

# FRIEZE MAGAZINE

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### CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT FRIEZE LOS ANGELES

by FRIEZE LOS ANGELES



Woody De Othello, *Flushing Out*, 2024. Glazed ceramic, 95 x 31 x 31 cm. Courtesy: the artist and Karma, New York

Black History Month recognizes the generations of African Americans who struggled with adversity to achieve full citizenship in American society. As 'Repossessions' opens at the California African American Museum (CAAM) and the Getty Center surveys the practice of María Magdalena Campos-Ponsand, at Frieze Los Angeles, artists such as Zanele Muholi, Emmanuel Louisnord Desir, Noah Purifoy and Akinsanya Kambon shed new light on Black history.

This year, Frieze also extends its community-led initiatives, partnering with Summaeverything Community Center – Lauren Halsey's South Central LA nonprofit that 'develops Black and Brown personal, political, economic and sociocultural empowerment' – and collaborating with The Black Trustee Alliance to capture the legacy of Altadena's Black and POC communities in the aftermath of the Eaton fire. Here are just some of the celebrations of Black history and culture happening at the fair and across the city during Frieze Week LA, 17–23 February.

## Across the City

Opening on 14 February at CAAM 'Repossessions' stems from the concept of 'reparations', the effort to repair the economic and psychological devastation caused by slavery for descendants of enslaved African Americans. Five Black artists – **Chelle Barbour, Marcus Brown, Rodney Ewing, Kenyatta A.C. Hinkle (Olomidara Yaya)** and **Curtis Patterson** – have been commissioned by curator Bridget R. Cooks to create work in response to documents from the enslavement and sharecropping eras in the US.

*'Repossessions' is at CAAM, Los Angeles, 14 February – 3 August 2025.*

This exhibition joins other reflections on Black culture and history across the city. The life and legacy of **Alice Coltrane** is celebrated in 'Alice Coltrane: Monument Eternal' at the Hammer Museum, whose social and musical innovations continue to inspire artists, writers and musicians. **María Magdalena Campos-Pons: Behold'** opens on 18 February at the Getty Center, offering a survey of the artist's 35-year practice exploring her Yoruban, Spanish and Chinese ancestry.

*María Magdalena Campos-Pons: Behold' at the Getty Center, 18 February – 4 May 2025.*

*'Alice Coltrane: Monument Eternal' is at the Hammer Museum 9 February – 4 May 2025.*

In 1989, Alabama-based artist Joe Minter announced his ambition to 'make art that could heal wounds everywhere'. On the grounds of Minter's Birmingham home and studio sprawls The African Village in America, an ongoing installation in tribute to African American history. Minter's assemblage sculptures weld together discarded construction material. These 'foot soldiers' of the civil rights movement, as Minter describes them, stand in dialogue with the Shadow Lawn Memorial Gardens, the city's largest historically Black cemetery, which is situated behind his home. 'Free Labor', one of two inaugural exhibitions at Parker Gallery's Melrose space in LA, will feature a selection of Minter's large-scale sculptures from 1989–2018, alongside recent paintings from 2022–24. **Joe Minter** is presented by Parker Gallery at Frieze Los Angeles 2025.

*'Joe Minter: Free Labor' is at Parker Gallery's new Melrose space, Los Angeles, 19 February – 29 March 2025.*

William Still *Grant's Symphony No. 1 (Afro-American Symphony)* (1930) was the first symphony by an African American composer to be performed by a major US orchestra. Grant's score features as a frottage backdrop to **Nate Lewis's** new works on paper for his solo show 'Tuning the Signals' at Vielmetter Los Angeles. Figures writhe and intertwine in response to the score, emerging through Lewis's fusion of photography, drawing, painting, printmaking and paper-sculpting. The rich textures of Lewis's works recall cellular tissue and topography, inspired by time spent as a critical care nurse and his practice of capoeira, an Afro-Brazilian martial art.

*'Nate Lewis: Tuning The Signals' is at Vielmetter Los Angeles, 8 February – 29 March 2025.*

When visitors cross the threshold into the final space of 'Tuning the Dial', **Woody De Othello's** solo show at Karma, LA, they will step on to a sand-covered floor. Referencing Robert Bauval and Thomas Brophy's *Black Genesis: The Prehistoric Origins of Ancient Egypt* (2011) – an anthropological argument for Egyptian culture's birth from an earlier Black civilization in the Sahara Desert – Othello presents audiences with their own sandy expanse to cross to encounter his improvisatory oils and works on paper. 'Tuning the Dial' also features works in ceramic and bronze sculpture and an ambient soundscape, *Vire Sab* – 'turning sand' in Haitian creole.

*'Woody De Othello: Tuning the Dial' is at Karma, Los Angeles, 19 February – 5 April 2025.*

Renowned LA artist **Noah Purifoy** found his own sandy stretch in Joshua Tree, where he moved to live in 1989. In the wake of LA's Watts riots of 1965, Purifoy created works from the burned debris. This use of found materials came to define Purifoy's practice, and in the last 15 years of his life, he assembled discarded objects to create 100 sculptures to populate his surrounding ten acres of desert. Sculptures and collages from this period – most of them not seen in LA – are the focus of Tilton Gallery's presentation at Frieze Los Angeles.

*Noah Purifoy is presented by Tilton Gallery at Frieze Los Angeles 2025.*

**Sydney Cain**, based in New Haven, CT, also plays with layering in their new works in powdered metals, graphite, pigments and chalk for their solo with Casey Kaplan at Frieze Los Angeles. Cain buries light beneath the surface of their 'metaphysical landscapes', tracing a collective consciousness of diasporic communities, commemorating origin stories and contemplating the lasting effects of subjugation on Black lineage. Sydney Cain is presented by Casey Kaplan at Frieze Los Angeles 2025.

*Sydney Cain is presented by Casey Kaplan at Frieze Los Angeles 2025.*

LA-based artist Emmanuel Louisnord Desir explores how the Americas' colonial history continues to reverberate today, creating sculptures that offer alternatives to the bronze and stone depictions of colonial generals, presidents and other oppressive male figures. At Frieze Los Angeles, Sebastian Gladstone presents a solo show by Desir, setting his sculptures alongside his wall works, which appropriate allegories from his religious upbringing as means of discussing race, masculinity and labour within contemporary structures of oppression.

*Emmanuel Louisnord Desir is presented by Sebastian Gladstone at Frieze Los Angeles 2025.*

South African artist **Zanele Muholi** takes a different approach to the canons of art history. Pointing to the near invisibility of Black women and non-binary bodies as subjects in Western painting and portraiture prior to the 20th century, Muholi responds by creating an expanding archive of intimate, queer expression through the act of self-portraiture. A new large-scale wallpaper print from Muholi's seminal series 'Somnyama Ngonyama' (Hail the Dark Lioness) is a highlight of Southern Guild's Frieze Los Angeles debut. Zanele Muholi is presented by Southern Guild at Frieze Los Angeles 2025.

*Zanele Muholi is presented by Southern Guild at Frieze Los Angeles 2025.*

**Akinsanya Kambon** was instrumental in the Sacramento Chapter of the Black Panther Party. With a practice spanning drawing, painting, sculpture and ceramics, Kambon creates works charged with the history and mythology of the Black diaspora and African histories, portraying past and present acts of resistance. Presented by Marc Selwyn Fine Art at Frieze Los Angeles, Kambon's sculptural works will be activated by Senegalese tama (talking drum) master Massamba Diop, known for his work on the Grammy and Oscar-winning *Black Panther* score, who will perform at the fair on Saturday 22 February. Akinsanya Kambon is presented by Marc Selwyn Fine Art at Frieze Los Angeles 2025.

*Akinsanya Kambon is presented by Marc Selwyn Fine Art at Frieze Los Angeles 2025.*

Dominique Clayton opened her gallery a decade ago in West Adams, LA, with a focus on diversity and Black representation. At Frieze Los Angeles, Clayton presents a solo show of new works by LA-based **Adee Roberson**, who casts the memories and histories of the Black diasporic movement in her iconic, vibrant palette. Of Roberson, Clayton says: 'I love how her work makes me feel. And I love how when people have seen it: there is a visceral response, like putting a smile on your face.' Adee Roberson is presented by Dominique Gallery at Frieze Los Angeles 2025.

*Adee Roberson is presented by Dominique Gallery at Frieze Los Angeles 2025.*

As part of Frieze Projects at the fair, LA-based artist Dominique Moody restages her installation NOMAD, recently shown at the Hammer Museum. This mobile dwelling is constructed from salvaged materials and functions as a live-in artist residency, addressing themes of housing insecurity and displacement. 'Being nomadic is a legacy rich in an ancestry rooted in this mobile memory now practised in defiance to social and economic limitations,' writes Moody, 'so I will continue to express "my mobility of spirit".'