

# McArthur Binion

## Biography

McArthur Binion (b. 1946, Macon, Georgia) lives and works in Chicago, Illinois.

Since the 1970's, he has sought an alternative to minimalist art, through his personal philosophy of the pictorial grids fused with his archival belongings, such as the pages of his phone books, personal family photographs, or found documents from the history of the Afro-American community. Binion's reduced combination of colors and forms enclose not only formal mastery but also layers of meaning, beginning with his search for modernist abstract painting's legacy in relation to a wider context, that of the need of human society to leave traces of itself and, at the same time, to project itself into the future.

McArthur Binion's work is strongly political, although very subtle. In fact, curator Lowery Stokes Sims once described Binion's DNA series as 'notions of self-awareness and self-discovery, a conscious reflection on himself and to the historical discourse he has contributed to'. McArthur Binion's 40-year career has been a continual investigation of abstract painting. The artist distinctive insertion of narrative and personal history and his emphasis on content differentiates his work from a more traditional minimalist practice. Binion's works have been prominently included in the 57th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, VIVA ARTE VIVA, curated by Christine Macel.

Binion's work is featured in several public and private collections including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, DC; Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills; Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Kemper Museum of Art, Kansas City; Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson; New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans; Strauss Family Collection, Santa Fe; Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo.

### Solo exhibitions

#### 2022

2022 - McArthur Binion: Self:Portraits, Library Street Collective, Detroit, USA  
2022 - Visual:Ear / Paper:Work, Xavier Hufkens, Brussels, B  
2022 - DNA:Study/(Visual:Ear), Lehmann Maupin, Seoul, ROK

#### 2021

2021 - Modern:Ancient:Brown, Lehmann Maupin, New York, USA  
2021 - DNA:Orange:Work, MASSIMODECARLO Pièce Unique, Paris, F

#### 2020

2020 - Modern Ancient Brown, Museo del Novecento, Firenze, I  
2020 - DNA:WORK AND THE UNDER:CONSCIOUS DRAWING, Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, USA. Catalogue

#### 2019

2019 - McArthur Binion, Lehmann Maupin, New York, USA

2019 - McArthur Binion, Ghosts: Rhythms & Haints, Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson, USA  
2019 - Hand:Work:II, Lehmann Maupin, Hong Kong, HK  
2019 - Hand:Work:II, Lehmann Maupin, Seoul, ROK  
2019 - New:Work (Hong Kong), Massimo De Carlo, Hong Kong, PRC

## **2018**

2018 - Ink: Work, Massimo De Carlo, Milano, I  
2018 - Binion/Saarinen, Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, USA  
2018 - Ink: Work, Massimo De Carlo, Milano, I

## **2017**

2017 - Route One: Box Two, Galerie Lelong & Co., New York, USA

## **2016**

2016 - Seasons, Kavi Gupta, Chicago, USA

## **2015**

2015 - McArthur Binion: Re:Mine, Galerie Lelong, New York, USA. Catalogue

## **2014**

2014 - DNA Study, Kavi Gupta, Chicago, USA

## **2013**

2013 - Ghost:Rhythms, Kavi Gupta, Chicago, USA

## **2012**

2012 - Perspectives 177: McArthur Binion, Contemporary Art Museum Houston, Houston, USA

## **2010**

2010 - Color Exploration: Simplicity in the Art of McArthur Binion, Univeristy of Maryland, University College Gallery, Adelphi, USA

## **2009**

2009 - House : Work, Center Galleries at College for Creative Studies, Detroit, USA

## **2008**

2008 - Simplicism II: The Gouaches, Audible Gallery, Experimental Sound Studio, Chicago, USA

## **2005**

2005 - Simplicism, G. R. N’Namdi Gallery, Chicago; G. R. N’Namdi Gallery, New York, USA

## **2004**

2004 - Simplicism, G. R. N’Namdi Gallery, Detroit, USA

## **2001**

2001 - Modern : Ancient : Brown, Alley Culture, Detroit, USA

## **1990**

1990 - Laconic : Love : Letters; K.V.C., Fisher Theater, New Center One, Detroit, USA

## **1980**

1980 - The Juices: New Paintings, Anspacher Gallery, New York, USA  
1980 - Drawings, Peg Alston Gallery, New York, USA

## **Group exhibitions**

## **2024**

2024 - SpaceRace, Lehmann Maupin, London, UK

## **2023**

2023 - McArthur Binion – Carl Andre, MASSIMODECARLO Pièce Unique, Paris, F  
2023 - Multiplicity: Blackness in Contemporary American Collage, Frist Art Museum, Nashville, USA  
2023 - Yuen Yeung, K11 Musea, Shanghai, PRC  
2023 - Beyond Form, Lehmann Maupin, Palm Beach, USA  
2023 - Neo Chicago, The Peninsula, Chicago, USA

## **2022**

2022 - Citing Black Geographies, Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, New York, USA  
2022 - Black Abstractionists: From Then 'til Now, Green Family Art Foundation, Dallas, USA  
2022 - Borrow and Steal: Appropriation from the Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, USA  
2022 - Sense of Place, Green Naftali, New York, USA  
2022 - Fire Figure Fantasy: Selections from ICA Miami's Collection, Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, USA

## **2021**

2021 - Black Art: in the Absence of Light, HBO Documentary, HBO  
2021 - McArthur Binion - Sol LeWitt, MASSIMODECARLO, Milano, I  
2021 - Building a Legacy: Chrysler Collects for the Future, Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, USA  
2021 - The Medium is Memory, Lehmann Maupin, Taipei, RC  
2021 - The Medium is Memory, Lehmann Maupin, Taipei, RC  
2021 - Art Basel Hong Kong, Hong Kong Convention Center, Hong Kong, PRC

## **2020**

2020 - Black Refractions: Highlights from The Studio Museum in Harlem, Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, USA  
2020 - Black Refractions: Highlights from The Studio Museum in Harlem, Frye Museum of Art, Seattle, USA  
2020 - Black Refractions: Highlights from The Studio Museum in Harlem, Utah Museum of Fine Art, Salt Lake City, USA

## **2019**

2019 - Black Refractions: Highlights from The Studio Museum in Harlem, Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, USA  
2019 - Black Refractions: Highlights from The Studio Museum in Harlem, Gibbes Museum of Art, Charleston, USA  
2019 - Black Refractions: Highlights from The Studio Museum in Harlem, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo, USA  
2019 - Expanding Narratives: The Figure and the Ground, Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago, Chicago, USA

## **2017**

2017 - Color People, Rental Gallery, East Hampton, USA  
2017 - VIVA ARTE VIVA, 57th Venice Biennale, Venezia, I  
2017 - Dimensions of Black: a Collaboration with the San Diego African American Museum of Fine Art, Museum of Contemporary San Diego, San Diego, USA  
2017 - New at NOMA: Recent Acquisitions in Modern and Contemporary Art, New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, USA  
2017 - From the Vault: Recent Gifts to the Collection, Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, USA  
2017 - Through the African American Lens, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, USA  
2017 - Thought Patterns, Deborah Ronnen Fine Art, Rochester, USA  
2017 - Above and Below the Surface: Eight Artists, Berggruen Gallery, San Francisco, USA  
2017 - Black and the Abstract, Part 2: Soft Curves/Hard Edges, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Houston, USA  
2017 - Picturing Mississippi, 1817-2017: Land of Plenty, Pain, and Promise, Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson, USA  
2017 - Something to Say: The McNay Presents 100 Years of African American Art, McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, USA  
2017 - Paper, Kavi Gupta, Chicago, USA  
2017 - Picturing Mississippi, 1817-2017: Land of Plenty, Pain, and Promise, Mississippi Museum of Art,

Jackson, USA

## **2016**

2016 - Circa 1970, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, USA  
2016 - Through the African American Lens, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, USA  
2016 - Recent Acquisitions, The Phillips Collection, Washington, USA  
2016 - Viewpoints, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, San Francisco, USA  
2016 - Chicago Invites Chicago, Galerie Lelong, New York, USA  
2016 - Exhibition of Work by Newly Elected Members and Recipients of Honors and Awards, American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, USA  
2016 - Invitational Exhibition of Visual Arts, American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, USA  
2016 - Dimensions of Black: a Collaboration with the San Diego African American Museum of Fine Art, Museum of Contemporary San Diego, San Diego, USA  
2016 - New at NOMA: Recent Acquisitions in Modern and Contemporary Art, New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, USA  
2016 - Chicago Invites Chicago, Galerie Lelong, New York, USA

## **2015**

2015 - Piece by Piece: Building a Collection, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, USA

## **2014**

2014 - Prospect.3: Notes for Now, New Orleans, USA  
2014 - Another Look at Detroit: Parts 1 and 2, Marianne Boesky, New York, Marlborough Chelsea, New York, USA  
2014 - Ice Fishing, Max Wigram Gallery, London, UK  
2014 - When the Stars Begin to Fall: Imagination in the American South, Studio Museum, Harlem, New York, USA  
2014 - Above and Below the Surface: Eight Artists, Berggruen Gallery, San Francisco, USA

## **2013**

2013 - Black in the Abstract, Contemporary Art Museum Houston, Houston, USA  
2013 - Green Flower Street, curated by TR, Tatiana Kourochkina Gallery, Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul  
2013 - Xstraction, The Hole, New York, USA  
2013 - Outside the Lines, Contemporary Art Museum Houston, Houston, USA

## **2010**

2010 - Well Put Together II, Thomas McCormick Gallery, Chicago, USA

## **2007**

2007 - 25th Anniversary Group Exhibition, G. R. N'Namdi Gallery, New York, USA  
2007 - STUFF: International Contemporary Art from the Collection of Burt Aaron, The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Detroit, USA

## **2002**

2002 - Americas Remixed, Comune di Milano, Milano, I  
2002 - No Greater Love, Abstraction, Jack Tilton/Anna Kustera Gallery, New York, USA  
2002 - The Bones of Clouds: Some Recent Experiences of Chance, Center Galleries, College for Creative Studies, Detroit, USA  
2002 - Paths, Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center, Birmingham, USA

## **2000**

2000 - Art for Technology: A Reunion of Mural Artists, Martin Luther King Neighborhood Network, Detroit, USA

## **1997**

1997 - T-race, Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago, USA

## **1996**

1996 - Drawing in Chicago Now, 11th Street Gallery, Chicago, Illinois and Carleton College, Northfield, USA

**1992**

1992 - Drawings for Billboards, Focus Gallery, Detroit, USA

**1987**

1987 - Share the Memories, Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit, USA

**1985**

1985 - David Hammons' House, Art on the Beach, Creative Time, Inc., New York, USA

**1984**

1984 - Affirmation of Life, Kenkeleba Gallery, New York, USA

**1983**

1983 - The Regentrified Jungle, Hamilton College, Clinton, New York; Wayne State University/NYC, Wayne State University, Detroit, USA

1983 - Modernist Trends, 22 Wooster Gallery, New York, USA

**1982**

1982 - Organized by Joe Lewis and Holly Solomon Gallery of New York, Mark Twain Bank, Kansas City, USA

1982 - Six Murals by Six Artists, Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center Gallery, Detroit, USA

1982 - Cranbrook USA: A 50-Year Survey of Alumni, Cranbrook Museum of Art, Bloomfield Hills, USA

**1978**

1978 - Detroit and Chicago: Art of the 70s, Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit, USA

**1973**

1973 - McArthur Binion, Jonathan Borofsky and Mary Obering, Artists Space, New York, USA

**1972**

1972 - Michigan Biannual, Saginaw Museum of Art, Saginaw, USA

# Bibliography

## 2021

Getsy, David J.. "Gray Warehouse", *Artforum*, February 2021.

## 2020

"Black Lives Matter al Museo Novecento: via alla mostra d'arte 'Modern Ancient Brown'", *GoNews*, October 2020.

"Black Lives Matter: apre la mostra di McArthur Binion a Firenze", *Amica*, October 2020.

"Duel. McArthur Binion. Modern Ancient Brown", *Arte*, October 2020.

"McArthur Binion la storia è black", *la Repubblica - Robinson*, October 2020.

"McArthur Binion - Modern Ancient Brown", *Exibart*, October 2020.

"McArthur Binion: la nuova mostra al Museo Novecento di Firenze", *Turismo Itinerante*, October 30, 2020.

"Modern Ancient Brown - McArthur Binion", *Pittorica*, October 2020.

Ficicchia, Loredana. "Guarda e Leggi - c'è McArthur Binion", *Corriere Fiorentino*, October 24, 2020.

Franza, Carlo. "L'afroamericano McArthur Binion erede dell'astrattismo modernista ripensa il minimalismo e la sua storia personale tra arti visive e letteratura. La mostra al Museo Novecento di Firenze.", *il Giornale*, 2020.

Meloni, Bruna. "McArthur Binion è a firenze con la mostra Modern Ancient Brown", *MAM-e*, October 25, 2020.

Montanari, Laura. "Black Lives Matter anche nell'arte", *la Repubblica*, October 24, 2020.

Zarley, David. "McArthur Binion's 'Data-Driven' Design", *Frieze*, October 29, 2020.

## 2019

"Discovered After 70, Black Artists Find Success, Too, Has Its Price", *The New York times*, March 23, 2019.

"McArthur Binion: Modern Ancient Brown", *GoGoFirenze*, October 20, 2019.

## 2017

Gavin, Francesca. "The African-American artists exciting savvy collectors", *Financial Times*, June 9 2017.

Swirsky, Rebecca. "McArthur Binion, Massimo De Carlo, London, UK", *Frieze*, October 2017.

# Public Collections

## **The Netherlands**

Museum Voorlinden, Wassenaar

## **United Kingdom**

Zabludowicz Collection, London

## **United States of America**

Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin  
Ariel Mutual Funds, Chicago  
Art Bridges Foundation, Bentonville  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan, Detroit  
Children's Hospital of Michigan, Detroit  
City of Detroit, Detroit  
Cook County Hospital, Chicago  
Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills  
Detroit Institute of Arts, Michigan  
Fidelity Investments Art Collection  
Guggenheim Museum, New York  
Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston  
Joyner Giuffrida Collection, San Francisco  
Kemper Museum of Art, Kansas City  
McNay Art Museum, San Antonio  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York  
Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson  
Mott Warsh Collection, Flint  
Museum, Winter Park  
National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, D.C.  
New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans  
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco  
Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, D.C.  
Studio Museum in Harlem, New York  
The Alfond Collection of Contemporary Art, Rollins College, Winter Park  
The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.  
Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo  
Wayne State University, Detroit  
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York