

TIME

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Rashid Johnson

Multimedia maverick

by **Belinda Luscombe**
EDITOR AT LARGE



Erik Tanner for TIME

Some artists spend their lives honing their skills in one medium. Rashid Johnson's oeuvre spans paintings, sculptures, mixed-media assemblages, mosaics, photographs, performance, films, and men's magazine covers. It's as if, following centuries of the stifling of Black thought, it takes a lot of avenues to explore the complexities of existence in 21st century America. "I'm not invested in medium specificity," Johnson told TIME in 2025, on the eve of a career-defining exhibition in NYC's Guggenheim rotunda that, after a stop in Fort Worth, Texas, will travel to his hometown of Chicago in November. He trusts his audience to follow along. "I think whoever convinced the viewer they should feel insecure... is at fault," he says. Johnson has not taken his stratospheric art-world success lightly, using his influence to promote the work of Black artists who came before him, including McArthur Binion and Robert Colescott, as well as hosting joint exhibitions and residencies with his friends and contemporaries.