

REQUEST FOR COVERAGE / FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Target Gallery's Solo Show Provides Multisensory Installation for Collective Healing

Ọmọlará Williams McCallister: "We, Too, Sing America"
Through July 18

Virtual Artist Talk: Friday, June 10, 7 p.m.

In-Person Durational Performances: June 24 – July 18, 12 p.m.

Waterfront Sunset Performance: July 9, 8 p.m.

June 7, 2021 – Alexandria, Va. –Target Gallery, the contemporary exhibition space for Torpedo Factory Art Center, presents its annual competitive solo exhibition, Ọmọlará Williams McCallister: [We, Too, Sing America. McCallister](#) (pronouns: O/love/beloved) transforms the gallery with a site-specific multisensory exhibition, creating a place of community contemplation and healing. The exhibition will be on view through Sunday, July 18, 2021. Target Gallery is located in Studio 2 at the Art Center (105 N. Union St.).

The multisensory elements for *We, Too, Sing America*, include visual, sound, and interactive components including a durational performance. The installation is a continuation of the artist's ongoing fiber-based series [Domestic Work](#), which confronts the extraction of emotional labor, caretaking and other domestic work from Black women that is expected, depended upon, normalized and erased in public and private spaces.

"*We, Too, Sing America* is a memorial to the small everyday acts we have undertaken to support ourselves and each other as we have collectively moved towards building a better future and weathered the storms of COVID, of white-supremacist anti-Black terror, of the intersecting forms of oppression we face/d these past many months," O said. "In this work, I use accumulation and repetition of ritual acts, art objects, images, and sound to explore the relationship of the individual act, individual person, individual moment to the collective, and to collective world building."

For this exhibition, the body of the work consists of 1,440 muslin squares hand embroidered with a description of an everyday act of emotional labor. The squares are dyed to read "for you," "for me," or "for us" in white letters on an indigo background.

From afar, the reader sees only the white supertext "for you/me/us." Projected over the squares are rotating images of the artist and O's collaborators holding up a single square, emphasizing the connection of the whole with the individual.

McCallister encourages visitors to tell their own stories through O's work. Visitors can move the squares and contribute their own to the conversation. The goal is to invite interaction to create a sense of community and dialogue around healing from societal pressures and oppression.



Ọmọlará Williams McCallister, *We, Too, Sing America* (select gallery images), 2021. Indigo, cotton muslin, beeswax, cotton embroidery floss, and velcro. Photography by Reese Bland.

McCallister's live durational performances will be noon – 1 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday, June 24 – July 18. (Dates are subject to change.) On Friday, July 9, McCallister will offer an extended performance on the waterfront at dusk, as a part of the Torpedo Factory Art Center's July Late Shift event. Viewers may experience the sunset with O's singing performance, then return to the gallery for an in-person reception.

McCallister was selected from more than 60 applicants based in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia region as part of Target Gallery's annual Open Call for a Solo Exhibition. The jurors were: New York-based independent artist and curator [Antonius-Tín Bui](#) (they/them); DC-based artist and associate professor in printmaking at Corcoran School of Arts and Design and the George Washington University [Michele Carlson](#) (she/her); and DC-based independent curator Deirdre Darden (she/her).

According to Bui, "Ọmọlará's multifaceted, nonhierarchical approach to art is liberating and certainly results in audience members leaving seen, held and empowered."

"To bear witness to the space that McCallister creates, but also the ritual O weaves in and around the installation is evidence that what will get us through this time and what drives forward movements for social justice is ongoing, durational, and takes every one of us," said Carlson.

"O's exhibition, performance and visitor engagement presents an opportunity for art again to become a capsule of the moment. With referencing of ancestral texts and hymns driving this piece, it brings past perspective into the present. Echoing sentiments that communities still need to hear," said Darden.

We, Too, Sing America, runs through Sunday, July 18, 2021. There will be a virtual reception via facebook.com/torpedofactory on Friday, July 11, at 7 p.m., with an artist talk, video of the exhibition, preview of the durational performance, and open artist Q&A with the audience.

Target Gallery is open to the public from Wednesday – Sunday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., but is subject to change. Visit torpedofactory.org to confirm availability before visiting. Private press viewings may be arranged upon appointment.

Those who wish to visit Torpedo Factory Art Center are asked to adhere to current [Forward Virginia](#) guidelines. Unvaccinated patrons and unaccompanied patrons under age 18 must wear a mask covering the nose and mouth. Patrons are asked to stay home if they are feeling unwell, have been in close physical contact with a known COVID-19 patient, are isolating because of a recent exposure, or are awaiting COVID-19 test results. Frequent handwashing for 20 seconds or use of hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol help prevent the spread of germs.

About the Artist

Ọmọlará Williams McCallister (pronouns: o, love, beloved) is a dynamic creator who shows up in many forms. O's work is a call and response blend of sculpture, performance, installation, ritual, space holding, community building, surface design, adornment, word, sound, song, movement, moving images and photography. The roles that Ọmọlará steps into include: artist, educator, organizer, cultural strategist, conjurer. In all forms O's work is immersive and interactive, it is co-authored by the people who inspire and encounter it. Originally from Atlanta, O's artistic journey began in church at 7 years old as a classically trained vocalist and bassist. Love attended Dekalb School of the Arts, a magnet 8–12 public school. Beloved actively organized around social justice issues on the local, regional and national levels since age 13. Ọmọlará's upbringing in the Black south is the foundation for O's work, which is how O manifests paths towards personal and collective liberation.

About Target Gallery

Target Gallery is the contemporary exhibition space for Torpedo Factory Art Center. The gallery promotes high standards of art by continuously exploring new ideas through a variety of visual media in a rotating schedule of exhibitions. More information is available via torpedofactory.org/target. follow Target Gallery on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Pinterest](#) via @targetgallery.

About the Torpedo Factory Art Center

Founded in 1974 in a former navy munitions plant, the Torpedo Factory Art Center is home to the nation's largest number of publicly accessible working artist studios under one roof. The Art Center is part of the [City of Alexandria's Office of the Arts](#). Just south of Washington, D.C., the Torpedo Factory Art Center overlooks the Potomac River in the Old-Town section of Alexandria, Virginia. Each year, more than a half million national and international visitors meet and interact with more than 165 resident artists in 82 studios and seven galleries. The Torpedo Factory Art Center is also home to [The Art League](#) headquarters and gallery, and the [Alexandria Archaeology Museum](#). For more information, visit torpedofactory.org or follow the Torpedo Factory on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Pinterest](#) via @torpedofactory.

###

High Resolution Images Available

Contact: Alyssa Ross, 703.746.4572, alyssa.ross@alexandriava.gov

