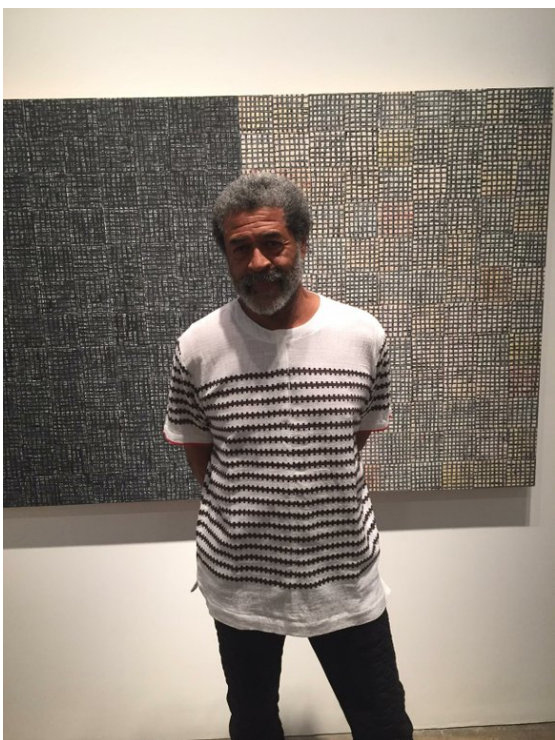


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by Herb Boyd

Artist McArthur Binion at Galerie Lelong



McArthur Binion

From a distance McArthur Binion's art has a textured effect, a few resembling huge pieces of tapestry. But as you get closer, the basket-like weave of blocks reveal bits of personal information. Under the application of industrial crayon and oil sticks are photocopied pages from a collection of address books and his birth certificate.

Mississippi born, Detroit raised, Chicago-based and gradually becoming universally acclaimed, Binion is the featured artist in the group show "Chicago Invites Chicago" at the Galerie Lelong in downtown Manhattan. Other artists joining Binion are John Phillips, Samuel Levi Jones, Bethany Collins, Nate Young and Tony Lewis.

Most of them were at the gallery for the opening last Thursday, and the exhibition runs to July 29.

"Things have really been going amazingly well for me," Binion said during an interview, in which he was accompanied by his daughter,

Stella. Doing well may be an understatement for the 70-year-old artist whose work is commanding national recognition and being bought by major collectors and museums. One of the works from his DNA: Black Painting series is on display at the American Academy of Arts and Letters in Upper Manhattan. That work was included in the Academy's Art Purchased category this year.

For many years, before moving to Chicago, Binion lived in lower Manhattan, and his unique minimalist style of creation placed him in good company with his colleagues, including Jean-Michel Basquiat. The late painter would be proud to witness Binion's renewed career.

Equally proud is Mary Sabbatino, vice president/partner of Galerie Lelong. "She makes it happen," Binion said.

"Though Binion's work is painting first and foremost," Sabbatino wrote in the foreword of his book "McArthur Binion: Re:Mine," "archive and specific history within the larger culture become inseparable parts of its content and meaning."

Sabbatino added, "The artist's biography and times in which he lived and continues to live are inextricably joined. Binion's paintings help us to see history uncovered and re-covered and, in the artist's words—'Re-Mine'—excavated and also claimed."

Art maven and highly regarded curator Lowery Stokes Sims in describing Binion's work said, "They mimic interwoven elements seen in basketry or fiber work and while they are made up of closely related hues of blacks, grays, browns, these paintings occasionally burst into reds, blues, greens and yellows, which also serve as undertones in the more somber works."

Visit the exhibit and draw your own conclusion, and if you happen to be a friend or close associate, get real close to the works because you may find yourself immortalized.

Galerie Lelong is located at 528 W. 26th St. Call Danielle Wu at 212-315-0470 for hours and other inquiries, or visit www.galerielelong.com for more information.