

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston

5216 Montrose Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77006
CAMH.ORG | @camhouston

Press Release

Exhibition

Divination: Beverly Buchanan & Dionne Lee

September 4, 2026–February 14, 2027



(L to R): Dionne Lee, *Castings* (detail), 2022. Gelatin silver prints, 5 x 7 inches. Courtesy the artist and Petra Bibeau, New York; Beverly Buchanan, *Abandoned Sculpture off Pea Ridge Road, Monroe Co., Georgia* (detail), 1982. Photographs mounted to photobook. Beverly Buchanan papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

HOUSTON, TX (July 10, 2026) – Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH) is excited to announce *Divination: Beverly Buchanan & Dionne Lee*, an exhibition foregrounding Beverly Buchanan and Dionne Lee’s explorations of the myths, majesty, and dispossessions embedded in the American landscape. *Divination* pairs original photographs as well as materials from the late Buchanan’s archives, including photographs, a video, writing, and ephemera, with a selection of videos, photographs, and sculptures by the Columbus-based Lee.

Press Contact

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While Buchanan (1940–2015) and Lee (b. 1988, New York City) are from different generations, both artists explore relationships between Blackness and land, mining racialized histories of the American landscape and its dualities as a site of sanctuary and displacement, sustenance and deprivation. The two artists share an interest in survivalist practices, and each thinks of land as not only a physical place or substance to be encountered, but an accumulation of ever-shifting material and psychic entanglements. *Divination* is the second in a series curated by CAMH Senior Curator Rebecca Matalon to bring together artists across generations as a way to open up new interpretations of

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Dionne Lee, *Untitled Rock Drawing II*, 2023, Gelatin silver print, 10 x 8 inches, courtesy the artist and Petra Bibeau, New York.



Beverly Buchanan, *Untitled*, 1970s–90s. Photograph. Beverly Buchanan papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Courtesy the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

their work, and follows the 2021 exhibition *Wild Life: Elizabeth Murray & Jessi Reaves*.

Divination focuses on a selection of photographs by (and of) Buchanan beginning in the late 1970s when the artist turned increasingly toward the natural landscape, realizing a series of large-scale environmental works and placing stone-like fragments outdoors, often in remote locations across the Southeast where she lived. These images offer insight into the complex and interrelated nature of photography, sculpture, and performance found in Buchanan's work. Over the last decade, new scholarship has brought renewed and much deserved critical attention to Buchanan's profound but under-recognized contributions to the history of land art and environmental sculpture. This exhibition aims to delve into lesser-known aspects of the artist's practice, for example, her placing of small cast concrete works in graveyards of enslaved peoples across rural Georgia, and her "auto-archival" use of photography to document these covert actions, major public works, and herself. *Divination* also includes a three-channel video by curator and writer Jennifer Burris and artists Park McArthur and Jason Hirata that features visual and sonic documentation of four of Buchanan's earthworks.

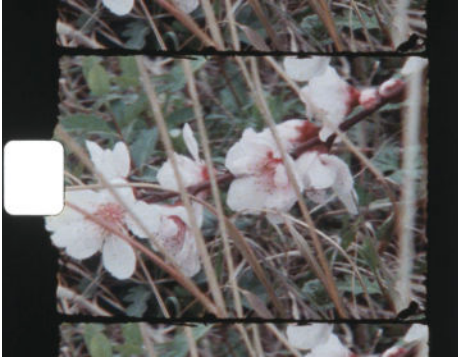
Divination places Buchanan's work in dialogue with Lee's photographic and filmic examinations of what it means to tend to, seek out, and honor the land on which we live, including its hidden and darker histories. Lee's images offer an alternative vantage on the American landscape, highlighting the small, intimate, and often overlooked details of the natural world. This orientation to the ground is not only physical, but speaks to a political, ethical, and philosophical approach to a medium historically tied to colonialist and imperialist domination. Rather than seeking out specific sites based on their racialized histories, Lee approaches the very history of our nation's relationship to land as inextricably tied to extraction and displacement. At the same time, her work is emphatically rooted in local ecologies, responding to the varied geographical terrains she has called home.

The works included in *Divination* attest to artmaking as a summoning, a response to and refusal of erasure. Through fragmentation and dispersion, they show the instability of land itself, as both a physical substance and psychic terrain. If, as the title of the exhibition suggests, the artists' works are bound up in a shared desire to uncover hidden histories, they are also committed to letting these histories remain out of focus and elusive. This exhibition positions their practices as forms of divination— making visible what all too often remains unseen.

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Beverly Buchanan, *Cherry Blossom Festival Ocmulgee River Happening* (still), 1982. Super 8 transferred to video (color, silent); 8:45 minutes. Beverly Buchanan papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Courtesy the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.



Dionne Lee, *Untitled Rock Drawing V*, 2024, Gelatin silver print. 10 x 8 inches, courtesy the artist and Petra Bibeau, New York.

Divination: Beverly Buchanan & Dionne Lee is organized by Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and curated by Rebecca Matalon, Senior Curator.

The exhibition is accompanied by a risograph-printed catalogue co-published by CAMH and F featuring new writing on the artists' works by exhibition curator Matalon and scholar Dr. Elleza Kelley, as well as an assortment of photographs, historical documents, and archival materials.

Following its presentation at CAMH, the exhibition will travel to the Wexner Center for the Arts, The Ohio State University (March 25–July 25, 2027) and Institute for Contemporary Art at Virginia Commonwealth University (September 17, 2027–February 20, 2028).

About Beverly Buchanan

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 in and around New York City. In 1971, Buchanan enrolled at the Art Students League, where she studied with Norman Lewis, devoting her time to artmaking. In the 1970s, she completed a series of Abstract Expressionist “Wall” paintings which were exhibited at the Montclair Art Museum in New Jersey in 1976.

In 1977, Buchanan moved to Georgia. From 1979 to 1986, she made a series of public environmental sculptures across the American Southeast. Most notably, in 1979 she completed *Ruins and Rituals* (also the title of the Brooklyn Museum retrospective from 2016–2017), and in 1981 *Marsh Ruins*, with funding from a Guggenheim Fellowship.

By the mid 1980s, Buchanan was developing what would become her most celebrated body of work: oil pastels and makeshift sculptures known as “shacks” in which she paid tribute to the vernacular architecture of Georgia’s rural communities. Buchanan’s later work continued her exploration of her natural surroundings and folk art, including vivid oil pastel flower drawings and small assemblages.

The winner of numerous honors during her 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 Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Whitney Museum, among others.

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CAMH Mission

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston presents extraordinary, thought-provoking arts programming and exhibitions to educate and inspire audiences nationally and internationally.

General Information

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is located at 5216 Montrose Boulevard, in the heart of Houston's Museum District.

Hours

Wed	11AM–6PM
Thu	11AM–9PM
Fri	11AM–6PM
Sat	11AM–6PM
Sun	11AM–6PM

Admission is always free. For more information, visit CAMH.ORG or call 713.284.8250.

About Dionne Lee

Dionne Lee (b. 1988, New York, NY) works in photography, collage, and video to explore power, survival, and personal history in relation to the American landscape. Lee works in Columbus, Ohio and received an MFA at California College of the Arts in San Francisco.

Lee's work has been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Aperture Foundation, New York, International Center of Photography, New York, and Light Work, New York.

Lee is a 2025 Guggenheim Fellow. She was an Artist-in-Residence at the Chinati Foundation, Unseen California, and Land Arts of the American West between 2022-2023. In 2019 Lee was an artist in residence at the Center for Photography at Woodstock.

About Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH)

Established in 1948, CAMH is one of the oldest non-collecting contemporary art museums in the country, and is internationally known for presenting pivotal and landmark work by artists recognized as the most important of the 20th and 21st centuries. CAMH's mandate is to be present, to connect artists and audiences through the urgent issues of our time, and to adventurously promote the catalytic possibilities of contemporary art. CAMH's programming, both in and beyond the Museum, is presented free to the public, and advocates for artists' essential role in society.

Support

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