

McArthur Binion joins Lehmann Maupin

McArthur Binion, Venice Biennale, 2017.

New York, March 1, 2018—Lehmann Maupin is pleased to announce its representation of McArthur Binion. For more than 40 years, the American artist has combined collage, drawing, and painting to create autobiographical abstractions of painted minimalist patterns, inserting personal references and ephemera into his signature grid format. This complex and laborious method of painting makes his a singular vision from the later half of the 20th century. Binion was born in Macon, Mississippi, and lives and works in Chicago. His first exhibition with Lehmann Maupin will open in Hong Kong in fall 2018, followed by a New York exhibition in winter 2019.

“We were immediately drawn to McArthur’s work when we saw it at the Venice Biennale last year,” says Rachel Lehmann. “His use of minimalism and abstraction, and the social and political issues he addresses through images of his personal history is strongly engaged with Lehmann Maupin’s programming and has ties to the work of Kader Attia, Teresita Fernández, Shirazeh Houshiary, Liza Lou, Cecilia Vicuña, and Nari Ward. He is one of the most important artists of his generation.”

Binion’s intricately layered works, upon first glance, can be read as minimalist abstractions that have led many to compare his work to that of Jasper Johns, Robert Ryman, or Brice Marden. While his contemporaries prioritized the exploration of materiality, abstraction, and in some cases the social and political climate of the time, Binion’s

works are intensely personal investigations of the multiple ways to make an abstract painting comprised of layers of line, color, and personal and historical narratives. Early on, Binion identified and made innovative use of oil stick, using it in thick application to impose a rigid formalism to his gridded compositions. Upon closer inspection, a dense subconscious of personal information is revealed through birth certificates, pages from his address book, newspaper clippings, and family photographs. His associations with this memorabilia, however plainly visible, are intentionally obscured from exact interpretation by the rational precision of the grid rendered on top in laboriously hand-drawn linework, allowing him to both reveal and obscure information.

The role of the written word, both as an elemental material in his work and in titling his paintings, is especially significant to Binion, who initially pursued creative writing after moving to New York in the late 1960s. An interest in the philosophical potential of painting led him to switch the focus of his practice from writing to painting, which he took on full time almost immediately. While working in New York, he became a key figure in the downtown artist scene, but avoided pigeonholing himself by prematurely exhibiting his work while he felt he was still developing his aesthetic. Eventually, having grown weary with the mechanisms of the art world, Binion moved to Chicago to teach and paint, free from pressure of the market. For more than 25 years, Binion has remained in Chicago, honing a uniquely intimate mode of formal and narrative abstraction that is strikingly personal as well as historically significant.

About the artist

McArthur Binion (born 1946, Macon, MS; lives and works in Chicago) received his BFA from Wayne State University, Detroit, 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. Solo exhibitions of his work have been organized at the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston (2012); and the University of Maryland University College Gallery, Adelphi, MD (2010). Recent group exhibitions featuring his work include *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 (2017); *New at NOMA: Recent Acquisitions in Modern and Contemporary Art*, New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans (2017); *Through the African American Lens*, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, D.C. (2017); *Circa 1970*, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2016); *Prospect.3: Notes for Now*, New Orleans (2014); *When the Stars Begin to Fall: Imagination in the American South*, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2014); and *Black in the Abstract*, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (2013). His work is in numerous public and private collections, including the Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, MI; Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, D.C.; New Orleans Museum of Art; The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.; Wayne State University, Detroit; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

About Lehmann Maupin

Founded in 1996 by partners Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin, Lehmann Maupin has fostered the careers of a diverse group of internationally renowned artists, both emerging and established, working in multiple disciplines and across varied media. With locations in New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul, the gallery represents artists from the United States, Europe, Asia, South America, Africa, and the Middle East. Known for championing artists who create groundbreaking and challenging forms of visual expression, Lehmann Maupin presents work highlighting

personal investigations and individual narratives through conceptual approaches that often address such issues as gender, class, religion, history, politics, and globalism.

Current & Upcoming Exhibitions

Robin Rhode, *The Geometry of Colour*, through March 10, 2018, West 22nd Street, NEW YORK

Alex Prager, through March 17, 2018, Pedder Building, HONG KONG

American Landscape, March 15—May 5, 2018, West 22nd Street, NEW YORK

OSGEMEOS, *Déjà Vu*, March 26—May 12, 2018, Pedder Building, HONG KONG

Catherine Opie, May 17—July 7, 2018, Pedder Building, HONG KONG

Cecilia Vicuña, May 19—July 14, 2018, West 22nd Street, NEW YORK

For more information on McArthur Binion or other Lehmann Maupin artists, please contact Marta de Movellan or Kathryn McKinney at +1 212 255 2923, or visit lehmannmaupin.com.

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