

TONI ROSS

Artist Toni Ross has long favored enclosed sculptural forms in which the interiors are uncertain, infusing the work with a sense of internal mystery. The architectural and cubic aspects of vessels, containers and totems have provided Ross an evolving lexicon of visual relationships that address shape and surface, balance and instability and elements of expressionism and transience.

In new sculptures, Ross explores tablets, stele and pyramidal formations, addressing exteriors and frontality in erect and leaning planar compositions. Often hand-inscribed with aspects of cuneiform and the written word, each sculptural face hints at an elusive, undiscovered language. Thread binding, layering and coupling of elements extend the narrative further as planes of distressed stoneware coax their component parts to stand, tilt or recline.

Born and raised in New York City, Toni Ross attended Wesleyan University where she studied ceramics and the arts, graduating with a BA in Film Studies. Her lifetime interest in the visual arts took her to Italy where she absorbed the great traditions of the Renaissance and the Middle Ages while painting and sketching in museums, piazzas and the countryside. Since then, her practice has evolved to include works in sculpture, drawing and painting; her focus on stoneware dates to 1997.

I am drawn to ancient Cycladic sculpture for its evocations of sensuality and purity in the human form, the sense of figural abstraction it embraces and the reductive qualities in which reflection, memory and mindfulness find balance.

I aspire to an art that embraces such primal authenticity. The textured surfaces of my recent sculpture retain their own histories, elucidating the beauty of imperfection. Tied and wrapped threads elude both to a sense of confinement and to breaking free of constraints.

Underscored by tension, fragility and candor, my art seeks symmetry between the temporal and the timeless. Moving from inwardness to architectural facades, pivoting cubes and sculptural collage, my recent work is fixed in action and contemplation.

Toni Ross, 2016