

PILLARS OF LIFE: the power and grace of market life

Tadesse Mesfin

12 June – 21 July 2018

Addis Fine Art Gallery, 3rd Floor Wold Fiker Building,
Bole Medhane Alem, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



Tadesse Mesfin, Pillars of Life: Market Day, 2018 140 x 200 cms

Addis Fine Art is very privileged to present *Pillars of Life: the power and grace of market life*, a solo exhibition of new oil paintings by legendary modernist painter and veteran professor at the Addis Ababa School of Fine Art, Tadesse Mesfin, at Addis Fine Art Gallery 3rd Floor Wold Fiker Building, Bole Medhane Alem, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia between 12 June – 21 July 2018.

Winner of the 1998 prestigious Mid-American Arts Alliance (MAAA) fellowship, Tadesse Mesfin was born in Weldia, Ethiopia in 1953. He attended the Addis Ababa University School of Fine Arts and Design where he was taught by *Gebre Kristos Desta*, receiving a

Diploma with a distinction. He then attended the Repin Academy of Painting, Architecture & Sculpture in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1984, where he graduated with Honours in a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Painting. Tadesse Mesfin has spent the last thirty-three years teaching at the Alle School of Fine Art, where he has influenced a generation of painters including, *Addis Gezehagn*, *Dawit Abebe*, and *Merikokeb Berhanu*.

His recent works are contemporary interpretations of frontal figures in columnar arrangements, influenced by ancient Egyptian sculptures and mythological drawings, infused with local colours, hinting at eastern Ethiopian cities like Harar. This sculptural arrangement celebrates the women who work as small-holder vendors in several markets around Ethiopian cities. These women typically sit with their goods laid out on the ground in front of them hoping for a custom from the crowd. These current works are reductive and minimal with the women being the sole inhabitants of the canvas. There is a rhythm, a playfulness, between these women, their neutral expressions welcoming interaction with the viewer.

Recent solo exhibitions include *In Search of Rhythm*, Alliance Ethio-Française, Addis Ababa (2014), with his work being featured in group exhibitions such as the *Art of Ethiopia*, Addis Ababa (2013, 2010), *Continuity and Change: Three Generations of Ethiopian Artists* at the Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, USA (2007) and *Four Points: African Contemporary* at the Pounder-Koné Art Space in Atwater Village, California (2007). Early in his career, he was also featured in the acclaimed *Second World Black and African Festival of Art and Culture (FESTAC 77)* in Lagos, Nigeria (1977).

Addis Fine Art

Founded by Mesai Haileleul and Rakeb Sile, Addis Fine Art (AFA) is a gallery specialising in contemporary African art, with a particular focus on art from Ethiopia and its diaspora. In January 2016, AFA opened its main gallery space in the heart of Addis Ababa, launching an innovative programme of exhibitions, talks and events. In October 2016, AFA opened a project space in London, to provide an additional international platform for the gallery's artist and programme. Addis Fine Art is quickly becoming the leading gallery in the region and continues to strengthen its cross-continental presence at prominent art-fairs, supporting its artists in exhibitions around the globe.

For more information or interview requests please contact Rakeb Sile at raku@addisfineart.com.



IMAGE DOWNLOAD LINK:
<https://we.tl/wr5GhnVDAC>

Pillars of Life: Saturday Market
2018

Oil on Canvas

178cm x 148cm

Courtesy of the Artist & Addis Fine Art



Pillars of Life: Harmony

2018

Oil on Canvas

110cm x 146cm

Courtesy of the Artist & Addis Fine Art



Pillars of Life: Market Day

2018

Oil on Canvas

140cm x 200cm

Courtesy of the Artist & Addis Fine Art

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