

S E L E B E

Y O O N

D A K A R



Entre-acte

03.12.21 - 05.03.22

« We propose neither humanity's Being nor its models. We are not prompted solely by the defining of our identities but by their relation to everything possible as well - the mutual mutations generated by this interplay of relations. »

- Poetics of Relation, Edouard Glissant, 1990

A multitude of characters, that come from here and elsewhere, parade under our steps, like a freeze-frame shot. Three artists are gathered: Rufai Zakari (Ghana), Rebecca Brodskis (France) and Khadim Bamba (Senegal). The explosion of colour, the eclecticism of materials, the dramatised postures: *Entre-Acte* may seem like a theatre play, yet the figures evoke less specific individuals than a contemporary society looking to reinvent itself. Through the recycled and compressed plastic of Rufai Zakari, the multiple textile cuts of Khadim Bamba, and the oil paintings of Rebecca Brodskis, the artists proposes an atlas of hybrid and mobile identities, archetypes redefining themselves. Figuration becomes a support on which to build and un-build systems of representation, a site where ideals, cultural and religious anchors, existential loss, as well as economical and environmental realities coexist.

Entre-acte explores the tension that seizes contemporary society, torn between collective identity and individuality, homogeneity in the face of a globalised world of consumption and singularity, locality and universalization, loss of oneself and creation. Because it is through creativity and in relations with otherness, that lies a possibility of renewal for mankind.

- Jennifer Houdrouge

RUFAI ZAKARI



Rufai Zakari, *Amaryan Zamani I*, 2021, 159 x 127 cm

Rufai Zakari's works, made of fragments of recycled plastic, present, in a local and urban aesthetic, elegant and fashionable figures. Similar to a photographer's approach, the artist brings to light individuals he is familiar with or that he crosses paths with in his country. He extracts them from their tiresome daily context and repositions them in an explosion of colours striking forceful poses, inspired simultaneously by daily gesture and fashion photography. In search of creative solutions to environmental problems, he uses single use plastics in his work, such as plastic bags, water sachets and food packaging. In his neighbourhood in Accra, he has established a recycling system in order to collect his community's plastic trash. Then, he hires individuals to help him wash, dry, compress, cut and fuse the materials that he sews together to compose his images, with the stitch marks left visible on the surface. As a paradoxically precarious, long-lasting, polluting and globalized object, Rufai Zakari appropriates the material of plastic for their colours, symbols and textures. In Ghana, Senegal and other large African cities, street curbs, popular neighbourhoods and the coastline, become entangled within thousands of colourful plastic bags. In his work, the figures' dresses, headgears and veils are enshrouded with emblems of our blind system of consumption. Through this collaborative work, Zakari transforms his studio as a site of engagement with community as well as social and environmental issues and encourages people to respond to the environmental urgency of single-use plastic through his artistic practice.

RUFAl ZAKARI



BIOGRAPHY

Rufai Zakari (b.1990, Ghana) is based between Accra and Bawku in Ghana. He completed his apprenticeship under Mozzay, a senior artist in Nima, Accra. In 2011, Rufai Zakari graduated from the Ghanatta College of Art and Design. In his work, Zakari examines consumerism, environmental pollution, and the perils of industrialization in contemporary Ghanaian Society. In search of creative solutions to environmental issues, he founded the Rujab Eco-Art Foundation in his hometown of Bawku and bases his practise on the recycling of waste in the streets of Ghana. Zakari had a solo exhibition at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London (2021). Group exhibitions include Akron Museum, Ohio, USA (2021); "Devil's in the Detail", Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London (2020); "This Exhibition is Untitled", Nubuke Foundation, Accra (2020); "CirculArt" Sustainable Art Exhibition by Eco Reward, Casa Trasacco

Accra (2019); "World Behind the Horizon Exhibition", Gess Gallery, Dusseldorf (2019); Sustainable Art Workshop, Merck Foundation, Dubai (2019); Sustainable Art Workshop, British High Commission, Accra (2018); "Violence Against Women", Alliance Francaise Accra (2018); "Yoomo Be Ga" Recycle Art Exhibition, Museum of Science and Technology, Accra (2017); Ghana Netherland Cultural Week Exhibition, Accra (2016); "African Champions" Mural in collaboration with (You Are For Africa), Lagos (2015).

Rufai Zakari's work is held in important private and public collections including Arthur Lewis Collection (US) Easton Capital/John Friedman Collection (US) Nubuke Foundation, (Ghana) The Beth Rudin Dewoody Collection (US) The Ditau Collection, (South Africa) Susan Goodman Collection; VG Collection.

REBECCA BRODSKIS



Faiza, 2021 © Rebecca Brodskis & Selebe Yoon

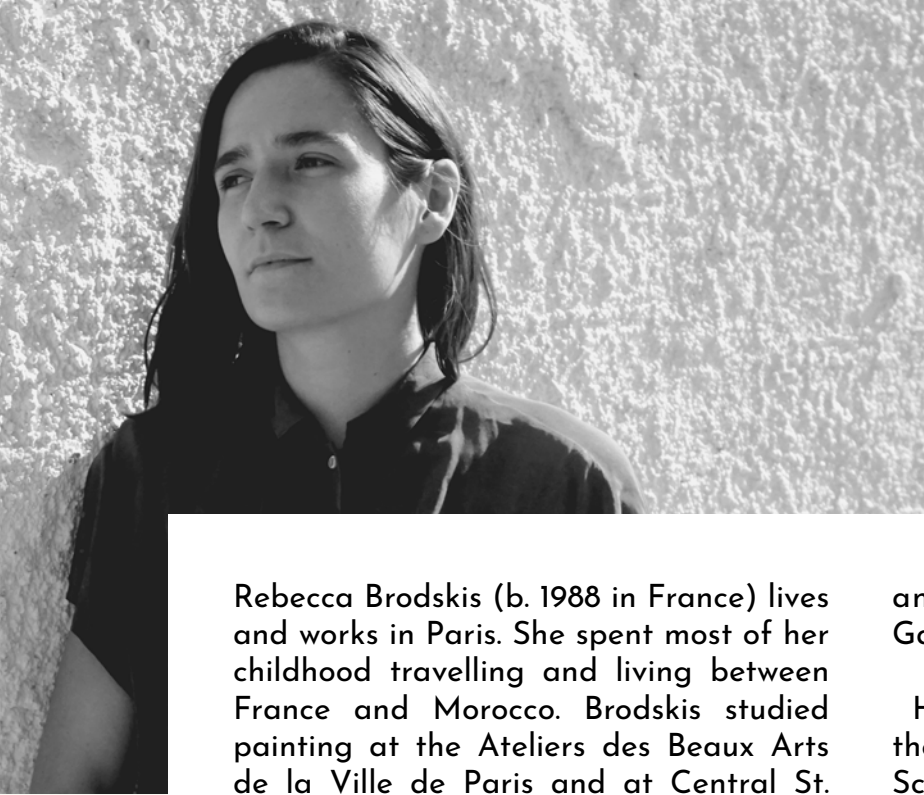
Rebecca Brodskis grew up between Paris and Morocco and has developed her artistic practice in several cities. Through these various sites, she paints from the fleeting visions of individuals who have crossed her path, as well as her memory and imagination.

With a sociological background and based on her observations of cultural confrontations and social crisis, Rebecca Brodskis draws from the discovery of new cities and the countless number of new faces, in order to approach different social contexts. At Selebe Yoon, following a 8-weeks residency in Dakar, Rebecca Brodskis presents a new series of paintings. Only women are featured in the works. Dressed with a turbans or holding basins, their well- defined silhouettes reveal faces filled with melancholy that offer moments of shadow and glow. Placed against a neutral graphic background, in a certain vacuity, her characters give the impression of floating in a surreal place, between reality and a reverie.

From the whiteness of "Magdalena" (2021) to the nuanced black tones of "Faiza" (2021), their skin colours are quasi-surreal, their gaze are homogeneous and their headgears become geometrical forms. Influenced by the aesthetic of cinema from the 1930s, these elegant figures seem to come from a different time.

In her works "De jour en jour à Dakar" (2021), a group of women seating or crouching, seem to be simultaneously accomplices and strangers. Their gesture is charged with tenderness and a latent threat: a woman is breastfeeding her child, another one is holding a fish, but their rebellious, airy and equivocal hands seem to detach from the rest of the scene. Similarly inanimate puppets, they abandon themselves to the mechanics of daily life. Like a film sequence unfolding before our eyes, the work appears like a panoramic view of an urban scene in Dakar, at the same time intimate yet left visible to anyone's gaze. Through an exploration of body dynamics, Rebecca Brodskis questions the ambiguous relation with the "Other" - this other that often appears to be a ghostly presence of our own self.

REBECCA BRODSKIS



BIOGRAPHY

Rebecca Brodskis (b. 1988 in France) lives and works in Paris. She spent most of her childhood travelling and living between France and Morocco. Brodskis studied painting at the Ateliers des Beaux Arts de la Ville de Paris and at Central St. Martins College of Art and Design in London, graduating in 2010. In 2015, she also completed a Master's degree in Sociology, focusing her research on the themes of vulnerabilities and social crisis.

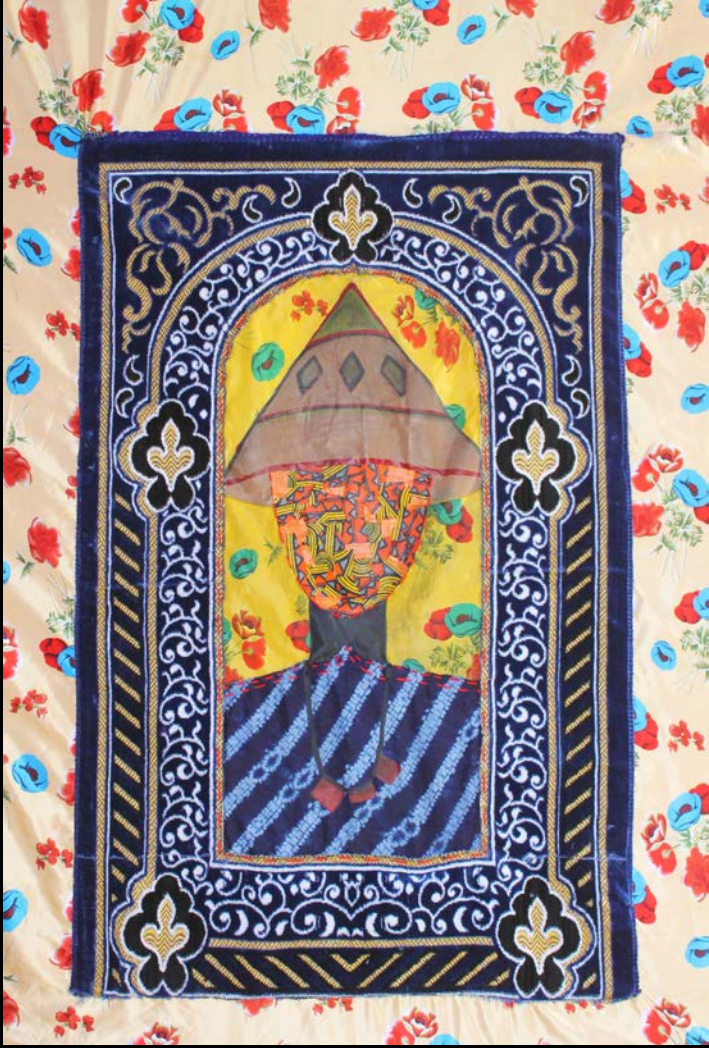
Her solo exhibitions include "La Danse de l'Absurde", Galleria Anna Marra, Rome (2021); "Arrêt Sur Image", Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London (2021); "Effet Miroir", Septième Galerie, Paris (2020); "Tomorrow Is Another Day," Steve Turner LA (2020); "Fragments of Life", Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, Berlin (2020); Galeriste with Hors Cadre, Paris (2019); "Unsettled disorders", Canopy Gallery, Netanya (2019); "Dépendance", Gallery Mario Kreuzberg, Berlin (2019)

and "Drifting Singularities", Sputnik Gallery, Tel Aviv (2017).

Her group exhibitions include "Facing the Sun", Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, Schloss Görne, Germany (2021); "All the Days and Nights", Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London (2020); "Constellations", Galerie du 6b- St-Denis, France (2019); "Where we once were", Yngspc (2019); "Interférence", Le Studio, Paris (2018); "Five French artists, Primitive Showroom", Tel Aviv (2017); "Human factor", Ori art space, Berlin (2016) and "Disfiguring, figuring the unfigurable", Kelenföldi Erömu, Budapest (2015).

Her work is held in important private and public collections which include Alan Lo Collection (Hong Kong); Museum Azman Collection (Malaysia); Pamela and David Hornik Collection (USA); The Beth Rudin Dewoody Collection (USA); Tiroche DeLeon Collection (Israel); Zeifang Collection (Germany).

KHADIM BAMBA



Thiedo, 2021 ©Khadim Bamba & Selebe Yoon

Through an assemblage of fabrics, Khadim Bamba presents characters that merge and dissolve within a decor of textiles whose traditional functions have been repurposed. As anonymous figures, these stylized figures, seemingly appear like models of a Pan-African culture and question one's malleable relation with cultural identity. He cuts, pastes, assembles and paints figures with forms inspired by the dress codes, accessories and symbols of various West African religious and ethnic groups as well as pop music, fashion and African studio photography. He collects a number fabric scraps from Dakar's markets: wax - a fabric that became a stereotypical symbol of Africa despite its colonial and multicultural itinerary, imitations of ancestral textiles; counterfeit impressions of patchwork, generally associated with the Baye Fall aesthetics and spirituality, a black and white squared fabric, found in ceremonies amongst the mouride religious group. Through the history and research of these materials, Bamba is drawn to the transformation of their social, religious, cultural and symbolic functions throughout the years. Other types of fabrics also immerse the viewer in intimate spaces and evoke the boundary between the interior and exterior, the self and the world. As an echo to the classic European portraits, the artist uses the praying carpet as a frame - a ritualistic object ubiquitous in Senegal's streets. This object, used for its interlacing curlicue foliage, no longer frames the sacred space of the daily five prayers, but its upright function now encloses the artist's figures. The textile used as a background is also symbolic: typically found in Senegalese family homes, these repurposed curtains composed of floral motifs and golden stripes speaks to desirable local customs and taste. Despite their paradoxical affiliation with an African aesthetic, numerous materials are « *made in China* » amongst the artist's materials. Between tradition and contemporaneity, the kitsch and the sacred, his works are an intertwining of philosophies, cultures and politico-economic relations. With these multiple threads, Khadim Bamba brings forth the question of openness and of an identity in becoming.


KHADIM BAMBA



BIOGRAPHY

Khadim Bamba (b.1991, Dakar), is a senegalese artist that lives and works in Dakar. He graduated from the school of Beaux Arts in Dakar in 2017. Khadim Bamba's work was included in a two-person exhibition at the Institut Français in Saint Louis in Sénégal in 2021, "Let's Talk about Art" with Urban Africa, Bamako, Mali (2021), « What about you ? » organised by Urban Africans in Cbk Zuidoost, Amsterdam, Holland (2020); Ankaria Foundation, Madrid, Spain (2020) ; 6th edition of the International du Cinéma Numérique de Cotonou

(FICNC), Cotonou, Bénin (2019); 10th Salon National des Arts Visuels du Sénégal, « Seentu ou attente » at Centre culturel Blaise Senghor, Dakar, Sénégal (2019); 8th edition of "Festival Africain d'Images Virtuelles et Artistiques" (FAIVA) in Bamako , Mali (2019) ; and « SISOOAGA » organized by the association Jeunes Artistes d'Avenir (JAA) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (2018), amongst others. He has also been nominated for the Kuenyehia Art Prize (Accra, Ghana) in 2021 and for the Ellipse Art Project (Paris, France) in 2021.



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