

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WHITFIELD LOVELL

Distant Relations *Selections from the Kin Series*

February 19 – March 21, 2015

Opening Reception
Thursday, February 19
6:00 – 8:00 pm



Kin XXXIII (May I Assume Whatever Form I Want, In Whatever Place My Spirit Wishes), 2011.
Conte on paper, vintage white cloth shoe,
30 x 22 1/2 x 2 3/4 inches.

DC Moore Gallery is pleased to present *Whitfield Lovell: Distant Relations, Selections from the Kin Series*. In this exhibition of assemblages, Lovell juxtaposes masterful drawings of African Americans with found objects to powerfully recast our collective history.

Lovell's exquisitely drawn Conte crayon visages are sourced from his large archive of vintage I.D. photos, including passport pictures and mug shots. The harsh lighting of the images and the lack of retouching contribute to the stark specificity of the *Kin Series* drawings and differentiate the series from other bodies of work in which Lovell engages the conventions of studio photography.

Lovell pairs the detailed drawings with multivalent objects that relate both formally and conceptually to the expressive faces. Everyday items such as a clock, a cake topper, or a syringe might variously impart a sense of irony, longing, or violence. Together, the intriguing objects and faces hint at potential narratives or conjure an individual's interior life. The artist explains: "Focusing primarily on images of anonymous black people from the period between the Emancipation Proclamation and the Civil Rights Movement, I attempt to illuminate the humanity and richness of these ordinary people. Though they rarely appeared in the visual art of their time, their legacies continue to be engrained in our cultural memory." As a whole, the sixty works in the *Kin Series* constitute an expansive American family album of sorts.

The titles of the individual *Kin Series* works compound their psychological and sociological resonances. "Like the objects conjoined with the rendered images," writes art historian Julie McGee, the titles are "quintessential Lovell gestures, destabilizing the literalism of verisimilitude—his exquisitely rendered images—and simultaneously enlarging our reading of the work."

An exhibition of Lovell's art, featuring the *Kin Series*, will open at The Phillip's Collection, Washington, D.C. in the fall of 2016. A major monograph highlighting the series will accompany the exhibition.

Lovell's most recent multimedia installation, *Deep River*, was shown at the Hunter Museum of American Art, Chattanooga, TN in 2013. It was on view at the Telfair Museums, Savannah, GA through January 2015 and will continue to travel. The installation *Whispers from the Walls* was created at the University of North Texas Art Gallery in 1999 and toured nationally for six years, appearing at venues including the Seattle Art Museum and New York's Studio Museum in Harlem. Other major installations include: *Visitation: The Richmond Project*, presented at the Hand Workshop Art Center in Virginia, the University of Wyoming in Laramie, the Columbus Museum in Georgia, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney, Australia; *Sanctuary: The Great Dismal Swamp* at the Contemporary Art Center of Virginia in Virginia Beach, VA; *Grace: A Project by Whitfield Lovell* at the Bronx Museum of the Arts in New York City, and *Echo* at Project Row Houses in Houston.

Whitfield Lovell is a 2007 recipient of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Fellowship Award. Works by Lovell are featured in major museum collections including the Brooklyn Museum, NY; Columbus Museum of Art, OH; High Museum of Art, GA; Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; Seattle Art Museum, WA; Smithsonian American Art Museum, DC; Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, DC; Studio Museum in Harlem, NY; Whitney Museum of American Art, NY; and Yale University Art Gallery, CT.

Also on view: *Duane Michals: The Portraitist*

DC MOORE GALLERY specializes in contemporary and twentieth-century art. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 6 pm. For more information, for photographs, or to arrange a viewing, please call 212-247-2111 or email Lily Zhou at lzhou@dcmooregallery.com.