

SPACE FACTS & REALITY

Ermias Mazengia

Eyob Kitaba

Hana Yilma

Merid Tafesse

Nebiat Abebe

Tamrat Gezahegne

Tewodros Hagos



MARCH 2 - 31 2013

LeLa Art Gallery

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA



Space, Facts and Reality echoes Bridges* an exhibition currently on view at the National Museum, celebrating a private initiative instrumental in raising awareness about contemporary art: the responsibility of private art collectors, worldwide, is playing a quasi institutional role until now and LeLa Gallery is delighted to partner with this exhibition of international caliber.

Ethiopia provides a very challenging context: the impossible becomes possible, artists and art institutions are evolving along a thin line providing a space for creativity. Space, Facts and Reality offers specific look at the topical developments of painting practices. How to confine reality –sensorial and formal– to a space as clearly demarcated as is the canvas without losing its freshness and freedom, is one of the great challenges that brought together seven of the most incisive painters in Ethiopia today. Their pictorial works, in their own unique ways and genuine manners, trace a wide set of lines of creative investigations, delving both into the systems of perception of the picture and into the mechanisms of its construction.

Offering alternative symbolic representation of the existing –understood in all its volumetric, expressive and visual complexity; figurative and abstract- Space, Facts and Reality frontally confronts us with universal contradictions in which the human being, society, the environment and actual pictorial language find themselves enveloped.

.../...

Space, Facts and Reality brings you the most significant forces of the young generation of Ethiopian fine artists. Most of them taking swiftly their place on the international art scene from Vienna to Los Angeles, Bruxelles to Dubai, Berlin, Madrid or Cape Town.

Painting should not only cater to our humdrum needs but also stir our sense of wonder.

This exhibition does.



Ermias Mazengia

Untitled

Acrylic on canvas

2013

Silently opening up new horizons, Ermias's iconoclastic work makes him a key player in Ethiopian contemporary art. By constantly redefining the possibilities of the medium, the space of his canvas is both deeply constructed and consciously deconstructed. While there is no given narrative in his painted surfaces, there is instead a genuine meditation on the pace of existence and the vacuity of space that invites an intense and profound contemplation. By being clearly visible yet remaining out of sight, he thereby places the relationship between his work and spectator under the greatest possible amount of pressure. Ermias relentlessly attempts to transcend the physical. while studying the impact of action and objects... Here. In our lives. Silently."

Graduated from the School of Fine Arts and Design, Painting Department in 2006, his works has been presented locally at Atelier gallery, Goethe Institute, National Museum, Zemen Bank, United Nations, Haramaya University. He also participated in various international shows such as the Bastakiya Art Fair Dubai; and recently enjoyed a three months residence in Austria.



Ermias Mazengia
Untitled
Acrylic on canvas
2013





Ermias Mazengia

Untitled

Acrylic on canvas

2013



Eyob Kitaba

Untitled

Mixed media on blue print paper mounted on formica

2011

Silently opening up new horizons, Ermias's iconoclastic work makes him a key player in Ethiopian contemporary art. Eyob Kitaba's work is as philosophically and visually dense as it is intentionally deceptive. Still expanding his artistic language, Eyob Kitaba remains an enigma, defies categorisation, balancing both personal and collective references while infusing private vision with a sense of poetry.

While to some his work might resemble doodles, illegible scratches or scrawls, his forceful staccatos, using felt-tips and markers, ink and acrylic paint and the sharp points of Bic pens, to scar, maul and ravage the blue surface with his unique loopy rhythmic freehand style of calligraphy, are only accumulations, adaptations, mutations and mutilations until they become Image. The paper then remains as a proof, more or less filled with paint and crayon giving a sense of nightmares, claustrophobia and confusion despite their mainly bright and hot colours.

Graduated from the School of Fine Arts and Design, Painting Department in 2000, his works has been presented locally at Atelier Gallery, Goethe Institute, British Council, Alliance Éthio-Française, Asni, Tewanney Studio, Ras Birhan and Lucy Gallery. He also participated in various international shows such as the Bastakiya Art Fair Dubai; Greatmore Studio in Cape Town; Wit Gallery Netherlands, Russian Cultural Institute, Tanzania.



Eyob Kitaba

Untitled

Mixed media on blue print paper mounted on formica

2011





Hana Yilma
Road Story
Acrylic on canvas
2011

Those works relate to my experience and impression when being in bathrooms, saunas & steam baths. I try to depict the simplicity and duality of the relationship the woman entertain with her own body, and of others, the cast shadows and also the formal qualities of those singular environments, the materials they use (towels...), the gestures, the exceptional tones of colours and unique atmospheres. There are different moments in bathroom. I am very interested when my 'models' are looking at their own selves into the mirrors, while discovering their real-selves.

“Women, who were laughing and smiling and all that, just before going into the sauna, start to be immersed and look like in a meditative mood, reaching a state of tranquility. I don’t know how that stillness or calmness comes to them. But I know it does.”

Excerpt from an interview with Tibebeselassie Tigabu,
"Woman in sauna, bath on canvas", The Reporter, 08/02/11

Graduated from the School of Fine Arts and Design, Painting Department in 2011, her works has been presented locally at Atelier Gallery, Museum of Modern Art, Alliance Éthio-Française and the National Theatre Art Gallery. She also participated in exhibitions abroad at the Casa Da Xuventude de Ourense. Hana currently studies in the USA.



Hana Yilma
Road Story
Acrylic on canvas
2011



Hana Yilma
Road Story
Acrylic on canvas
2011



Merid Tafesse

Untitled

Charcoal & pastel on paper

2011

What is the mystery behind Merid TAFESSE's charcoaled world? With radical simplicity, Merid's intricate and efficient web of lines dusts off our perceptions of reality. Moving away from privileged styles like oil paintings, we are pulled toward a direct contact with the soft pulp of the paper, representing a porous and amorphous universe where circadian rhythms meet the puzzled infinity of his visions. In the warm grey dawn, close to the frozen borderline, the numberless reflections featured in the "Where Do I Know You From?" series rise like ghosts and cannot be brushed off. We are drawn as if by a magnet, and Merid knows.

Graduated from the School of Fine Arts and Design, Painting Department in 1998, his works has been presented locally at Asni, Alliance Éthio-Française, Zemen Bank, National Museum, The Red Terrors Martyr Museum, Children Art Village, Atelier and Lela art galleries. He also participated in various international exhibitions in Dubai; Jerusalem; New Mexico; NYC; Atlanta; Miami Art Basel.



Nebiat Abebe
Sink or Swim
Acrylic on canvas
2013

Nebiat Abebe

Graduated from the School of Fine Arts and Design, Painting Department in 1999, her works has been presented locally at Alliance Éthio-Française, Asni and Laphto Galleries.



Nebiat Abebe
Sink or Swim
Acrylic on canvas
2013



Tamrat Gezahegne

Mesossow

Acrylic on canvas

2013

Scrutinising everyday life while creating his delirious mythology, Tamrat Gezahegne creates moments of forceful irony by constantly reinventing the language of Ethiopian contemporary fine art, introducing a straightforward style that deliberately rejects sophisticated artistic techniques preferring the bold directness of bright colours, or minimalist ink pen and the meticulous repetition of motifs. A new wide world is under construction under the genuine intervention of this artist with exceptional skills.

Graduated from the School of Fine Arts and Design, Painting Department in 2000, his works has been presented locally at Asni, Netsa Art Village, Alliance, Goethe, German House, Zoma, Sheraton, US Embassy, Gedam Sefer, Atelier and Lela art galleries. He also participated in various international shows such as the Bastakiya Art Fair Dubai; ARCO, Madrid, Spain; Harn Museum, University of Florida, USA, Cairo and Berlin.



Tamrat Gezahegne

Manetekelfares

Acrylic on canvas

2013



Tewodros Hagos
Old Woman
Oil on canvas
2013

Tewodros has developed a pictorial language that is very much of his own, an artistic project that articulates an alternative to the mainstream where a lot of contemporary paintings is to be found. Tewodros Hagos' most recent paintings can be described as both portraits and masks paintings. Figuratively, the subjects are mainly inspired by models, but Tewodros incorporate an ambiguity, a subtle sense of impending tension lurking just under the surface of the canvas. Tewodros works in the double space where representation and abstraction confront one another. Clearly looking for a communion between the subject, the artist and the viewer, Tewodros looks at his surrounding intensively. His eyes scalp every single detail, beyond the surface of the epidermis, in order to produce his genuine incremental series of paintings, adding to the fragments of his models, his own subjectivity and each of his viewer's mental projections. Through those new icons Tewodros skilfully portraits and questions our societies, ourselves and confront us with phantoms, chimeras and illusions. Tewodros does not embrace a narrative style, the spaces of his paintings are transparently abstract, existential, but almost quintessentially lyrical, giving a unequivocal new connotation to the concept of '*Social Realism*'.

Graduated from the School of Fine Arts and Design, Painting Department in 1995, his works has been presented locally at Atelier, LeLa, Alliance Éthio-Française, Sheraton Hotel. He also participated in various international exhibitions in Berlin, Leuven, Antwerp, Kappelen, Rome, Rotterdam and most recently in Los Angeles.



Tewodros Hagos

Country Girl

Oil on canvas

2013



Tewodros Hagos
Shoeshine Boy
Oil on canvas
2012



Tewodros Hagos
Teenager
Oil on canvas
2012



LeLa Art Gallery

PO Box 297

Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA

Lilly Sahle, *Director*

00 251 911 300 756 - mobile

Leo Lefort, *Associate Curator*

00 251 911 124 360 - mobile

lomagallery@gmail.com

www.lomagallery.com