

# JESSICA SILVERMAN

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## Woody De Othello: Looking In

Opens Saturday, October 2, 2021



Jessica Silverman is delighted to present Woody De Othello's "Looking In," an exhibition of new works comprised of paintings on canvas and paper, ceramic sculptures, and a large-scale outdoor bronze. On view from October 2 to November 13, the exhibition is the artist's second at the gallery. It explores still life as social commentary and psychological inquiry.

A bright orange, ten-foot-high bronze sculpture stands in the center of the show. Titled *Fountain*, it consists of two column-like pipes punctuated by three knobs and three faucet heads. The graceful arc of the tallest tap culminates in a single drop of water. "Moving from the rising tides of the Florida tropics to drought-ridden California, the environment is always on my mind," said Othello. "Among other concepts, *Fountain* is about abundance, scarcity, access and denial." An inversion of Duchamp's 1917 *Fountain*, Othello's 2021 *Fountain* symbolically offers clean, life-sustaining drinking water.

The large bronze is in a sea of ceramic sculptures depicting mirrors, clocks and watches on stools and chairs, hanging lights, light switches, and oversized coffee-mug planters. Bearing witness to the way Othello uses clay as a spontaneous and improvisational material, these forms could be the lyrics to the instrumental jazz music that is in heavy rotation in his studio.

Six oil-on-canvas and four acrylic-on-paper paintings portray domestic spaces full of time pieces, plant life and windows to the outside world. Vibrantly rendered in primary and tertiary colors, the paintings play with natural and artificial light sources that speak to intellectual perspectives and emotional states.

"Looking In" marks a new level of mastery in the artist's command of his forms and themes. Animistic, anthropomorphic, and deeply human, Othello's work evokes both pathos and humor, sensory pleasure and intellectual vigor.

Accompanying Othello's solo show in the main gallery is an exhibition curated by the artist in the upstairs space titled "Closer Together," which features works by Asif Hoque, Faith Icecold, Evan O'Neal Kirkman, Mareiwa Miller, Cinque Mubarak, Tracy Ren, Malaya Tuyay and Xia Zhang.

**Woody De Othello** was born in Miami and now lives in Oakland, CA. His work is in the following public collections: Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA); San Jose Museum of Art; Kohler Art Center, Sheboygan, WI; and the Rennie Collection, Vancouver, BC. Othello was featured in the FRONT International Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art in 2018 and enjoyed a solo show at the San Jose Museum of Art in 2019. Othello holds a B.A. in ceramics from Florida Atlantic University and a M.F.A in studio art from California College of Arts.



Images—**Top:** *Brighter Look*, 2021; *Night Turns to Morning*, 2021. **Bottom:** *Fountain*, 2021.

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