



"In Her Place"

Mimi Tasama Sibaho | Tigist Yoseph-Ron

Idris | Atar | Jaffa Museum

Opening Event: 13.12.18 at 20:00

Closing: 12.01.19

“Wonderful is the stage of tradition, mistress of a proud heritage, Natural grace, mother of a valorous people. We shall protect you - we have a duty; Our Ethiopia, live! And let us be proud of you!” These are the final words of Ethiopia’s national anthem *March Forward, Dear Mother Ethiopia*. In this exhibit, the link between national identity and motherhood is approached in both a personal and communal manner. In the transition from Ethiopia to Israel, women have played a central role, recognizable in the shared and individual recollection of the Jews of Ethiopia. The mothers of the Yoseph Ron and Soboa have been a source of creative inspiration, and are memorialized in their works.

A sound intervention on the artwork envelopes the visitor entering the exhibition space: a young female voice reading the poem "The Confessions of a Potter (Tatey)." The dramatic sequence, shifting from narrative to monologue, is imbued with rhetorical questions of time, creativity and legacy. The voice is inevitably covered by the sounds of visitors. Rather than an interference, this is a welcomed figurative meeting between the audience and the poet, between times and spaces. It is a blunt expression of approval to intergenerational continuity: the poem is based on the artist Tigist Yoseph Ron's grandmother, is written by Yoseph Ron's brother, and performed by her daughter.

Yoseph Ron’s black and white portraits of female relatives confront the viewer. The direct look reinforces the audience's own awareness of physical presence while creating a sense of alienation and discomfort. At the same time, the expressions of these women invoke respect and admiration: a reflection of the way the artist experiences their look, thereby drawing us closer to her world.

Ethiopian textiles are known for their white and bright colorful patterns. Overturning our expectations, Soboa produces black fabric with simple linear patterns. The fabrics are at once anonymous and personal symbols: the national textile tradition is merged with the artist’s personal experience of loss. Similarly, her reproduction of a traditional Ethiopian basket (*mesob*) – a wide colorful basket with a conical lid and hollow pedestal, commonly used as a table, around which people share *injera* and *tsebhi*– is enlarged,

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blackened and displaced, emptied of its purpose. In addition, in a site-specific installation on the floor of the gallery, the artist encloses hair-extensions in a hexagonal wooden structure. Black hair is charged with symbolic meaning and at the center of beauty-standard contentions; here it is confined and prevented from fluttering naturally and spontaneously.

The contrast of black and white in the exhibit aspires to create an intergenerational conceptual balance: the construction of a feminine identity, rooted in its origin and reclaiming a new present.

Tigist Yoseph Ron (b. 1977 in Gondar, Ethiopia) immigrated to Israel in 1984. She lives and works in Raanana. In her charcoal drawings and via digital techniques, she deals with notions of femininity, motherhood and parenthood. Yoseph Ron has participated in exhibitions in Israel and abroad, among them a duo exhibit in Addis Ababa (2018) in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture.

Mimi Tasama Sibaho (b. 1989 in Shoda, Ethiopia) immigrated to Israel in 1991. She lives and works in Netivot. She uses the colour black as a conceptual means, creating site-specific works using black wool strings and nails. The notions she works with are derived from traditional Ethiopian culture. Tasama Sibaho has presented her work at the Sapir College of Audio and Visual Arts.

Idris | an independent mobile art project run by Barak Rubin and Livia Tagliacozzo. The initiative emphasizes social diversity in Israel, bringing artists from diverse backgrounds to participate in exhibitions dealing with contemporary issues. Idris's collaborative structure aspires to bring together different forms of artistic expression and facilitate public engagement with contemporary art.

Atar | a multi-disciplinary artist residency project, hosted and hosting in the Old Jaffa Antiquities Museum. Atar is comprised of studios for artists practicing various disciplines, an exhibition space doubling as an event lounge, and a space for projects. The designated uses of exhibition areas is be modularly modified, in accordance with the art and cultural events taking place at Atar. Atar operates alongside and in cooperation with the Museum's renewed Archeology Wing.

Atar Artistic Director and Producer: Lia Tzigler

Director of the Archeology Wing: Naama Meirovich

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