



NICOLE KLAGSBRUN
526 WEST 26TH STREET
ROOM 318
NEW YORK, NY 10001
212.243.3335
NICOLEKLAGSBRUN.COM

Rashid Johnson (Chicago, IL, 1977), works across the disciplines of painting, sculpture, photography, and video. Johnson's practice is defined by its critical evocations and entangling of racial and cultural identity, African American history, and mysticism. Many of his early works took the form of conceptual photography, though Johnson eventually expanded his practice to include wall-based works that engage the legacy of painting, sculptural installation, and assemblage, using materials like soap, wax, and shea butter, books, records, glass, and incense. "The goal," Johnson explains, "is for all of the materials to miscegenate into a new language, with me as its author." Johnson also exercises a range of mark-making techniques—like scoring, scraping, engraving, and branding—using self-made tools. In a 2013 interview, Johnson states, "I started thinking about this kind of domestic material and taking it into a place where it would not necessarily expect to find itself. I've always considered the artist as almost a magician-like character who grants agency to materials to allow them to be elevated into objects that we admire."

George Ohr (Biloxi, Mississippi, 1857-1918), American ceramic artist and self-proclaimed "Mad Potter of Biloxi" was active from 1879 to around 1910. He began to alter his wheel-thrown shapes, forcing pots to twist or buckle while manipulating the forms by hand through folding, indenting, and ruffling. Even with many of the pieces severely burned in an 1894 fire that destroyed his studio, Ohr salvaged many of the works calling them his "burned babies." After the re-establishment of his studio, Ohr became even more committed to his new approach to form, producing his well-recognized thin-walled, thin-skinned, crushed, folded, and dented vessels. Ohr's practice shatters the conventions of ceramics, anticipating modern and contemporary movements, including American Abstract Expressionism and Post-Minimalism.

Keith Sonnier (Mamou, Louisiana, 1941-2020), is a post-minimalist American artist who began his career in New York City in the 1960s. Sonnier redefined sculpture by using materials and techniques that were previously restricted to the hardware store. Sonnier's wall sculptures from the *File* Series, before incorporating light and technology, were tied to the five senses; how things felt; how things smelled; and how things could be heard. He was part of a new generation of sculptors who were not using the older sculptural techniques or materials anymore. Sonnier speaks about his approach, "when I approached these new materials, it was as though I was investigating the kinds of techniques that were common to everyday experience, like wrapping, stuffing, mixing or even upholstering." The construction of the *File* pieces can be traced to a childhood observation of his mother upholstering living room furniture. The act of upholstering relies on layering and padding and sourcing a variety of materials. Sonnier's use of transparent and translucent materials emphasizes the layered nature of this series of works, placing one thing in front of another thing, in front of yet another. The basis of this work is upholstery, and then translucency because it was one skin on top of another skin.

Nari Ward (St. Andrew, Jamaica, 1963), lives and works in New York. Nari Ward is best known for his wall and installation-based sculptural works created from materials frequently found and collected throughout Harlem, his longtime neighborhood. Ward combines these materials to re-contextualize their original meanings, creating assemblage works that confront complex social and political realities, often surrounding race, migration, democracy, and community through literal and metaphorical juxtaposition. Materially specific but intentionally ambiguous in their signification, Ward's works encourage the viewer to explore many possible interpretations. Themes of memorial, remembrance, and societal relationships have permeated Ward's practice. Constructed of discarded fire hoses and tires Ward's, *Anon; Three Boxes Two Tires*, 1993 carries undertones on commemoration, community, and the reclamation of public space are explored through the medium of public streets.