

## THOMAS DANE GALLERY

### Magdalene Odundo

Evening viewing: Tuesday 8 October, 6–8pm

Exhibition dates: 9 October–14 December 2024

Thomas Dane Gallery

3 Duke Street, St James's, London SW1

Thomas Dane Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition with Dame Magdalene Odundo (b.1950, Nairobi, Kenya) at No. 3 Duke Street, St James's. Presenting a series of her unique sculptural clay vessels, this will be Odundo's first solo exhibition in London in over two decades.

Known for her refined forms and profound understanding of clay's universal capacity for material storytelling, Odundo draws influence from a broad compass of historical and contemporary making practices. Her work embodies her research into traditional techniques and vernacular ceramic traditions across the world, exploring diasporic identity and recognising the power of objects as repositories of intercultural meaning. Odundo's vessels are informed by references as diverse as British studio pottery, ancient ceramics, traditional ceremonial vessels from Kenya and Nigeria, and modernist sculpture.

Following a solo show at Houghton Hall earlier this year, this exhibition will present recent hand-built works carefully made over the course of several months. Often anthropomorphic in their references to the female body, Odundo's vessels strike a balance between the physical and the spiritual; between strength and fragility; between permanence and ephemerality. Finding equal inspiration in manmade objects and the natural world, Odundo's expressive and deeply resonant ceramics offer a striking formal synthesis of the organic and the crafted, the elemental and the refined.

Odundo received her initial training as a graphic artist in Kenya before moving to the UK in 1971. She studied at the Cambridge School of Art (now Anglia Ruskin University), the University for the Creative Arts and the Royal College of Art. In 2018 Odundo was appointed Chancellor of the University for Creative Arts (UCA) and was made a Dame in the Queen's New Year Honours list in 2020. She has been the subject of major solo exhibitions at Houghton Hall, Norfolk, England (2024); the Gardiner Museum, Toronto, Canada (2023-2024); The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield, England and Sainsbury Centre, Norwich, England (2019); The High Museum of Art, Atlanta GA (2017); British Council, Nairobi, Kenya (2005); Blackwell House, Bowness-on-Windermere, England (2001); The National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian, Washington D.C. (1995); Stedelijk Museum Voor Hedendaagse Kunst, s'Hertogenbosch, Netherlands (1994); Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg, Germany; and Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe, Germany (1992).

Odundo's work is in the collections of many national and international museums including The British Museum, London, England; The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, England; The V&A, London, England; The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, England; The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield, England; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York NY; The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn NY; National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian, Washington D.C.; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles CA; The Gardiner Museum, Toronto, Canada; Stedelijk Museum Voor Hedendaagst Kunst, s'Hertogenbosch, Netherlands; The Frankfurt Museum for Applied Arts, Frankfurt, Germany; Die Neue Sammlung (The Design Museum), Munich, Germany; and the National Museum of Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya.

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Gallery hours: Tuesday to Friday 11am–6pm, Saturday 12pm–6pm or by appointment.  
Admission: Free  
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Nearest Tube: Green Park or Piccadilly Circus

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