

MARIANE IBRAHIM

PALIMPSEST

July 30 - August 24, 2024

CHICAGO

Exhibiting Artists:

ruby onyinyechi amanze

McArthur Binion

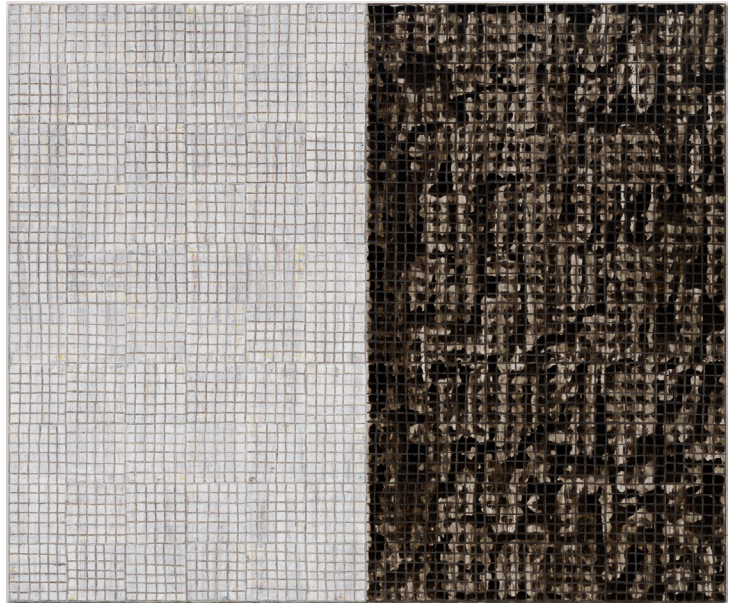
Bethany Collins

Carmen Neely

Zohra Opoku

Michael Rakowitz

Edra Soto



Mariane Ibrahim is pleased to announce *Palimpsest*, a summer group exhibition presenting work by ruby onyinyechi amanze, McArthur Binion, Bethany Collins, Carmen Neely, Zohra Opoku, Michael Rakowitz, and Edra Soto. *Palimpsest* sparks dialogue between hegemonic and emergent histories, private and public iconographies, mythologies, and fantasies. The show will be on view from July 30 through August 24, 2024.

Present in various text-based cultures since antiquity, the notion of the palimpsest has fascinated conservators, historians, and artists throughout modern history. A palimpsest is a manuscript support that is reused by washing off or scraping the original text, creating layers of latent content that are partially visible, varying greatly in theme and time of creation.

This convergence of work examines how drawing, painting, and sculpture serve as palimpsests as each embodies records of personal and diasporic narratives. These artworks highlight the opacity of history in our lives, where memories are veiled and known only through their traces. Composed of contested memories, social minutia and phenomena, alongside notions of spirituality and myth these visual records illustrate that even in the haste of erasure, histories may be shrouded, but traces remain, destined to be rediscovered.

Language is a central tool to build and describe our world, yet Bethany Collins' work highlights its aporetic nature by questioning how language falls short in its performance. Collins' *The Southern Review* features tear sheets from the Louisiana-based literary journal of the same title. This palimpsest forms as she overlays texts with soft, velvet-like charcoal that obscures the main text, leaving only footnotes, titles, and quotes visible. In direct view of each other, Collins' texts converse with Zohra Opoku's practice in which she transforms photography into silkscreen compositions detailed with sutures that memorialize her personal histories. Inspired by the Egyptian Book of the Dead, this work witnesses the artist confronting her own mortality. Through her dialogue with this ancient text, she confronts uncertainty, and asserts her agency to author her own story.

Works by Michael Rakowitz from his series *The invisible enemy should not exist* (2024), focus on the looting of the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad, that occurred in the wake of the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq. The artist percolates from themes of community and individuality to those of empire and nation by using material rooted in Iraqi visibility to reproduce invaluable archaeological artifacts. Complementing Rakowitz's didacticism, McArthur Binion's *Handmadeness: four* (2024) provokes an archaeological observation of his dimensional gestures that build a dense narrative collage on the pictorial plane. The sobering dose of raw umber and white compels viewers into a closer gaze that reveals archival material and painterly structures that undergird its surface.

Like Binion's focus on the visibility and opacity of personal histories, Carmen Neely's *subtle softening* (2024) unveils the narrative dimensions of her practice. Interpolating journal writings into affective gestures with competing opacities that vie for prominence. The traces of Neely's handwriting are faint and partially obscured, creating a palimpsest where only the faintest whispers of ideas emerge beneath the most prominent marks, infusing the ensemble with energy and sensuality.

Palimpsest also presents a dialogue between the worlds of ruby onyinyechi amanze and Edra Soto. ruby onyinyechi amanze's works on paper introduce us to a fantasy inhabited by recurring characters and shapes that move weightlessly. In stark contrast, Edra Soto's work grounds viewers in the residual realities of coloniality, examined through the lattice of immigration, race, class, and cultural oppression.

Palimpsest illuminates the dynamic interplay between visibility and concealment, memory, and imagination in our lives. By engaging in detailed observation, viewers uncover how these interconnected residual histories shape personal and collective narratives.



Image Credits:

McArthur Binion, *Handmadeness:four*, 2023. Ink, oil paint stick and paper on board © McArthur Binion. Courtesy the artist and GRAY, Chicago/New York

Carmen Neely, *subtle softening*, 2024. Courtesy of the artist and Mariane Ibrahim

For sales inquiries:
jenna@marianeibrahim.com

For press or general inquiries:
chicago@marianeibrahim.com