati Foundation, Shanghai, China  
 Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, USA  
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston, USA  
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA  
 Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, USA

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal, Canada  
Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, USA  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, USA  
Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, USA  
Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris  
Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany  
Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA  
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa  
Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, USA  
Spinoza Foundation, Paris  
Start Museum, Shanghai  
Studio Museum Harlem, New York, USA  
Tate Collection, London  
University of Chicago, Chicago, USA  
The Hunterian, University of Glasgow, Scotland  
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, USA  
Whitney Museum of Art, New York, USA  
Yuz Museum, Shanghai