

HEADSTONE

A Sackful of Seeds

Joshua AM Ross and Judd Schiffman

July 1 - August 27, 2023

For Immediate Release:

Headstone is proud to announce *A Sackful of Seeds*, a two-person exhibition featuring Joshua AM Ross and Judd Schiffman. A combination of saturated, gestural colored pencil drawings from Ross and wall-mounted, ceramic vinyetes by Schiffman cultivate and document a tender phenomenology; each character is an invitation to accept a familiar story - intrinsic, authentic, and perhaps on the cusp of divine. *A Sackful of Seeds* presents an insatiable cadence where one is compelled to listen and observe, a kind of storytelling that is gestative and in its most accurate definition, wonderful.

If ballet were a written language, it might resemble Joshua AM Ross's rhythm in his delicately layered new works. Intimate in scale, each drawing creates a soft rumble - harder than a tiptoe - and not because of weight; it's the intention that comes with sculpting a melody. Depicting black bodies whose facial identities aren't revealed - bending at their waist away from the viewer, covered by a heap of clothing, or grouped together as a single entity performing a group somersault, Ross creates provocative scenarios that place one in the middle of his story. It's a relieving element, finding one's self with a celebratory group surrounded by open space, ripe for projection. Ross's painterly details are a gorgeous merriment to his ability to activate a powerful and relentless curiosity.

Schiffman's new body of work is fueled by a deep awareness of finite time - a driving force behind some of the most prolific artists in our lifetime- Keith Haring, Louise Bourgeois, Kara Walker. For Schiffman, however, it was the birth of his child that sparked this dilemma. Depicting a character, Mothman, Schiffman delivers his updated milestones of found truths. In *I Am with the Self*, Mothman looks proud, almost ecstatic, to share that the interiors of the soul look like an open serving platter for the stomach or chest, glazed in royal blue and gold. Schiffman's eager studio practice is compelling and inspiring, making one comfortable with feeling - all of it; beautiful, painful, and pivotal.

No promise, no guarantee; an obvious sentiment found in Salmon Rushdees's recent fiction from *The New Yorker*, a title directly pulled for this exhibition, *A Sackful of Seeds*. Unbeknownst to both artists, each read the epic tale and found solace in Rushdee's graphically tragic poetics about a small child witnessing the catastrophes and terror of the world only to be given the power to create a new one via a few seeds to be planted. It is belief that drives the heart and perhaps a close runner-up to hope. The ability for an artist to take us with them, to trust them to create an enticing narrative, big or small, is the very thing that churns and yearns the gears of our life - to share it and participate in the inevitable evolution of a story. To tell it is to change it. While Ross and Schiffman are some of the best guides, their works find ways into one's own life, challenging a narrative that seemed all too complete.

Joshua A.M. Ross (b. 1992, Indianapolis) holds a MFA in Art from the University of California, Irvine, and a BFA in Photography from Herron School of Art in Indianapolis, Indiana. Ross's work explores the interplay between drawing and photography through notions of performance, occasioning sculptural and spatial interventions. His artworks incorporate creative participants, fabrics, and bodily limbs as critical focal points interlaced with representational and abstract scenes. In tandem with his completion of a residency at Wells College, String Room Gallery, New York, 2022, and Massachusetts Liberal Arts College, Artist Lab, 2021, Ross opened solo presentations titled *Stumbling Stumbling and come inside*. Other recent notable exhibitions Ross' work has been featured in include *Shadow Tracer* at the Aspen Museum of Art in Aspen, Colorado, 2022-2023, *Loitering is Delightful* at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, 2019-2020 *Slippers at Queens LA*, 2019 a series of performances titled *Telathon* at Human Resources Los Angeles, 2019.

Judd Schiffman (b. 1982) is a Providence, Rhode Island based artist. He has lectured at Harvard University Ceramics and Brown University, and participated in residencies at the Zentrum fur Keramik (Berlin, Germany) and Millay Arts (Austerlitz, NY). Schiffman earned his MFA from the University of Colorado, Boulder and his BA from Prescott College. Schiffman's work has been exhibited throughout the United States, including at The Valley (Taos, NM; 2022), Oddkin Gallery (Providence, RI; 2022), the Jane Hartsook Gallery (New York, NY; 2022), Maake Projects (State College, PA; 2021), 1969 Gallery (New York, NY; 2020), and Inman Gallery (Houston, TX; 2020). In 2016 he received an emerging artist award from the National Council for the Education of Ceramic Arts. Schiffman is currently the Visiting Assistant Professor of Ceramics at Providence College.

Headstone is an artist-run, for-profit contemporary art gallery located in Kingston, New York, dedicated to showing two-person and solo exhibitions. The 1,100sq ft gallery space was created by artists Lauren Aitken and Chase Folsom. The gallery is deeply committed to our artists and their ideas, providing them with a beautiful contemporary space and the necessary support to help them foster and fulfill their artistic vision. It is with considerate curation and our vast love of the art world that we bring together and introduce emerging and established artists, some of whom have yet to benefit from wider critical and commercial attention. We believe the arts should be equitable and accessible to anyone who would like to engage. Through artist exhibitions, we hope that Headstone can collectively bring people together, create community, expand connections and become an engaging, diverse melting pot of artists, creatives, collectors, and community members.

Opening Reception: Saturday, July 1st, 5-8pm

Gallery Hours:
Friday to Sunday, Noon- 5pm
Or by appointment

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