

## ■ Beauford Delaney

## ■ James Baldwin

**1901** Born Knoxville, Tennessee, on December 30 to Delia Johnson Delaney and the Reverend John Samuel Delaney, 815 East Vine Avenue.

**1919** Father dies on April 30. Rioting breaks out in August after an African American man, Maurice Franklin Mays, is accused of murdering a white woman in what would later become known as Knoxville's "Red Summer." Memories of the violence haunt Delaney for years afterward.

**1923** Moves to Boston, taking art classes at the Massachusetts Normal Art School, Copley Society, South Boston School of Art, and Lowell Institute.

**1924** Born Harlem, New York, on August 2 to Emma Berdis Jones. Biological father is unknown.

**1927** Mother marries the Reverend David Baldwin. Together, they had eight biological children (four girls and four boys) in addition to James, the eldest.

**1929** Moves to New York, spending the first night sleeping on a park bench in Union Square. Settles in Harlem, where the following year he is joined by younger brother Joseph (1904-1991). Attends Public School 24 and soon develops a talent for writing.

**1930** Work is selected for an exhibition at Whitney Studio Galleries (later the Whitney Museum of American Art). Hired as a doorman at the Whitney and given a studio and basement apartment. First one-person show, at New York Public Library's Harlem branch (now the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture). Classes at the Art Students League with Thomas Hart Benton and John Sloan. Finds work with the mural division of the Federal Art Project, Works Progress Administration.

**1931** With brother Joseph moves to 18 Downing Street in Greenwich Village.

**1933** With brother Joseph returns to Knoxville to visit family. Beauford produces pastel portraits of Joseph and mother Delia.

**1935** Works with Charles Alston on the Harlem Hospital mural project, joins the Harlem Art Guild, and spends time at Alston's "306" space.

**1936** After living at several addresses on Downing Street in the 1930s, settles nearby at 181 Greene Street, where he would remain until 1952. First work in print, at age 12, a short story about the Spanish Revolution, appears in a church newspaper.

**1938** Gains national attention when *Life* magazine features photographs of him painting in Washington Square. Begins preaching at Fireside Pentecostal Assembly, his stepfather's church.

**1940** Meets Delaney for the first time at the artist's 181 Greene Street studio.

**1941** Spends Christmas with his family in Knoxville. Appears in Delaney's art for the first time in *Dark Rapture* (James Baldwin).

**1942** Graduates from DeWitt Clinton High School.

**1943** Stepfather David Baldwin dies.

**1944** Appears in Delaney's pastel *Portrait of James Baldwin*.

**1945** Lauded by friend Henry Miller in his chapbook "The Amazing and Invariable Beauford DeLaney."

**1948** Awarded a Rosenwald Foundation fellowship and publishes first short story. Moves to Paris.

**1950** Visits Knoxville in March. Receives a two-month fellowship to Yaddo, the famous artist's retreat in Saratoga Springs, New York.

**1952** Moves to 713 Broadway. Begins writing *The Amen Corner*.

**1953** Visits Knoxville in August before leaving by boat from New York for Paris on August 28. Reunites with Baldwin, and settles at Hôtel des Ecôles in Saint-Germain. Publishes his first novel, *Go Tell it on the Mountain*, which earns praise from Langston Hughes.

**1954** Paintings are included in exhibitions at the Musée d'Art Moderne and the Musée des Beaux Arts in Paris. Earns a Guggenheim fellowship and receives a fellowship to Yaddo. *Giovanni's Room*, his second novel, rejected by Knopf because of its homosexual themes. Finishes first draft of *The Amen Corner*.

**1955** In December, moves to 68 Rue Paul Vaillant Couturier in Clamart, a Paris suburb, a move arranged by Richard Olney, a friend of Baldwin's who also occupied the residence. Publishes collection of essays, *Notes of a Native Son*; first play, *The Amen Corner*, is performed at Howard University.

**1956** Travels with Baldwin and artist friend Lawrence Calcagno to Ibiza, Spain. Publishes second novel, *Giovanni's Room*.

**1957** Meets Martin Luther King Jr., and travels across the American South as a correspondent for *Harper's Magazine*. "Sonny's Blues" appears in *Partisan Review*. Spends time with Delaney at his studio in the Paris suburb of Clamart, noting significant growth in the artist's work.

**1958** Mother, Delia, dies in Knoxville.

**1960** Clamart paintings are shown for the first time, at Galerie Paul Facchetti, Paris.

**1961** While traveling by boat across the Mediterranean to Greece, jumps overboard in a suicide attempt and is rescued by a fisherman. Friends pay for his return to Paris and hospitalization. Second essay collection, *Nobody Knows My Name*, published by Dial. Makes first trip to Istanbul, where he finishes writing his third novel, *Another Country*.

**1962** Moves to 53 Rue Vercingetorix in Montparnasse. Painter and friend Paul Jenkins publishes a tribute, "Beauford Delaney: A Quiet Legend," in the December issue of *Art International*. First visit to Africa; Dial publishes *Another Country*.

**1963** "The Fire Next Time" is published in *The New Yorker* and by Dial. Appears on cover of *Time* magazine. Meets with Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy at Kennedy's home to discuss civil rights. Participates in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom and makes his second trip to Africa.

**1964** Solo exhibition at Galerie Lambert, Paris, featuring a mix of recent abstractions and portraits. Completes second play, *Blues for Mister Charlie*, while in Istanbul. Contributes an essay for the publication accompanying Delaney's Galerie Lambert show.

**1965** Paints his monumental portrait *Marian Anderson*, and dedicates it to Baldwin. *Going to Meet the Man*, Baldwin's first short-story collection, is published by Dial and dedicated to Beauford Delaney. Debates William F. Buckley Jr. before 1,200 students at Cambridge University and receives a two-minute standing ovation. Makes first trip to Israel.

**1966** Completes his fourth novel, *Tell Me How Long the Train Has Been Gone*, while in Istanbul, and is visited by Delaney.

**1968** *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* is published by Dial. Moves to Los Angeles to work on the script for *Autobiography of Malcolm X*. His distress at Martin Luther King's assassination causes him to abandon the Malcolm X project and return to Europe.

**1969** Spends Christmas with family in Knoxville. During the visit, independent curator Elsa Honig Fine meets with Beauford and Joseph to propose a joint exhibition at the University of Tennessee's Frank H. McClung Museum, where Delia Delaney once worked as a custodian. After returning to Paris in January of 1970, writes his brother to explain that he is not able to participate in the exhibition, which subsequently becomes a solo exhibition of Joseph's work.

**1970** Buys a home at Saint-Paul-de-Vence, in the South of France.

**1971** Travels to London to appear with poet/activist Nikki Giovanni on the television program *Soul*. At his new home, he is visited frequently by an increasingly unstable Delaney, who sees Baldwin's home as a refuge.

**1972** Publishes *No Name in the Street*, his fourth book of non-fiction, and dedicates it to Delaney.

**1973** Interviewed along with dancer Josephine Baker and novelist Cecil Brown by Professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. in Saint-Paul-de-Vence. A *Dialogue*, a conversation with Nikki Giovanni, is published by Lippincott. Collaborates with Ray Charles at the Newport Jazz Festival.

**1974** Mental health declines further and Baldwin and other friends place him in Sainte-Anne Hospital, Paris for treatment. Publishes fifth novel, *If Beale Street Could Talk*.

**1976** Publishes children's book *Little Man, Little Man*, which is dedicated to Delaney, and *The Devil Finds Work*, a critique of the film industry.

**1978** First retrospective exhibition, at the Studio Museum, Harlem, organized by Richard Long. Begins one of several teaching stints at Bowling Green College and is awarded the Martin Luther King Memorial Medal by the City College of New York. Essay from Delaney's 1964 Galerie Lambert exhibition brochure is included in the publication accompanying the painter's retrospective at the Studio Museum, Harlem.

**1979** Dies on March 26 at age 77 at Sainte-Anne. Teaches at the University of California at Berkeley. Returns to Paris on the occasion of Beauford Delaney's death. Makes his first trip to Russia.

**1980** Visits University of Florida for a meeting of the African Literature Association, where he participates in a dialogue on the "African aesthetic." Travels through the American South as part of the television documentary *I Heard It through the Grapevine*.

**1981** *Playboy* magazine publishes Baldwin's essay on the Atlanta child murders, "The Evidence of Things Not Seen."

**1986** Awarded La Légion D'Honneur by President François Mitterrand. Travels to Russia with group of writers to meet Mikhail Gorbachev and discuss world peace.

**1987** Dies on December 1 at age 63 of stomach cancer at home in Saint-Paul-de-Vence.