

• FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE •

Mike Womack

Love Letters to Rocks

May 18 – June 16, 2018

Opening Reception May 18, 6 - 8 pm

Free and open to the public/ Artist in Attendance



Image: *Untitled*, wood and rock, 30 x 30 x 30in (76.2 x 76.2cm)

David B. Smith Gallery is pleased to present, *Love Letters to Rocks*, the gallery's first solo exhibition of new work by Mike Womack. This body of work includes both sculpture and painting in line with Womack's interdisciplinary practice that combines conceptual rigor, abstraction, and, in this case, geological forms directly from nature.

Love Letters to Rocks employs reductive abstraction as a method to explore futility in representation in his paintings as well as a means to display the subject of devotion, rocks. According to Womack, true depiction is a problematic gesture and "the separation between an image and the essential truth of an object/being is more confused than ever given the primary platform of how images are consumed today—in a digital space." By contrast, this exhibition brings object and image into physical space, displaying the rocks within their own wooden matrix from which to view the paintings created for them. Monochromatic palettes are chosen as a challenge to the concept of traditional ideas of depiction via painting. These 'love letters' also confront ideas relating to romance, and the dynamics of a one-sided relationship. What type of relationship can occur if the romance lacks reciprocity? And does this question look to a larger narrative on the current, and futile, state of interpersonal relationships in the digital age?

For Womack, "as depiction-less as a painting may strive to be it still exists as an image, and is projected in the mind as an image of something. My hope here is to charge the viewer with the possibility that depiction could be conjured in the mind not by representation but instead by devotion or proximity." In this instance, the devotion is to objects that cannot reciprocate, but in their own absurd way provide a platform for the viewer to redefine their notions of subject, object, painting, and relationship.

About Mike Womack

Mike Womack's works have been praised by *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Sculpture Magazine*, *Art in America*, and others. His work has been seen in galleries and museums including Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, the Evergreen Museum, Baltimore, and Arthouse, Austin. Mike lives and works in Boulder, Colorado.

About David B. Smith Gallery

David B. Smith Gallery is committed to presenting intelligent and culturally relevant exhibitions in its Denver location, featuring the region's most important emerging talent alongside internationally recognized artists. Through its curatorial program, participation in art fairs, and extensive media coverage in publications such as *Art in America* and *ARTnews*, David B. Smith Gallery has cultivated a strong regional, national and international collector audience. *The New York Times* hailed the gallery as offering "an exciting contrast of cutting edge works" and *The Denver Post* declared that it is the "premiere commercial space" in Denver. The gallery also maintains an active publishing division, which produces exhibition catalogues and editions.

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