



**AISHA TANDIWE BELL**  
**AKIN. ALIKE. IN REFERENCE TO. OF THE SAME FAMILY.**



Welancora Gallery is pleased to announce AKIN, a new body of work by Aisha Tandiwe Bell on view from November 7-December 11, 2020.

AKIN is Bell's second solo exhibition at Welancora. This iteration includes a new series of mixed media paintings on wood, large and small scale sculpture and a wooden trap, which expands upon her Scars, Bars, Stripes and Camouflage series presented at the gallery in 2017.

Bell utilizes composites of her mental archive of gazes and gestures to create realistic portraits and personifications of ceramic heads, while the bodies are trapped or painted in Indian ink on wood panels. Some of the heads are adorned with vertical strips of paint reminiscent of African scarification, masks, and face painting. In keeping with Bell's interest in ideas centered-around identity, this work acts as camouflage contemplating the possibility of blending in and disappearing, simultaneously. Symbolically the work also references prison bars and the stripes of the American flag.

Metallic, copper, silver and gold leaf, are incorporated in the work to illustrate Bell's interest in value and the desire to consume that which is deemed valuable. Bell's wooden traps are depicted as comfortable spaces to inhabit, yet they simultaneously serve to illustrate the lure of escapism in all of its forms including consumerism and the comfort found in the unchanged and unchallenged. In drawing upon our shared and intersecting histories, Bell weaves together a coherent picture of the conflicted realities that shape who we are and who we can be.

Bell theorizes that these works are of the same family. They share the same intentions. They define themselves through sound and space and time. They slip through clear definitions and assumptions. They are layered in shifting multiple fragmented identities. They are washed in metaphor, simile, and duality. Their faces are masks, they masquerade an extension of their spirit. They are both old and new. They are Kin.

A catalogue with an essay by **Greg Tate** will accompany the show.

An opening reception will take place by appointment on Saturday, November 7 from 6-8pm.



**Aisha Tandiwe Bell** received a B.F.A in Painting and Arts Education and a M.S. in Art and Design Education from Pratt. In 2005 she received a NYFA fellowship in Performance Art/Multidisciplinary Work and was a 2006 Skowhegan Fellow. In 2008 she received a M.F.A in Ceramics from Hunter College. Bell's work has been included in exhibitions at The Harvey Gantt Center in Charlotte, NC, The National Museum of Catholic Art, The Rosa Parks Museum, Edna Manely College in Kingston, Jamaica and the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts. In 2018 Bell was among 14 artists commissioned to create permanent works of art for Adjaye Associates' new electrical switching station in Newark, New Jersey. In 2020 Bell was an artist in residence at Wassaic Project in Wassaic New York. The artist lives and works in New York City.

#### **About Welancora Gallery**

Welancora Gallery is founded by Ivy N. Jones and located in a townhouse in Brooklyn, NY. The gallery's mission is to represent artists from around the world by placing their works with collectors and museums, holding major exhibitions and publishing scholarly catalogues and monographs.

The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday by appointment only from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm. In keeping with COVID-19 protocols masks are required upon entry.

**For press inquiries, please contact Hannah Gottlieb-Graham, ALMA Communications:**  
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