Mildred Thompson

Mildred Thompson was born in 1936 in Jacksonville (USA). She died in 2003 in Atlanta (USA).

Thompson studied at Howard University (Washington, D.C.) under the tutelage of James A. Porter, a pioneering African American art historian, and earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1957. In 2016, her solo exhibition, “Mildred Thompson: Resonance, Selected Works from the 1990s”, was held at the SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah (Georgia). Her work was featured in the 2017 group exhibition, “Magnetic Fields: Expanding American Abstraction, 1960s to Today”, at the National Museum of Women in the Arts (Washington, D.C.); the exhibition later travelled to the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art (Kansas City, Missouri). In 2025, the MNAM – Centre Pompidou acquired a large painting by Thompson, which featured in the exhibition “Paris noir”. An exhibition entitled “Mildred Thompson: Frequencies” opened at ICA Miami in 2025.

Mildred Thompson’s work is present in numerous public and private collections, including the Brooklyn Museum, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.; New Orleans Museum of Art, Louisiana; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; the Larry and Brenda Thompson Collection of African American Art; the Mott-Warsh Collection in Flint, Michigan.

Solo shows (selection)

2026

Cosmos Calling, Galerie Lelong, New York, United States

2025

Mildred Thompson: Frequencies, ICA Miami, Miami, United States

2023

L'Appel de la Lumière, Galerie Lelong, Paris, France

2022

Mildred Thompson: Cosmic Flow, New Britain Museum of American Art, New Britain, United States

2021

Mildred Thompson: Helio Centric, John W. Bardo Fine Arts Center, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, United States

Throughlines, Assemblages and Works on Paper from 1960s to the 1990s, Galerie Lelong, New York, United States

2019

Mildred Thompson: The Atlanta Years, 1986-2003, Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, Atlanta, United States

2018

Mildred Thompson: Radiation Explorations and Magnetic Field, Galerie Lelong & Co., New York, United States

2016

Mildred Thompson: Resonance, SCAD Museum of Art, Atlanta, United States

2015

Creating Matter: The Prints of Mildred Thompson, Michael C. Carlos Museum of Art, Atlanta, United States

2010

Mildred Thompson: Wood Pictures, Galerie l'Aquarium, Valenciennes, France

Making the Invisible Visible: Photographs and Works on Paper by Mildred Thompson, Tubman African American Museum, Macon, United States

2009

Mildred Thompson: A Life Long Exploration, Leopold Hoesch Museum and Schloss Burgau, Düren, Germany

1999

Omega '99 Painting Exhibition: Mildred Thompson, Georgia Perimeter College, Atlanta, United States

1997

Mildred Thompson: Deep Space, Jacksonville Museum of Contemporary Art, Jacksonville, United States

1996

Mildred Thompson: Hand Pulled Prints and Drawings: A Retrospective, 1956-1996, The Fine Print Gallery at Rolling Stone Press, Atlanta, United States

1995

Mildred Thompson, Kenkelaba House, New York, United States

1994

Mildred Thompson, Hochschule für Kunst & Design, Halle-sur-Saale, Germany

Cosmic Consciousness, Auburn University, Auburn, United States

1992

Mildred Thompson: Paintings, Prints and Sculpture, Brenau College, Gainesville, United States

1990

Mildred Thompson: Concatenation, Agnes Scott College, Atlanta, United States

1987

In and Out of Germany, Goethe-Institut, Atlanta, United States

1980

Mildred Thompson, Franz Bader Gallery and Bookstore, Washington, United States

1979

Fantasy in Form, Premiere Gallery, Bethesda, United States

1977

Allegro in Spruce: Mildred Thompson, Harvard University, Cambridge, United States

Mildred Thompson, James A. Porter Gallery of Art, Howard University, Washington, United States

1975

Allegro in Spruce: Mildred Thompson, Tampa Bay Arts Center, Tampa Bay, United States

1974

Mildred Thompson: Zeichnungen und Radierungen, Galerie Kunsthaüsle, Singen, Germany

1973

The Gas Mask, Neu Galerie—Sammlung Ludwig, Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany

1969

Mildred Thompson, Galerie Bodo Glaub, Cologne, Germany

Mildred Thompson: der mensch, Galerie Bodo Glaub, Cologne, Germany

1968

Mildred Thompson, Ferbes, Düren, Germany

Mildred Thompson, Kline Galerie, Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany

1965

Mildred Thompson, Kunsttruhe, Düren, Germany

1964

Mildred Thompson, Kunsttruhe, Düren, Germany

1960

Mildred Thompson, Galerie Sander, Hamburg, Germany

1959

Mildred Thompson, Galerie Sander, Hamburg, Germany

Group shows (selection)

2026

Revelation: A Journey into Abstraction, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, United States

2025

Paris Noir, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

2023

Color Effects, Galerie Lelong, New York, United States

Spectrum: On Color & Contemporary Art, Museum of African Diaspora, San Francisco, United States

2022

9th Street and Beyond: 70 Years of Women in Abstraction, Hunter Dunbar Projects, New York, United States

Complex Uncertainties: Artists in Postwar America, Telfair Museums, Savannah, United States

Parallax: Framing the Cosmos, The Fances Young Tang Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, United States

Revisiting 5+1, Staller Center for the Arts, Stony Brook University, New York, United States

The Dirty South: Contemporary Art, Material Culture and the Sonic Impulse, Crystal Bridges Museum, Bentonville, United States

2021

Life After the Revolution: Kate Millett's Art Colony for Women, The Dorsky Museum at SUNY New Paltz, New York, United States

2020

Duro Olowu: Seeing Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, United States

Memories & Inspiration: The Kerry and C. Betty Davis Collection of African American Art, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, United States

Never Done: 100 Years of Women in Politics and Beyond, Tang Museum of Art, New York, United States

The Dirty South: Contemporary Art, Material Culture and the Sonic Impulse, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, United States

2019

Art After Stonewall, 1969-89, Grey Art Gallery and Leslie Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, New York, United States

Innovation and Imagination: The Global Dialogue in Mid to Late 20th Century Art, Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, Jacksonville, United States

2018

Surface Work – Abstract Painting by Women, Victoria Miro Galleries, London, United Kingdom

Approaching Abstraction, Telfair Museums, Jepson Center, Savannah, United States

2017

Expanding Tradition: Selections from the Larry D. and Brenda A. Thompson Collection, Georgia Museum of Art, Athens, United States

Magnetic Fields: Expanding American Abstraction, 1960s to Today, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, United States

Recent Acquisitions in Modern and Contemporary Art, New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, United States

2010

Looking Ahead: Portraits from the Mott-Warsh Collection, Las Cruces Museum of Fine Art & Culture, Mexico City, Mexico

Abstraction + Abstraction, Wilmer Jennings Gallery at Kenkeleba House, New York, United States

Black Artists of Georgia: Selections from the Tubman Museum, Arts Clayton Gallery, Jonesboro, United States

Cosmic Convergence: Art and Science, I.P. Stanback Museum and Planetarium, Claflin University, United States

2009

Tradition Redefined: The Larry and Brenda Thompson Collection of African American Art, David C. Driskell Center, University of Maryland, College Park, United States

2008

African-American Abstract Artists, Penn State HUB-Robeson Galleries, University Park, United States

Something to Look Forward To: Abstract Art by 22 Distinguished Americans of African Descent, Morris Museum of Art, Augusta, United States

2007

Masterpieces of African American Art: An African American Perspective, M. Hanks Gallery, Santa Monica, United States

2005

A Proud Continuum: Eight Decades of Art at Howard Universit, Howard University Gallery of Art, Washington, United States

2004

Anima of the African Diaspora: The Feminine Presence, Clark Atlanta University Art Galleries, Atlanta, United States

Atlanta Collects / Women, City Gallery East, Atlanta, United States

Images of America, African American Voices: Selections from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Walker, Walton Arts Center, Fayetteville, United States

Something to Look Forward To, Phillips Museum of Art, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, United States

2000

African American Abstraction, City Gallery East, Atlanta, United States

1999

The Hourglass Project: A Women's Vision, Bill Lowe Gallery, Atlanta, United States

1997

Fine Arts Exhibition, Boys and Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta, Atlanta, United States

Group Show, Kenkeleba House, New York, United States

Joy of the Journey: Ten Georgia Women Artists, Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, Atlanta, United States

1996

Nine Georgia Women, Washington Women's Museum, Washington Women's Museum, Washington, United States

1995

African-American Printmaking, 1838 to the Present, Rockland Center for the Arts, New York, United States

African-American Works on Paper, Jacksonville Museum of Contemporary Art, Jacksonville, United States

Group Show, Kenkeleba House, New York, United States

Stripping an Idea: Recent Abstract Works, Blue River Gallery, Jacksonville, United States

1993

Atlanta Artists (Selected Works from the Permanent Collection) + New Works + New Acquisitions, Hammonds House Museum, Atlanta, United States

1992

Free Within Ourselves: African-American Artists in the Collection of the National Museum of American Art, National Museum of American Art, Washington, United States

1991

In Celebration of the Samella S. Lewis Collection, CRT's Craftery Gallery, Hartford, United States

The Search for Freedom: African American Abstract Painting 1945-1975, Kenkeleba House, New York, United States

1990

Mildred Thompson: The German Years, Gilla Juette Fine Art, Atlanta, United States

1987

Art Works from the Black Women's Collection, Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, Atlanta, United States

1982

Forever Free: Art by African-American Women 1862-1980, Center for the Visual Arts Gallery at Illinois State University, Normal, United States

1979

American Drawings II, Smithsonian Institutio, Washington, United States

Cross Pollination, Los Angeles Women's Building, Los Angeles, United States

Impressions/Expressions: Black American Graphics, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, United States

Washington Women in the Visual Arts, Washington Women's Arts Center, Washington, United States

1978

15 Afro-American Women, H.C. Taylor Gallery, North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, United States

8th Annual Faculty Exhibition, Howard University Gallery of Art, Howard University, Washington, United States

1977

Transitions: Sculpture, Painting, Graphics, LeMoyne Art Foundation, Tallahassee, United States

1976

The Afro-American Collection, Fisk University, Nashville, United States

1975

Art Expo '75, Tate Galleries, London, United Kingdom

1970

Aachen Artist, Musee St. Denis, Reims, France

1967

Wood Work, Kleine Galerie Aachen, Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany

1961

New Vistas in American Art, Howard University Gallery of Art, Washington, United States

1958

Art USA, Madison Square Garden, New York, United States

Biennials (selection)

2018

We Don't Need Another Hero, Berlin Biennial, Berlin, Germany

1992

A/Cross Currents: Synthesis in African American Abstract Painting / Croisements des parcours, Biennale de l'Art African Contemporain, Dakar, Senegal

Public collections (selection)

Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

Hamburg Museum, Hamburg, Germany

Leopold Hoesch Museum, Düren, Germany

Stadt Museum, Hamburg, Germany

American Federation of Arts, New York, United States

Brooklyn Museum, New York, United States

Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, United States

Columbus Museum, Columbus, United States

Cummer Museum, Jacksonville, United States

Fisk University, Nashville, United States

Georgia Museum of Art, Athens, United States

Howard University, Washington, United States

MoMA – Museum of Modern Art, New York, United States

Mott Warsh Collection, Flint, United States

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, United States

Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, United States

New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, United States

Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, United States

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, United States

The Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham, United States

The Coca Cola Company, Atlanta, United States

The National Museum of Women in the Art, Washington, United States

The Telfair Museum of Art, Savannah, United States

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond Virginia , United States