

TRAITS TO REMEMBER:

THE AESTHETICS AND POLITICS OF BLACK PORTRAITS

25 June — 21 August
10:30 - 19:00 | Tuesday to Sunday
193 GALLERY | Venice

The 193 Gallery opened its second space in Venice last April and continues its cycle of shows under “Colore e Materia” concept with its second exhibition “Traits to remember: the aesthetics and politics of black portraits”, curated by Brice Arsène YONKEU.

Across the portrait practice, the artists Sesse Elangwe, Idris Habib and Bara Sketchbook carry out a work of memory by celebrating the black body.

Portraits of black people are rare and often marginalized in the history of art. Yet very present in society, this interculturality is not faithfully reflected in the visual arts prior to the 1950s. As a matter of fact, the portrait genre has evolved a lot in painting with the remarkable and valuable contributions of European masters in particular, but its development took place in detriment of black bodies.

All three from West Africa and working between Africa and the United States, Sesse Elangwe, Idris Habib and Bara Sketchbook really capture humanity in a contemporary way, with emotion, truth and meaning. With this set of works, the exhibition creates a new iconography of African community and its diaspora.

SESSE ELANGWE



Based in the United States, Sesse Elangwe comes from Cameroon and more specifically its English-speaking area in conflict since 2016. His paintings are a strong reflection of everyday life, his experiences, hopes and aspirations in the society.

His work emphasizes the inseparable relationship between human existence and conversations. It also sheds light on our desires.

Without these conversations, the world would be at a standstill. His art may be seen as a call to action in which viewers engage in thoughts and positive conversations to liberate society.



BARA SKETCHBOOK

The uniqueness of Bara Sketchbook's work resides in his Nigerian and Sierra Leonean heritage that he attempts to incorporate into his portraits by exploring the inner and outer feelings of his subjects. In the synesthetic spirit of the artist, each emotion is attached to a color. Through their clothes and their poses, he tries to capture the subtleties of his people. Their skin tones are often depicted in two shades, either blue or in purple. The first represents what its people lived. The second is used to reveal the rich legacy of its people's past and the beauty that the future holds

IDRIS HABIB

American artist of Ghanaian origin whose experimentation with materials illuminates his beautiful portraits. The work of Idris Habib is made of culture, vibration, of texture and audacity. Powerful and committed, his work questions the image of the African American. Indeed, Idris seeks to promote the “ordinary” African American who is neither an icon or superstar nor a martyr. His work is powerful and engaging, and his creative technique brings a succession of free portraits that look playful, expressive and deep at the same time.



ABOUT 193 GALLERY :

It is around a passion for art, travel and discovery that 193 Gallery was founded in 2018. The gallery offers through its programming the possibility of experiences related to cultures around the world. Rejecting clichés, the gallery and its curators cross borders to explore local art scenes. The mission is to make people discover the diversity of contemporary art world scenes by passing through Southeast Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, South America, Europe, and Oceania.

INFORMATION

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