

# N'NAMDI CONTEMPORARY

## **RASHID JOHNSON.**

Rashid Johnson, American, born on 1977 is a sculptor and photographer who works in a wide range of everyday materials, including wax, wood, steel, brass, shea butter, ceramic tile, and such found objects as books, records, VHS tapes, live plants, and CB radios. Johnson's work engages questions of personal, racial, and cultural identity, producing a unique synthesis of historical and material references that are grounded in African American and art history while expanding into questions of mysticism and cosmology. Johnson uses "alchemy, divination, astronomy, and other sciences that combine the natural and spiritual worlds" to augment black history. Johnson works in a variety of media with physical and visual materials that have independent artistic significance and symbolism but that are augmented by their connections to black history.

Johnson is described as an artist who avoids the struggles of black people and explores their strengths, while inserting himself as subject in his "aesthetic aspirations" through a variety of forums. Johnson has garnered national attention for both his unusual subject matter and for his process. In addition to portrait photography, Johnson is known for his use of a 19th century process that uses Van Dyke brown, a transparent organic pigment, and exposure to sunlight. He achieves a painterly feel with his prints with the application of pigment using broad-brush strokes.