



SELOME MULETA
Collapsing Space

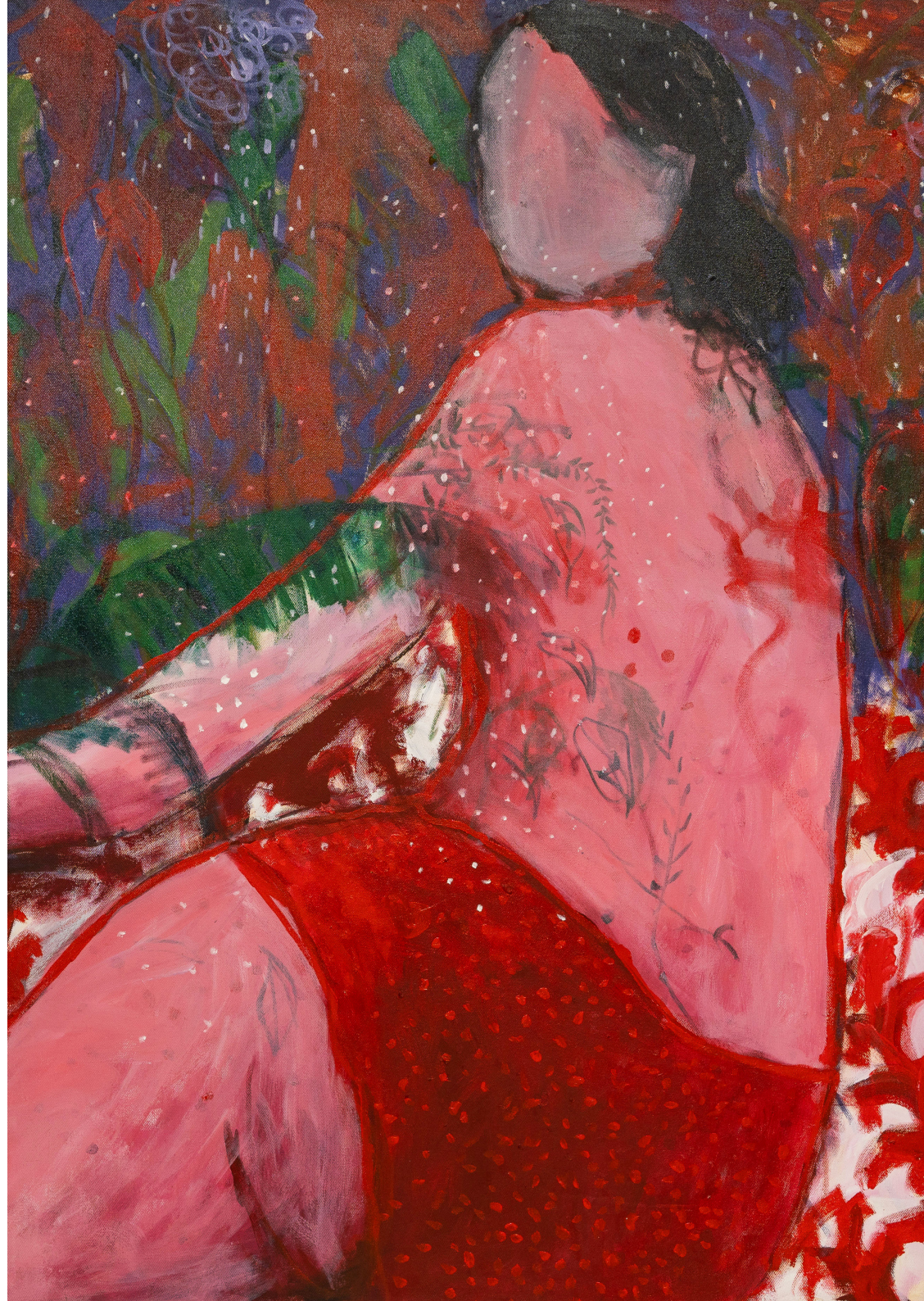
SELOME MULETA

Collapsing Space

11 March – 16 April 2022

“Everything that is dead quivers. Not only the things of poetry, stars, moon, wood, flowers, but even a white trouser button glittering out of a puddle in the street... Everything has a secret soul, which is silent more often than it speaks.”

– Wassily Kandinsky



SELOME MULETA

Selome Muleta (b. 1992) is one of the most exciting young female artists to emerge from the Ethiopian visual arts scene in recent years. Now based in Addis Ababa, Muleta studied art formally at the Abyssinia Fine Art School (2012) and Entoto Polytechnic College (2013-2014). Throughout her latest body of work, Selome merges portraiture with still life in a meditative exploration of womanhood and interiority.

Muleta crafts rich internal worlds through the colour-laden interior scenes of her canvases, which frequently depict women in states of inner reflection. The gestural, loose quality of her strokes coupled with her sophisticated blending of pastels with vibrant shades of crimson and green creates an atmosphere both quiet

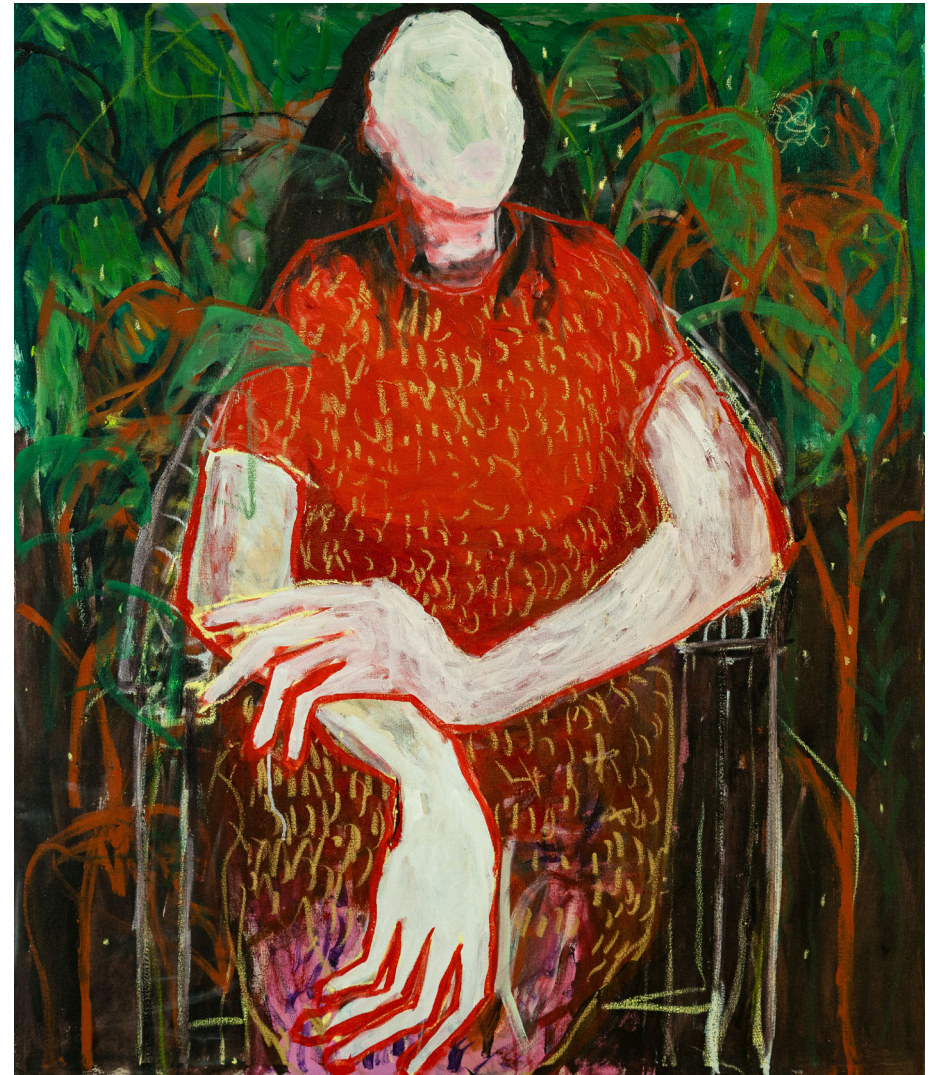
and complex. In a similar vein to the portraits of Jennifer Packer, Muleta employs translucent washes of hue to create a sense of contemplative unity between her subjects and their respective environments. At times, the faces of her characters are obscured or cropped, and the viewer is invited instead to focus on the sparse array of objects that decorate the room. A drooping plant, a dozing feline companion, a distant crooked framed portrait – the line between living and non-living objects becomes blurred, and the viewer is encouraged instead to focus on the sheer physicality of being. Much like the bottles and bowls of Morandi and Hockney's plant-laden vases, the flattened characters and objects born from Muleta's brush seem to hum serenely with the energy of their very existence.



Selome Muleta in her studio in Addis Ababa



Collapsing Space IX, 2021
Acrylic and oil pastel on canvas
165 × 230 cm



Collapsing Space XIX, 2021
Acrylic and oil pastel on canvas
130 × 110 cm



Collapsing Space X, 2021
Acrylic and oil pastel on canvas
165 × 230 cm



Collapsing Space VI, 2021
Acrylic and oil pastel on canvas
130 × 150 cm



Collapsing Space VIII, 2021
Acrylic and oil pastel on canvas
210 × 165 cm

Addis Fine Art

In 2016, Rakeb Sile and Mesai Haileleul co-founded Addis Fine Art, creating the first white-cube gallery space for modern and contemporary art in Ethiopia. Described as one of the “Most Important Young Galleries in the World” (Artsy 2019), the gallery has since then grown to become one of the leading galleries in Africa, establishing a prominent international platform for artists from the Horn of Africa.

In October 2021, Addis Fine Art London moved into expanded premises in Eastcastle Street, opening a two-storey gallery space in the heart of Fitzrovia. The London gallery programme will encapsulate Addis Fine Art’s commitment to heightened international exposure for, and critical reappraisal of, African art on the world stage. The gallery’s Addis Ababa space will continue to be an incubator for emerging talent, facilitating critical engagement within the local market and encouraging the growth and development of the artworld ecosystem on the continent. The gallery will also serve as a space for artists from the diaspora to return to the continent and share and develop their practice.

Credits

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