

MASSIMODECARLO

MCARTHUR BINION

NEW: WORK (HONG KONG)

Massimo De Carlo is pleased to announce McArthur Binion's first exhibition in Asia. The Hong Kong presentation will be presented jointly with Lehmann Maupin, which will be opening simultaneously in both their Hong Kong and Seoul galleries. Spanning all three spaces, these joint exhibitions present an unprecedented opportunity to view new work by the 72-year-old American artist who has been garnering increasing international attention.

Throughout his fifty-year practice of assemblage painting, Binion has continually defied classification as an artist. Terms such as "abstraction" and "minimalism" has often been employed as a descriptors for his large scale paintings, however Binion himself resists such rigid categorisations of his work. Through his rich and tumultuous career, Binion has developed an incredibly complex practice, incorporating interwoven personal memories with historical recollection and his experience of America in the past, by layering paint and personal memorabilia onto large-scale canvases.

In the 1970's, Binion immersed himself within the renowned downtown New York art scene — socializing and working among artists such as Jean-Michel Basquiat, Dan Flavin, Carl Andre and Sol LeWitt. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, his style evolved from more gestural abstraction to include increasingly pared-down, colorful, and geometric abstraction. Binion's distinctive insertion of narrative and personal history and his emphasis on content, differentiates his work from the more reductive Minimalist practices of other artists and continues to do so today. In his DNA series, previously shown in Massimo De Carlo London, the artist blends private documents, such as negatives of his birth certificate (which references the situation of many that, like him, were born in rural communities and whose births were never recorded) and hand written pages of his old phone books are covered with layers of painted coloured grids, that conceal and at the same time introduce the narration element of his practice. These works made their international debut in 2017 at the Venice Biennale.

Such use of personal documents asserts Binion's own existence, whereas the layers of paint encompass the artists' experience with authority and the art world in America. Insofar, the intricate surfaces of the canvases become abstract shapes and motives: the artist's archival belongings, that can only be seen when in very close physical proximity to the canvas, are transformed by the paintbrush into weightily textured patterns and reflect the importance of the influence of modernism in McArthur Binion's practice.

In his newest *Hand:Work:II* paintings, Binion's usage of his hand is a symbol he repeats across the large canvas. An emblem for his personal touch upon the work, the gesture of the hand also hints at the time-consuming and laborious nature of his practice. The incorporation of his hand indicates the motif as a self-generating subject, veering the *Hand:Work:II* series into a new conceptual territory, expanding his repertoire to include performative self-portraiture. Additionally, Binion has employed the bold and brightly saturated hues of his earlier paintings in colorful ink washes poured and spread across the photocopied pages of his address books from that period. In recent years, Binion has emerged as an increasingly important artist of his generation, combining the post-minimal embrace of new, commercial grade materials, with a more personalized approach to the austere, formal devices of minimalism, realized through the incorporation of his personal history into these deceptively simple paintings.

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McArthur Binion was born in Macon, Mississippi, in 1946. He currently lives and works in Chicago, Illinois. He received his BFA from Wayne State University, Detroit, MI in 1971 and his MFA from the Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, MI in 1973. Binion's works were featured prominently in the 57th Venice Biennale, VIVA ARTE VIVA, curated by Christine Macel. His recent solo exhibitions include: *New: Work*, Massimo De Carlo, Hong Kong (2019); *Ink: Work*, Massimo De Carlo, Milano (2018); *Binion/Saarinen: A McArthur Binion Project*, the Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, MI (2018); *Perspectives 177*, the Contemporary Art Museum, Houston, TX (2012) and *Color Exploration: Simplicity in the Art of McArthur Binion*, the University of Maryland University College Gallery, Adelphi, MD (2010). Recent group exhibitions featuring his work include: *Black Refractions: Highlights from The Studio Museum in Harlem*, Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, CA (2019); *Expanding Narratives: The Figure and the Ground*, Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL (2018); *Something to Say: The McNay Presents 100 Years of African American Art*, McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX (2018); *Picturing Mississippi, 1817-2017: Land of Plenty, Pain, and Promise*, Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson, MI (2017); *Dimensions of Black: a Collaboration with the San Diego African American Museum of Fine Art*, Museum of Contemporary San Diego, San Diego, CA (2017); *New at NOMA: Recent Acquisitions in Modern and Contemporary Art*, New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA (2017); *Through the African American Lens*, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, DC (2017). His work resides in important public collections, including: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington DC; New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans; Phillips Collection, Washington, DC; Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan; Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit.

Hard Facts:

Massimo De Carlo, Hong Kong
3rd Floor Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong
From May 23 until August 31, 2019
Opening reception on Monday May 22, 2019
Open Monday to Saturday, 10:30am – 7:00pm

For further information and materials:

Press Office, Massimo De Carlo
T. +852.2613.8062
hongkong@massimodecarlo.com
press@massimodecarlo.com
www.massimodecarlo.com
Instagram: massimodecarlogallery
Twitter: mdcgallery
#massimodecarlogallery

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