

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Artsy
Two Artists Seeing Major Sales in Art Basel in Basel
Benjamin Sutton
26 September 2021



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Welcome to Artsy Insider. This week, I'm looking at early sales from Art Basel in Basel and examining the markets of two artists whose work is attracting collector interest at the fair: the influential abstract artist McArthur Binion and the indefatigable sculptor Lynda Benglis. I'll also be sharing a collection of in-demand works on offer at this week's fairs in Basel.

By the Numbers: Strong Sales Out of the Gate at Art Basel in Basel

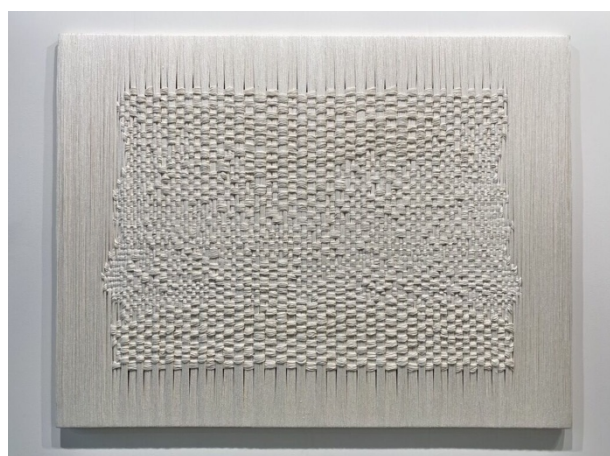


Image: Sheila Hicks, 'Cloud Hieroglyphs', 2021.
Courtesy Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

Jack Shainman Gallery sold a Kerry James Marshall painting, 'Untitled' (Exquisite Corpse) (2021), for \$5 million; the Barkley L. Hendricks portrait 'Misc. Tyrone (Tyrone Smith)' (1976) for \$3.75 million; and, from the gallery's joint presentation with Gagosian in the fair's Unlimited section for very large works, a monumental Meleko Mokgosi painting, 'Bread, Butter, and Power' (2018), which was acquired by an American collection for \$750,000.

Pace Gallery sold the Barbara Hepworth bronze 'Single Form (Eikon)' (1937–38, cast 1963) for \$1.2 million, and the large Loie Hollowell painting 'Yellow Brain' (2021) for \$450,000.

Hauser & Wirth sold the new Rashid Johnson canvas 'Bruise Painting "Easy Street"' (2021) for \$975,000 to a European collection and an edition of Thomas J Price's 2020 bronze 'All In' for £135,00 (\$184,500).

Sikkema Jenkins & Co. sold a large work on paper by Kara Walker, 'Replacement Parts' (2021), to a European collection for \$500,000, and a sculptural textile piece by Sheila Hicks, 'Cloud Hieroglyphs' (2021), to an American collection for \$200,000.

Lehmann Maupin sold Arcmanoro Niles's painting 'I'm Through Wasting What's Left of Me (As if I have Defeated My Desires)' (2021) for \$65,000 to a European collector who serves as a museum trustee, as well as two works by Nari Ward: the flag-based work 'Tamper Free' (2021) to a collector and museum trustee based in the U.S. for \$120,000; and the large copper paneled work 'Breathing Drunkard's Path' (2019) to a collector with a museum in Asia for a price in the \$400,000–\$500,000 range.

Blum & Poe sold two Eddie Martinez works, one for \$200,000 and the other for \$90,000, and two Yoshitomo Nara paintings for \$1.75 million each.

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Collection: Artists Everyone Is Talking about at Art Basel in Basel 2021



Image: Marina Adams, 'Songs and Seeds', 2020. Courtesy of Stephen Friedman Gallery; Vivian Greven, 2021. Courtesy of Kadel Willborn; Bernard Frize, Tola, 2021. Courtesy of Simon Lee Gallery

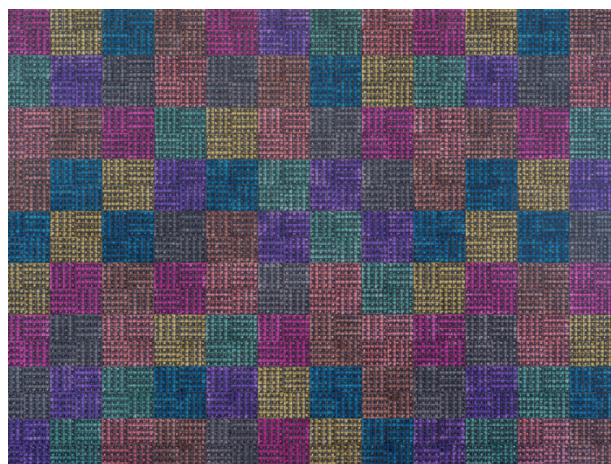


Image: McArthur Binion, 'Modern:Ancient:Brown', 2021. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, and London

At every major fair, there tend to be a few artists whose work just seems to be everywhere. This week at Art Basel in Basel, none may be more ubiquitous than septuagenarian Chicago-based artist McArthur Binion. The fair, which coincides with a major solo show of his new paintings at Lehmann Maupin's New York headquarters, has seen his work fly off the walls of at least three booths. On the first day of previews, Lehmann Maupin sold his painting *Modern:Ancient:Brown* (2021), which features his trademark gridded pattern of alternating squares of color, overlaid atop copies of the artist's birth certificate, for \$300,000 to prominent collectors based in Germany. Chicago's Richard Gray Gallery also sold a 2021 Binion painting titled 'Modern:Ancient:Brown', which was priced at \$300,000. And Italy's MASSIMODECARLO sold one of the artist's recent works on paper, 'healing:work' (2020), for \$30,000.

This week's sales are in keeping with the top end of the secondary market for Binion's work, where his pieces have only surpassed the \$100,000 mark five times. All five of those results have been in the last three years. In May of this year, his large, monochromatic square composition with a circle set against his characteristic grid, 'DNA: Black Painting: III' (2015), sold for \$300,000 at a Christie's day sale in New York. That price was double the work's high estimate and smashed Binion's previous auction record.

His works on paper, to date, have topped out at \$15,600, about half of the price of the work sold this week by MASSIMODECARLO. On Artsy, demand for his work surged in 2017—the year he was included in the central exhibition at the Venice Biennale and had his first solo show with the Italian gallery—with the number of collectors inquiring about his work on the platform nearly tripling from 2016. With one quarter to go, this year is already his biggest on the platform.

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Images: McArthur Binion
'healing:work' 2020 MASSIMODE-CARLO and Lynda Benglis
'SERPENS', 1982 Cheim & Read

If Binion's practice has long been characterized by fidelity to a geometric framework, Lynda Benglis's relentlessly fluid work has consistently incorporated new hues and materials. The Postminimalist pioneer has prominent placement at this week's Art Basel fair: New York gallery Cheim & Read sold three of her sculptures for

\$125,000, \$275,000, and \$450,000, the latter to a museum trustee; and Brussels-based Xavier Hufkens sold two of her wall-mounted paper sculptures, each for a price in the range of \$85,000–\$100,000.

Auction results for Benglis's work suggest her secondary market has some ground to make up and may be poised to take off. Her auction record was smashed this past March, when 'Silver Spur' (1987), a sculpture made from stainless steel, copper, nickel, and iron, more than doubled its high estimate to sell for \$378,000 at an online sale with Sotheby's. That represented an increase of more than 50 percent from her previous auction record, which dated back to 2014. On Artsy, demand for Benglis's work surged dramatically in 2019, the year she joined Pace's roster and had her first solo show with the gallery at its space in Palo Alto, California. Between this week's six-figure sales, her current solo show at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and a major exhibition slated for next spring at the Nasher Sculpture Center, Benglis may be on the cusp of another breakout moment.