

AISHA TANDIWE BELL

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EDUCATION

- 2008 M.F.A Ceramics, **Hunter College**, New York, NY
2006 **Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture**, Skowhegan Maine.
1999 M.S. Art and Design Education (focus in Painting) **Pratt Institute**, Brooklyn, NY.
1998 B.F.A Painting and Art Education, (Minor in Cultural Studies) **Pratt Institute**, Brooklyn, NY

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2012 Living Sculpture II, Cage Gallery, Edna Manley College, Kingston Jamaica
2011 *Black Gossamer*, Glass Curtain Gallery, Columbia College, Chicago IL
Open Studios, LMCC Swing Space, Governors Island. NY
Buy what you Love, Marianne Boeksy Gallery, New York, NY
2010 A.I.Rspace, Abrons Art Center , New York NY
American Ship, Junto Meeting Center, Brooklyn NY
Urban Jungle, Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, Brooklyn, NY
Wearing Spirit, CCCADI. New York NY
Art/Works in the Spirit, Union Theological Seminary, New York NY
2009 *Getting A head*, Corridor Gallery, Brooklyn NY (solo)
From Africa to America, Iona College Council of the Arts, New Rochelle, NY
2008 *Reel Sisters Film Festival*, The Kumble Theater, Brooklyn NY
Breaking Head, Hunter College Time Square Gallery, New York NY
The Beauty Shop, Curated by Derrick Adams, Basel Miami Florida
The Black, Madonna The Rosa Parks Museum, Montgomery AL: **traveling** to The National Museum of Catholic Art, New York NY, Castle Gallery, New Rochelle, NY (2005-2008)
2007 *The Postmillennial Black Madonna*, MOCADA & Skylight Gallery, Brooklyn NY
Time, Diaspora Vibe Gallery, Miami Florida
2006 *The Pulse of New Brooklyn*, Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Art, Brooklyn NY
2005 *Project Diversity*, Sputnik Gallery, Brooklyn NY
2004 *Eve*, Rush arts Foundation, New York, NY
Black history month, Brooklyn Borough Hall, Brooklyn NY
A Blues for Nina, BMCC, New York, NY.
2003 *Fundraiser* MOCADA MUSEUM, Brooklyn, NY .
2002 *Eros Negras*, Afro-American Cultural Center, Charlotte, NC.
2002 Challenge Exhibition, Skylight Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Women's Work, NYC Urban Experience Museum, New York, NY
Mostly Emerging, Corridor Gallery, Brooklyn NY
2001 *Looking through Stone Walls*, Grand Army Plaza library, Brooklyn NY (solo)

SELECTED PERFORMANCES

- 2011 "Nuttin Island" LMCC Swing Space, Governors Island. NY
"Out Damned Box" LMCC Swing Space, Governors Island. NY
2010 "Putting our Heads together" Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, Brooklyn, NY
2009 "Getting a Head" Corridor Gallery, Brooklyn NY

AWARDS RESIDENCIES AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2012 The Laundromat Project Public Art Commission
- 2011 LMCC Swing Space Residency, Governors Island, New York
- 2010 Nominated for The Rema Hort Mann
- 2009-10 Artist In Residence, Abrons Art Center Henry Street Settlement, New York NY
- 2009 Summer Artist in Residence, In Practice at the Rush Arts Foundation's Corridor Gallery, Brooklyn NY
- 2009 Nominated for The Rema Hort Mann and The Louis Comfort Tiffany grants
- 2007 Hunter College Travel Grant (South Africa)
- 2006 Camille Hank Cosby Fellowship (Skowhegan)
- 2005 NYFA New York Foundation for the Arts fellow in Performance Art/ Multidisciplinary Work

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2011 Fomberg, Jason "Eye Exam: Selling Hot Drama" Art.newcity.com, December 6, 2011
- Whorley, Sam 'Black Gossamer' explores racial identity through fashion" Chicagoreader.com November 17,2011
- 2010 Arterberry, Marissa "AISHA TANDIWE BELL DISCUSSES CHASING THE CROWN." Societyhae.com, May 31,2010 (video interview)
- Traven, ABRONS ARTIST "AIR OUT" thelowdownny.com, May 28,2010
- Robinson, Kenya "BATH IN A BUCKET." kenyaworkspace.blogspot.com, April 14, 2010
- 2009 Marissa ArterBerry "PERFORMANCE AISHA TANDIWE BELL." Soul Goddess.blogspot.com, September 12, 2009
- 2007 Ogunnaike, Lola. "COLLECTIONS: A Museum Grows In Brooklyn." New York Times, March 28,2007
- 2006 Curtis, Lisa J "A NEW HOME" The Brooklyn Paper, May 27, 2006
- Miller, Leigh Anne " NEW HOME FOR AFRICAN DIASPORA MUSEUM" Art in America, May 1, 2006
- 2004 Mccallister, Jared. "ARTIST PAY HOMAGE TO JAZZ DIVA NINA SIMONE." New York Daily News, March 28, 2004
- 2002 Dewees, Gayle. " SKYLIGHT GALLERY OFFERS RANGE OF ART." New York Daily News, September 5, 2002

LECTURES / ARTIST TALKS

- 2011 *Black Gossamer*, Glass Curtain Gallery, Columbia College, Chicago IL with Ebony G. Patterson
- 2008 The Black Madonna, Castle Gallery, New Rochelle, NY
- Museum of Fine Arts, Boston MA, Panel Discussion 'Racing Yourself', with Senga Nengudi and Dread Scott
- 2007 Skylight Gallery, BKLYN NY, Panel w/ Sherman Fleming, Wanda Raimundi Ortiz & Keisha Scarville moderated by Wangechi Mutu
- 2006 MOCADA, Brooklyn NY, Artist Talk
- 2002 Corridor Gallery Brooklyn NY, Artist Talk and Performance
- 2001 Grand Army Plaza library, Brooklyn NY, Artist Talk

Bio

Aisha Tandiwe Bell is an interdisciplinary artist her studio practice is a commitment to creating myth and ritual through the use of narrative performance art, video, sound, drawing and installation. Bell received a BFA in Painting and a MS in Art Education from Pratt in 1999. As a performance spoken word artist she released 2 CD's with the group second2last between 1995-2005. She received a 2005 NYFA in Performance Art/Multidisciplinary Work and was a 2006 Skowhegan Fellow. In 2008 she completed her MFA at Hunter College .Bell was a 2009 artist in residence at Corridor Gallery, a 2009-2010 artist in resident at Abrons Art Center and she was an artist in residence with LMCC Swing space 2011. She has exhibited at the Rosa Parks Museum, The National Museum of Catholic Art, MOCADA, CCCADI and the Rush Arts gallery.

Artist Statement

I am a Multidisciplinary artist. I started as a painter, painting figures trapped within the two- dimensional space of the canvas. Working with clay to make man out of dirt, I added a three dimensional aspect allowing the figures to push out of the canvas or wall and invade the space of the viewer. I gave each figure a narrative sound track. They become my altered egos.

At times these clay heads come off of the wall, become a part of my performance and I shape-shift into multiple consciousness. I document the performances with video and photography.

Studying the common threads in international indigenous religions and mythology, my studio practice is a commitment to creating myth and ritual through the use of narrative performance art, video, sound, drawing and installation.

My Work is an exploration of individual burdens, insecurities, and self prescribed traps, walls, armor, masks, stereotypes that are worn/carried out of habit, comfort, fear, sloth and shame. However the work also explores our ability to transform, resist and escape these traps.

Looking at DuBoisian “double consciousness” and Jacques Lacan’s shape shifting subconscious I realize that we have many identities and like chameleons they shift according to our surroundings. They become “Multiple Consciousness”. Juxtaposing the contemporary practice of code switching with African and Indigenous ideas of “the trickster” my many headed series “breaking Head”, “getting a head”, and chameleon all speak to our ability to transform, resist and escape traps while exploring ideas of transformation, multiplicity, indecision, confusion, consumption, balance and fragmentation.

Simultaneously I make traps, tricked out spirit traps, consumer traps, comfortable traps, safe traps, traps that invite you to stay unchanged unchallenged. I work in whatever media gets my point across. Text appears as both sounds and large scale phrases that transform during performances. Drawings inspire sculptures, that inspire performance, that inspire video that inspires narrative, that inspire sound, the order changes.

I work with multiples, compulsive reproduction/repetition with minute changes that build to something dramatically different from the first moment. I experiment with weight and balance the whole verses the fragment. I am as intrigued by the material aesthetic aspects of my process as the metaphoric meta-narrative. There is often an aspect of my work that references child like play (sometimes it’s a tantrum) but there is also often a dirty joke and something fragile. I work on several things at once.

I consider my practice a play to movie production except the props costumes and storyboards are as important as the movie/play. I am interested in that which misleads and seduces and the potential of weakness and vulnerability as façade, as power, as regiment. Utilizing nostalgia and beauty to implicate/suggest that which is ugly, uncomfortable and terrifying, I explore the meta-narrative and the duplicity of meaning, the ironic and oxymoronic, the co-dependence of polar opposites, the space between words and the possibility for a change in roles for both the victim and predator.