

Galerie Lelong & Co., New York to Represent the Estate of Ficre Ghebreyesus



Ficre Ghebreyesus, 2012.

September 24, 2019 — Galerie Lelong & Co. is pleased to now represent the Estate of Ficre Ghebreyesus (1962–2012), marking the first time the artist will be formally represented by a gallery.

Shifting fluidly between abstraction and figuration, Ghebreyesus' matte acrylic and oil paintings reveal the ambiguous forms found in dreams, memories, and storytelling. Momentarily recognizable figures dissolve into colorful patterns: a school of fish morphs to human bodies in motion or a boat emerges from brightly hued woven shapes echoing Eritrean textiles. His rebuke of borders and divisions seem to be distilled from his own optimistic embrace of an identity and home perpetually in flux.

Passing away unexpectedly at just fifty years old, Ghebreyesus left behind a staggering 800 works of art in his modest studio in New Haven, Connecticut. Each work is populated with intricate, highly personal experiences as a citizen of the world. Born in Eritrea during their War of Independence, a conflict that would continue until 1991, Ghebreyesus left as a teenage refugee moving through Sudan, Italy, and Germany, before later settling in the United States. There he mastered several additional languages, worked as the executive chef and co-owner of New Haven's Caffé Adulis, along with studying painting and printmaking at Yale University, all the while continuing his steadfast activism for Eritrean independence.

Mary Sabbatino, Vice President/Partner at Galerie Lelong & Co., says, "We are proud to continue expanding understandings of abstraction and figuration through representation of Ficre Ghebreyesus. Having escaped a country in conflict, his work speaks to a history that is largely overlooked yet so necessary to attend to today. He generously invites us to reflect upon a tumultuous past with light and color."

Galerie Lelong & Co., New York, will present his first solo exhibition with the gallery in Spring 2020 coinciding with a solo booth of his paintings at ADAA The Art Show in February 2020.

While Ghebreyesus turned down most opportunities to show during his short lifetime, recent posthumous exhibitions of his work include *Ficre Ghebreyesus: City with a River Running Through* at the Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, California, and *POLYCHROMASIA: Selected Paintings by Ficre Ghebreyesus* at Artspace, New Haven, Connecticut. Lowery Stokes Sims, Co-Curator of his exhibition at MoAD and Curator Emerita for the Museum of Arts and Design, states, "Ghebreyesus's paintings are infused with the urgency of cultural memory, national storytelling, and personal evocation." Writer and poet Elizabeth Alexander's widely lauded memoir, *The Light of the World* (2015), chronicles her husband Ghebreyesus' life and work.

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Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10:00am-6:00pm