

## Kerry James Marshall BIOGRAPHY

Kerry James Marshall, one of the most celebrated artists currently working in the United States, was commissioned to create *A Monumental Journey* to commemorate the 1925 founding of the National Bar Association in Des Moines.

Born in Birmingham, Alabama in 1955, Kerry James Marshall grew up in South Central Los Angeles. He now lives in Chicago, and previously taught at the School of Art and Design at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Marshall, who is a MacArthur Foundation “genius grantee,” has exhibited widely in both this country and around the world.

His large-scale paintings, sculptures, and other objects often take African-American life and history as their subject matter, and deal with the effects of the Civil Rights movement on domestic life, in addition to working with elements of popular culture. Through his art, Marshall explores the experiences of African-Americans and the narratives of American history that have often excluded black people. Drawing upon the artist’s prodigious knowledge of art history and the scattered populations of Africa, his paintings combine figurative and abstract styles and multiple allusions, bringing into play “high” and “low” sources — for instance, classical works of art and comics.

His artwork is exhibited in more than 50 major public collections including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Denver Art Museum, the Harvard Art Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the National Gallery of Art, the Smithsonian Museum of American Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art and Yale University.

Kerry James Marshall with a model of *A Monumental Journey*

