

John McIntire is an enduring cultural figure who taught at the Memphis College of Art from 1961-85. Although McIntire's primary focus has always been his sculpture practice he has had little interest in a traditional professional career. He has been happy to exhibit his work, but he does not seek it out. Most of his work has been bought by collectors who show up at his house. McIntire is a gambler and the prices he would ask always fluctuated depending on how his luck has been at the casinos in Mississippi. In addition to his art McIntire has been a facilitator, collaborator, teacher, and an example for generations involved in concrete and fleeting creative endeavors in Memphis. He owned and organized the famed Memphis coffee house, the Bitter Lemon, from 1962-65 that hosted many blues revival musicians including Bukka White and Furry Lewis and younger musicians like McIntire's friend John Fahey. McIntire was at the center of the counter-culture in Memphis in the 1960s and 70s. The late *New York Times* music critic Robert Palmer describes the milieu: "McIntire was like a non-guru. He was a bit older than everybody else, he had this great visual eye and this unlimited tolerance for weirdness. I think of his place over there on Madison, Beatnik Manor, as having been like a salon for artists. . . . From night to night it was hard to tell who lived there and who didn't. The epicenter of the Memphis beatnik scene was for sure with McIntire. And it wasn't really anything he said or did, although he could be incredibly charming and funny. His attitude was like, 'I'm doing art, here's my house, you know, rock on.'"

McIntire was born in Wellsville, Ohio in 1935 and moved to Memphis to start the sculpture department at the Memphis Academy of Art (later Memphis College of Art) in 1961. He had attended the Carnegie Institute of Technology (later Carnegie Mellon), College of Steubenville (later Franciscan University of Steubenville), the Cleveland Institute of Art, and Cranbrook Academy, but did not receive any degrees.

McIntire's work has been exhibited widely including at the Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN, the Cleveland Museum of Art, Clough-Hanson Gallery, Memphis, TN, Alice Bingham Gallery, Memphis, TN and solo shows at Tops Gallery in 2018 and 2022

His work is in the collections of the Brooks Museum of Art, the Cranbrook College of Art, and the Cleveland Museum of Art. McIntire's public sculpture *The Muse*, 1976 is permanently installed on Main Street across from the Memphis City Hall.