

Beverly Buchanan

Born 1940, Fuquay, NC; died 2015, Ann Arbor, MI.

Born in Fuquay, North Carolina, Beverly Buchanan (1940-2015) grew up in South Carolina. By the late 1960s, Buchanan had earned several university degrees in the sciences, and was working as a public health worker and educator in New York City and East Orange, New Jersey.

In 1971, Buchanan enrolled at the Art Students' League, where she studied with Harlem Renaissance painter Norman Lewis. From that time on, Buchanan devoted her time to making art. In the 1970s, she considered herself an abstract expressionist painter and completed a series of "Wall" paintings which were exhibited at the Montclair Art Museum in New Jersey in 1976.

In 1977, Buchanan moved back to the South. From 1979 to 1986, Buchanan made a series of public stone sculptures across the American Southeast, which she allowed to decay over time and become part of the surroundings. Most notably, in 1979 she completed *Ruins and Rituals* (also the title of the Brooklyn Museum retrospective from 2016-2017), and in 1980 *Marsh Ruins*, with funding from a Guggenheim Fellowship. Some of these works can still be found, while others have withered away. They contemplate the idea of "ruination" and commemorate the history of Southern Black communities.

By the mid 1980s, Buchanan was exploring Southern vernacular architecture through her practice. She created a series of makeshift sculptures known as "shacks" in which she paid tribute to the improvised and self-built homes of Black communities in rural Georgia. Often attached to her sculptures were hand-written or typed narratives, which she referred to as "legends," that gave voice to a cast of characters, some remembered and others imagined.

Buchanan's later work is intimately linked to her natural surroundings and folk art. As a native Southerner, she drew on memories from her childhood as well as the lush Georgian landscape and yard art of local self-taught artists. A passionate gardener, Buchanan produced vivid oil pastel flower drawings and small assemblage works.

The winner of numerous honors during her long career, including the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship and the National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, Buchanan's work is in the permanent collections of the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Studio Museum in Harlem and the Whitney Museum, among others. A posthumous solo retrospective, *Ruins and Rituals*, curated by Jennifer Burris and Park McArthur, was held at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in 2016-17.

EDUCATION

1969 Columbia University, M.P.H.

1968 Columbia University, M.S.

1962 Bennett College, Greensboro, NC

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2026

Beverly's Athens, Athenaeum, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

2025

Beverly Buchanan, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin, DE (forthcoming); traveling to Frac Lorraine, Metz, FR (2026); Spike Island, Bristol, UK (2027).

2024

Collection 1980s – Present, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY

Beverly Buchanan: I Broke The House, gta exhibitions, ETH Zurich, CH; traveling to Fisk University Galleries, Nashville, TN

2023

Beverly Buchanan: The idea was to capture something closely related to a feeling, Gund Gallery, Gambier, OH

Beverly Buchanan: Northern Walls and Southern Yards, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY

2021

Beverly Buchanan: Shacks and Legends, 1985-2011, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY

2016

Beverly Buchanan: Ruins and Rituals, 1976-2013, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; Spelman Fine Art Museum, Spelman College, Atlanta, GA

2012

The Art of Beverly Buchanan, N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art, Detroit, MI

2005

Beverly Buchanan: Southern Saddlebags and Shotgun Houses, Lane Hall, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

2000

Beverly Buchanan – 6th Annual Masters Series, City Gallery East, Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Atlanta, GA

1998

Beverly Buchanan: Home is a Magnet, Steinbaum Krauss Gallery, New York, NY

1997

Beverly Buchanan, Art Museum of Missoula, Missoula, MT

Beverly Buchanan, The Rural South: Drawings and Sculptures, Opelika Arts Gallery, Opelika, AL & Auburn University, Auburn, AL

Beverly Buchanan, McIntosh Gallery, Atlanta, GA

1996

Beverly Buchanan, Visual Witnessing: Portraits of Shacks and Their Yards, Steinbaum Krauss Gallery, New York, NY

Beverly Buchanan, Tubman African American Museum, Macon, GA

1994-1996

Beverly Buchanan: ShackWorks, A 16 Year Survey, traveling mid-career retrospective hosted by The Montclair Museum of Art, Montclair, NJ

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2026

Divination: Beverly Buchanan & Dionne Lee, Contemporary Art Museum Houston, Houston, TX

2025

Counter History, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA

2024

Edges of Ailey, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

American Art, Brooklyn Museum, New York, NY

Silver Linings: Celebrating the Spelman Art Collection, Spelman College Museum of Fine Arts, Atlanta, GA; traveling to the University of Michigan Museum of Art, MI; Boise Art Museum, ID; Harn Museum of Art, FL; Hunter Museum of American Art, TN

Looking Back: The 14th White Columns Annual, curated by Randy Kennedy, White Columns, NY

Queer Histories, São Paulo Museum of Art, BR

2023

Copy Machine Manifestos: Artists Who Make Zines, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; traveling to Vancouver Art Gallery, BC, Canada.

Inheritance, curated by Rujeko Hockley, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

Groundswell: Women of Land Art, curated by Dr. Leigh A. Arnold, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, TX

Calling, curated by Kathrin Bentele, Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf, DE

So let us all be citizens too, curated by Ebony L. Haynes, David Zwirner, London, UK

2022

feel rubble, curated by NYU Gallatin, Governors Island, New York, NY

Dead Lecturer/Distant Relative, curated by Genji Amino, Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, New York, NY

The Dirty South: Contemporary Art, Material Culture, and the Sonic Impulse, organized by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR

Toni Morrison's Black Book, curated by Hilton Als, David Zwirner, New York, NY

2021

Knowledge of the Past Is the Key to the Future, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY

Memories and Inspiration: The Kerry and C. Betty Davis Collection of African American Art, International Arts and Artists, Washington, DC

The Dirty South: Contemporary Art, Material Culture and the Sonic Impulse, curated by Valerie Cassel Oliver, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA

Dream Monuments: Drawing in the 1960s and 1970s, curated by Erica DiBenedetto and Kelly Montana, Menil Drawing Institute, TX

Now Is The Time: Recent Acquisitions to the Contemporary Collection, Baltimore Museum of Art, MD

2020

Out of Place: A Feminist Look at the Collection, curated by Catherine Morris and Carmen Hermo, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY

2017

Room, Sadie Coles HQ, London, UK

POWER, Sprüth Magers, Los Angeles

We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965 - 65, curated by Catherine Morris, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY

2016

Southern Accent: Seeking The American South in Contemporary Art, Nasher Museum of Art, Durham, NC, Speed Museum of Art, Louisville, KY

2015

THIS MUST BE THE PLACE, John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI

2014

Haunts and Habitats, John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI

When the Stars Begin to Fall: Imagination and the American South, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY

2010

Howard University BEWARE: Women Working at Flomenhaft's, Flomenhaft Gallery, New York, NY

Recollection: The Past Is Present, Cameron Art Museum, Wilmington, NC

2009

Collected. Propositions on the Permanent Collection, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY

Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness, American Visionary Art Museum, Baltimore, MD

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Asheville Art Museum, Asheville, NC

The Art Galleries at Black Studies, University of Texas at Austin, TX

The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY

The Baltimore Museum of Art, MD

Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA

Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA

Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, SC

Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, GA

High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA

Los Angeles County Museum, CA

Mead Art Museum, Amherst, MA

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY

The Minneapolis Institute of Art, MN

The Montclair Art Museum, Montclair, NJ

Morris Museum of Southern Art, Augusta, GA

Muscarelle Museum of Art, College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA

Museum of Contemporary Art, LA

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA

Museum of Modern Art, NY

The Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, NV

Newark Museum, Newark, NJ

Pennsylvania Museum of Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA

Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY

Tampa Museum of Art, Tampa, FL

The Museum of Arts and Sciences, Macon, GA

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY