

Press Release
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Welancora Gallery presents *Journey Into The Lost and Found*
Opening reception: February 15 from 6-8pm



Welancora Gallery is pleased to present *Journey Into the Lost and Found*, a solo exhibition of new work by Tyrone Mitchell (b. 1944). The opening reception will take place on Thursday, February 15, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at our 33 Herkimer Street location in Brooklyn, New York. The exhibition will remain on view until March 28, 2024.

The exhibition consists of Mitchell's assemblages, composed of traditional and unconventional objects, from pieces of wood and metal to African ceremonial masks and bullets. The resulting arrangements are reflective of fragmented, albeit global narratives that speak to an evolving, hegemonic world.

While he is deeply engrossed in the process of carving to unveil a form, Mitchell's improvised forms are not only concerned with the individual materials themselves, but how the once disparate pieces join to become a vehicle for storytelling. The sculptures are representative of an ongoing quest to understand international histories and 'otherness' as they exist in the western canon. In particular, in *Tulsa I, The Act*, 2023, this larger than life, freestanding work towers above the human frame, existing in a space between sculpture and installation as it corresponds to a contemporary narrative pertaining to global circumstances. Hovering above the passport masks, Mitchell recontextualizes the depictions of Christ on church fans by replacing them with photographs of the aftermath of the Tulsa Massacre of Little Africa on June 6, 1921. Composed of agrafes, Mitchell connects each independent appendage to another, linking the found objects within the work much like people are linked within the broader context of the world.



Mitchell's artistic background is rooted in sculpture; his traditional Beaux Arts training and travels to West Africa both inform his approach. The usage of found objects is directly inspired by African traditions, namely Malian and Senegalese cultures, which aim to extend the lifespan of the materials. His application of *architecture parlante* ('speaking architecture') is indicative of the global crises his work comments upon; repurposing materials in response to the ongoing

climate crisis and extending beyond the rubric of postcolonial modalities. The resulting sculptures become both a reaction to global history and a reflection upon personal history and identity.



The exhibition also includes a participatory performance piece, *Tulsa II*, intended to provide reflection and healing, as the audience is invited to complete the work during the opening reception.

About the Artist

Tyrone Mitchell (b. 1944) is a sculptor whose approach involves integrating personal experiences with a broader understanding of the history of sculpture worldwide. His interests lie in how materials solidify and shape his sculptural ideas. Inspired by the likes of Julio Gonzales, Pablo Picasso, David Smith, and Auguste Rodin, Mitchell incorporates applied stains, industrial paint, metal sheets, and fabrics into his works.

Travel deeply influences the artist's work and his background in photography assists him in researching and documenting how various cultures differ in how they create and construct. Allowing his found materials to speak for themselves is crucial to Mitchell's artistic practice; by integrating these objects into his artwork, Mitchell not only extends their lifespan, but contributes to a broader conversation of global circumstances.

Mitchell received his BFA in 1965 from the Art Students League of New York. He went on to the New York Studio School, earning his MFA from the institution in 1967. He has had solo exhibitions at G.R. N'Namdi Gallery in Chicago and Birmingham; Bomani Gallery in San Francisco; the Bronx Museum of Art; and the Newark Museum. Mitchell has been included in group exhibitions at the Studio Museum in Harlem, Painted Bride Art Center in Philadelphia, and the Fukui Fine Art Museum in Japan, to name but a few. Mitchell's work is part of various collections, including the Collection of The Newark Museum, The Delaware Art Museum, The Schomburg Center, Time Equities Inc. Readers Digest Corporate Collection, Forma Viva Sculpture Park. Winston Salem State University Sculpture Garden. His honors include fellowships from the Joan Mitchell Foundation, the MacDowell Colony, Lila Wallace, and the Guggenheim Foundation. Recent residencies include Art Omi in Ghent, NY and the Surf Point Foundation in York, Maine. Mitchell has taught at Bard College, Hunter College, and the Delhi College of Art in India; He currently teaches at Queens College in New York.