

FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE: YOUNG ETHIOPIAN PHOTOGRAPHERS CHANGING THE GAZE

GIRMA BERTA | EYERUSALEM JIRENGA

9 April – 25 May 2019

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



Girma Berta, ASMARA VII, 2018 Digital Archival Print 45 x 60 cm Edition of 7 plus 1 AP

Addis Fine Art is pleased to announce, *From Our Perspective: Young Ethiopian Photographers Changing the Gaze*, a dual exhibition by dynamic young photographers Girma Berta and Eyerusalem Jiregna at Addis Fine Art Gallery in Addis Ababa, from 9 April - 25 May 2019.

Ethiopia is home to some of the fastest rates of development in the world and a changing political landscape. Two young local artists, Girma Berta (b. 1990) and Eyerusalem Jiregna (b. 1993) aim to tell its story through their photography. They represent the new voices in contemporary Ethiopian photography, pushing the boundaries of the medium and questioning the definitions of documentary photography. Their works have been exhibited internationally and selected to adorn Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's new public and private offices.

Eyerusalem Jiregna (b.1993) is an exciting emerging artist and fashion designer based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Shot in the walled city of Harar, her series *The City of Saints*, documents a living history. Informed by her experience in design, Jiregna specialises in evocatively bright and discerning portraits, enliven with distinctive and striking colour detail. Her use of rich textures and colours plays against the crisp focus of her photographs, enhancing their warm, visually stimulating effect.

Girma Berta (b.1990) is an award-winning photographer whose work fuses street photography with fine art. In his *Moving Shadows* series, solitary figures are juxtaposed against vibrant backgrounds, creating truly unique artworks, which exemplify the contrasting colours and personalities on the streets of his hometown. As one of the first photographers to travel to Eritrea once the blockage was lifted in June 2018, his new *Asmara* series documents Eritrea's capital frozen in time. Berta, who is self-taught, uses a combination of street photography and graphic design to create images of passers-by with a painterly quality. Berta's use of digital media, to produce and present his artworks, is in itself a commentary on the digital revolution underway across Africa. He represents the vibrancy of the millennial African.

Eyerusalem Jirenga has received considerable acclaim for her work both within Ethiopia and internationally. She has exhibited in the New York photography festival Photoville 2016 and participated in the New York Times Portfolio Review 2016. Solo and Group shows include: FNB Joburg Art Fair (2018), *Refraction: New Photography of Africa and its Diaspora*, Steven Kasher Gallery, NY (2018), Investec Cape Town Art Fair (2018), Also Known As Africa Contemporary African Art Fair (2017).

Girma Berta is the recipient of the Getty Images Instagram Award 2016. He was selected to participate in the New York Times Portfolio Review 2017, and shortlisted as a finalist for the CAP Prize 2017. Solo and Group shows include: *Africa State of Mind* curated by Ekow Eshun at The New Art Exchange, Nottingham, UK (2018), *Refraction: New Photography of Africa and its Diaspora*, Steven Kasher Gallery, New York (2018), *Afrotopia: Pan-African Exhibition*, 11th edition of Rencontres de Bamako, Biennale Africaine de la Photographie (2018), Image Afrique/Cap Prize in Basel (2017), La Gacilly Photo Festival (2017), Nataal / Red Hook Labs NY New African Photography II (2017). Berta's artworks have also been shown in multiple art fairs including: Cape Town Art Fair (2017 – 2018 - 2019), Art Dubai (2018), PhotoVille NY (2016, 2015), Look Festival (2016), Salon Zurcher NY (2016), 1:54 Contemporary Art Fair London (2016), Also Known as Africa Art Fair Paris (2016 - 2017) and Bamako Photo Fest (2015).

Addis Fine Art

Founded by Rakeb Sile and Mesai Haileleul, Addis Fine Art is a pioneering gallery based in Addis Ababa and London. The very first local space and international platform based in Ethiopia, the gallery focuses on highlighting modern and contemporary fine art from the Horn of Africa region and its diasporas.

January 2016 saw the opening of the gallery's main space in the heart of Addis Ababa, launching its innovative programme of exhibitions, talks and events, showing a diverse set of modern and contemporary artists. In October 2016, the AFA Project Space was opened in London, to provide an additional international platform to the gallery's programme. Soon, the London programme will move to Cromwell Place, a first-of-its-kind exhibition space in Kensington, London.

Addis Fine Art has quickly become one of the leading galleries from Africa, facilitating critical engagement with the local and mainstream art markets, championing an underrepresented, yet rich space in modern and contemporary fine art.

For more press information contact Raku Sile/Judith van Helden on hello@addisfineart.com.

IMAGE DOWNLOAD LINK: <https://bit.ly/2HN5gFI>



Girma Berta
Moving Shadows II, IV, 2017
Digital Archival Print
40 x 40 cm
Edition of 7 plus 1 AP
(GIBE0051)



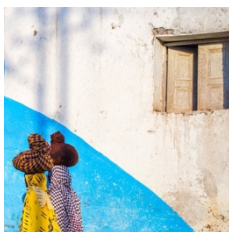
Girma Berta
Moving Shadows II, VI, 2017
Digital Archival Print
40 x 40 cm
Edition of 7 plus 1 AP
(GIBE0053)



Girma Berta
Asmara I, 2018
Digital Archival Print
45 x 60 cm
Edition of 7 plus 1 AP
(GIBE0068)



Girma Berta
Asmara XVI, 2018
Digital Archival Print
45 x 60 cm
Edition of 7 plus 1 AP
(GIBE0084)



Eyerusalem Jirenga
The City of Saints VII, 2017
Digital Archival Print
80 x 80 cm
Edition of 7 plus 1 artist's proof
(EYJI0007)



Eyerusalem Jirenga
The City of Saints X, 2017
Digital Archival Print
80 x 80 cm
Edition of 7 plus 1 AP
(EYJI0010)

PLEASE NOTICE THE COPYRIGHT. By using the following images, the recipient agrees to the terms of usage. The reproduction of the images at a later point in time is only possible in agreement with the author, which needs to be stated in written form. By reproducing these images, the terms of usage are automatically agreed upon.