



Abel Tesfaye (Abelafitz) (Ethiopia)

Abel Tesfaye, known professionally as Abelafitz, was born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He is a contemporary painter and printmaker who earned his bachelor's degree in printmaking from the prestigious Ale School of Fine Art and Design at Addis Ababa University in 2023. Abel's artistic practice primarily involves acrylic painting on canvas and printmaking on both canvas and paper.

Memo1, 2023

Memo2, 2023

Memo3, 2023

Digital Mixed Media

My work engages with the exhibition theme "Illuminating Identity: A Celebration of African Artists in the Digital Era" by exploring the intricate interplay between past and future within the African experience. Through my digital artworks, I seek to capture the essence of memory, blending moments from history with visions of the future in a single image. The use of a double exposure effect and deliberate blurriness reflects the complex, often fragmented nature of personal and collective memory. These elements create a sense of fluidity, where the boundaries between what was and what could be are seamlessly intertwined. In the digital era, where the rapid pace of technological advancement continually reshapes our identities, my work stands as a testament to the enduring influence of heritage and the potential of future narratives. By merging these temporal planes, I aim to illuminate the dynamic, evolving nature of African identity. My images are portals that invite viewers to reflect on their own experiences, challenging them to consider how the past informs their present and future. Through this visual dialogue, I celebrate the richness of African culture and its ability to adapt, innovate, and thrive in an ever-changing digital landscape.



Christelle Emulu (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

Christelle Emulu is a photographer born in Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo. She is currently a student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kinshasa, in the Department of Photography. Emulu sees photography as a means of expression, and a tool that helps her share her vision of the worlds. She has most recently exhibited work at the Wallonia Brussels Center and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kinshasa.

Mabina 1, 2023

Mabina 2, 2023

Mabina 3, 2023

Digital Photography

Mabina is a word in Lingala meaning dance. For this project I focus on the Rumba, a great cultural manifestation from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This dance is recognized by UNESCO as intangible heritage. Rumba originated in the Kongo Kingdom and migrated to the Americas through the slave trade, settling in Cuba. Initially, this dance was called Nkumba and its characteristics are those of many African dances: energetic movements of the belly followed by syncopated rhythms played on percussion. The Rumba's ancestor is Nkumba, a dance that uses the whole body and is characterized by a breathtaking series of movements in the abdomen and pelvis. When this dance arrived in Cuba five centuries ago, Spanish colonizers removed its Africanness by renaming it "Rumba" rather than "Nkumba." Despite this change, it has long been a means of protest for black individuals denouncing the injustices of their lived experiences. The Congolese Rumba, named as such because there is also a Cuban Rumba, experienced a rise in popularity starting in the 1940s. It maintains a strong Cuban influence and is danced in couples. My research encourages viewers to adopt a new, more nuanced perspective, and invites them to understand the origin of the Rumba. This artistic work serves to illuminate areas of shadow, revealing nuances and complexities that were previously hidden.



Neals Niat (Cameroon / France)

Neals Niat, born in Paris to Cameroonian parents, is an architect and illustrator based in Brussels. He draws inspiration from memories of the 7 years he spent in Douala (Cameroon) during his childhood. His distinctive graphic art style blends a mosaic of monochrome and pastel colors, and his creations often feature elements such as old family photos, life scenes, astringent humor, and the popular Cameroonian language "cam-franglais," a mix of local languages, French, English, and Pidgin.

Ton corps sur mon corps, 2024

On go nan, 2023

Le bisou sur la tomate, 2023

Digital Art

Niat's works are part of his ongoing project titled "Mapanes Love," which he launched in 2018. This project examines the impact of societal influences and external pressures on romantic relationships in Cameroon. Beyond the visual aesthetics, Neals' intention is to document the attitudes and language of a time that is bound to change. He aims to archive all these Cameroonian expressions and vocabulary—a sort of glossary he is trying to create and share to preserve this culture. The digitalization of his art allows for better dissemination of this culture. Ultimately, his wish is for people across Africa to fully acknowledge the importance of their respective cultures, traditions, and native languages, themes dear to his heart that he brings forth to his audience. Through his work, Neals Niat represents a deep exploration of African identity while questioning and highlighting the societal influences on this identity.



Photo by Ericke Tjiueza

Pebofatso Mokoena (South Africa)

Mokoena holds a BA Honours in Fine Art (with distinction) from the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, where he is currently completing a Master of Arts in Fine Arts, and has previously taught drawing and presentation at the University of Johannesburg. Emerging from an early focus on printmaking, Mokoena's painting practice is formally underscored by mark making and division of space, while exploring ideas around micro and macro scales of relations, and the visual environment.

Kathorus Documents, 2020- Interactive Archive

The Kathorus Documents aim to function as a parallel archival and historical metanarrative towards understanding Thokoza in the early 90's. Thokoza, a township in the East Rand of the Witwatersrand, was gripped by immense socio-political, ethno-tribal civil unrest which, at one point, threatened to derail South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994. Confronting the consequences of this history and having been born a few months before its end in 1994, Mokoena attempts to come to terms with the psycho-social conditions this violence has brought on friends and family whom the artist shared a childhood with. By referencing a 1996 Independent Report pointing towards similar violence in similar circumstances in the East, West Rand, Cape Town, and KwaZulu-Natal, the artist writes over, redacts, deconstructs, expands and offers his own experiential documentation on Thokoza specifically, complicating the image of Thokoza as a footnote in the greater narrative of South Africa's transition towards a democratic state.



Thuthukani Myeza (South Africa)

Thuthukani Myeza is a multi-disciplinary artist from Johannesburg, South Africa. Myeza's work weaves together fragments of African history to reimagine narratives that celebrate the richness and resilience of shared memory. He uses archives as a foundation for artistic practice, and challenges dominant narratives imposed by colonial powers, reclaiming ownership over how we remember ourselves. Through layering photographs and historical ephemera, he invites viewers to actively engage in remembrance, ensuring that the past is not confined to the edges of history but brought into the heart of our present awareness.

We the dying, 2024

Saze safa Mama, 2024

Blood of my blood Prt 2, 2024

Digital Mixed Media

My work explores the beauty and dread of being black and African. It is heavily influenced by all tales of African history, from apartheid, segregation, to colonial and precolonial Africa. I define my part in this process as being a visual historian, reclaiming and distributing the history of my people back to my people. Ever since I was a child, I have been fascinated by the history of African culture. What started out as a yearning to know soon became a journey down a rabbit hole. There I discovered parts of our history that were not taught in schools. The beauty of a continent is still held hostage in the museums and galleries of the oppressor's descendants. My work is a reshaping of the narratives hidden behind paywalls and privileges. It is the unearthing of the beauty that was stolen and hidden from us. In my work, the viewer is left holding a hymn to the richness of our culture and a chorus to how ugly we have been treated with all this beauty.



Tlhomamo Molefe (South Africa)

Tlhomamo Molefe is a student at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa, who is a multidisciplinary art creator. His current work is based on his emotional journey through spaces and reflects on his personal evolution. Molefe views art as a spiritual experience, and also as a means to communicate and express himself.

Tsela ya batsamayi - Emotional Landscape, 2024
Digital Art

Becoming. To evolve is the only aim about oneself and the journey of it all leads to being and becoming. Through the journey of facing physical, spiritual and mental challenges, loss and creation becomes evident, whether it's the loss of your current self or the creation of a better version of yourself. In this case, the art also becomes the imitation one's life. As an African in today's context, this is my identity. Evolution leading to Becoming.



Trueboy Samarista Gayiza Dlamini (South Africa)

Trueboy Samarista Gayiza Dlamini was born in Benoni, East Rand, South Africa. His work is deeply influenced by his fascination with the universe which began early in his life through a love of science fiction, cartoons, and scientific documentaries. He strives to reflect a sense of cosmic unity through his work, blending spiritual insights with scientific inquiry to craft narratives that probe the mysteries of existence. Dlamini sees art as a bridge between science, spirituality, and Black Consciousness, offering a medium through which he can explore the universe's vastness, our human existence, and the deep cultural roots that ground him.

Cosmic Progeny, 2023
Digital Collage

"Cosmic Progeny" is a digital collage that illuminates the multifaceted nature of identity from an African perspective. In the digital era, where boundaries are constantly shifting, my artwork celebrates the inclusive and cosmic consciousness that is inherent in African cultures. By embracing our shared humanity as children of the universe, I seek to transcend the superficial identities that often lead to bias and discrimination. In "Cosmic Progeny," I draw upon the rich cultural heritage of Africa, where many tribes revere animal totems as sacred and interconnected with the natural world. This ancestral wisdom reminds us that our identities are not fixed or fragmented, but rather interconnected and harmonious with the universe. By acknowledging our cosmic origins, we can move beyond the limitations of individual identities and embrace a more expansive sense of self. Through the use of digital collage, I aim to create a visual representation of this inclusive and cosmic identity, one that celebrates the diversity and complexity of African experiences in the digital age. By illuminating our shared humanity, "Cosmic Progeny" invites the viewer to reflect on the ways in which our identities are intertwined with the universe, and to embrace a more compassionate and harmonious understanding of ourselves and each other.