

PIPPY HOULDSWORTH GALLERY

WOODY DE OHELLO

on and ON

THE BOX

16 September-31 October 2020



on and ON, 2020, ceramic, underglaze, glaze, 42 x 43 x 37 cm

Pippy Houldsworth Gallery is delighted to present a new ceramic work, *on and ON*, by California-based artist, Woody De Othello, made especially for The Box. This solo project is the first presentation of the artist's work in the UK.

Othello presents a seemingly whimsical composition of household items – an alarm clock, a padlock, a wristwatch – each humorously animated in tension with the solidity of their objecthood and ceramic medium. Shaped using a 'slab construction' technique, the work appears quirkily mobile, yet simultaneously slumped and squashed. A sense of fatigue weighs down on its form, heightened through sombre inky blue and leaden grey glazes.

Timepieces recur as a motif within Othello's practice. This meditation on the experience of time in contrast to the markers of its passing has been sharpened for the artist whilst working during lockdown – time has seemed to stretch endlessly or stand quite still. On closer inspection, the numbers of the clockface appear to have switched places with the combination dial of the padlock, provoking a feeling of unease and confusion. Disorientation is further expressed through the symbolism of the alarm clock – a call to wake up – in contrast with the hands of the wristwatch, stilled in the kiln, crystallising the present moment.

Compounding action and paralysis, Othello speaks to a moment both of increased political activity and overwhelming weariness in the context of momentum behind the Black Lives Matter movement and the slow pace of change. The padlock adds a darker note speaking to security, exclusivity and gatekeeping. In adopting a familiar, domestic language, Othello addresses a wide audience, whilst demonstrating an oppressive reality, not distanced through isolation or screens, but now, more than ever, part of the fabric of our everyday lives.

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About the artist

Woody De Othello (b. 1991, Miami, Florida) obtained a BFA from Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL (2013) and an MFA from California College of Arts, San Francisco, CA (2017). His practice encompasses ceramics, painting and large-scale bronze sculpture. Othello opened his first solo museum exhibition, *Woody De Othello: Breathing Room*, at San José Museum of Art, San José, CA in November 2019. The artist's work has also been included in group exhibitions including *Sleight of Hand*, Center for Craft, Asheville, NC (2020); the 33rd Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts, Slovenia (2019); *Bay Area Now*, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA (2018) and *FRONT International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art*, Cleveland, OH (2018). In 2018 Othello's work was commissioned by the San Francisco Arts Commission and permanently installed at The San Francisco International Terminal. The artist's work is held in the collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), CA; San José Museum of Art, San José, CA and Rennie Collection, Vancouver, BC. Upcoming exhibitions include *Close to Home: Creativity in Crisis* at SFMOMA (2020). He is represented by Jessica Silverman Gallery in San Francisco and KARMA in New York. Othello lives and works in Oakland, CA.

About The Box

The Box is a small white cube suspended in a black passage, its hidden LED lighting causing it to hover at the back of the space. Initiated in 2011, The Box programme to date has commissioned and presented works by Susan Hiller, Paul McCarthy, Shana Moulton, Martha Rosler, Arlene Shechet, Yinka Shonibare CBE, Ai Weiwei, Jane and Louise Wilson, and Alina Szapocznikow to name a few.

Gallery opening hours

Tuesday – Saturday, 11 am – 6pm

We welcome walk ins but please be aware numbers are limited in the gallery space and booking is recommended. We prefer that you wear a mask. Hand sanitizer will be provided.

Please click to schedule your visit: <https://app.artsvp.co/837ebf>

For further information please contact:

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