



SHERATON ADDIS

Addis Ababa



Yohannes Gedamu



Tadesse Mesfin



Teshome Bekele



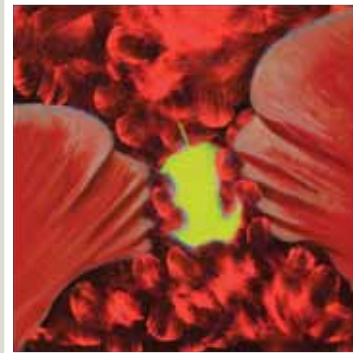
Tibebe Terffa



Lulseged Retta



Mezgebu Tesema



Bisrat Shibabaw



Demessie Gurmu

Merge - The art of Ethiopia

Co-sponsored by  **Lufthansa**

Merge - The art of Ethiopia

THE LUXURY COLLECTION™

Hotels & Resorts

Merge - The art of Ethiopia

presented by
Sheraton Addis



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Co-sponsored by





Welcome to Merge - The art of Ethiopia, the first art show of the new Ethiopian Millennium sponsored by the Sheraton Addis. As a patron of the arts, over the last ten years, the hotel has acquired a permanent art collection representing Ethiopian artistic talent. This collection is a work in progress as we are constantly expanding it.

This exhibition is intended to bring together various contemporary Ethiopian artists who vary in style and medium in order to illustrate the diversity and vibrancy of the Ethiopian art scene.

I hope that everyone will be able to appreciate the beauty of this exhibition and in their own way become a patron of the arts.

To quote a famous French Post-Impressionist artist of the late 19th century who was influenced by African artistic styles - Paul Gauguin: "Art requires philosophy, just as philosophy requires art. Otherwise, what would become of beauty?"

*Jean Pierre Manigoff
General Manager*

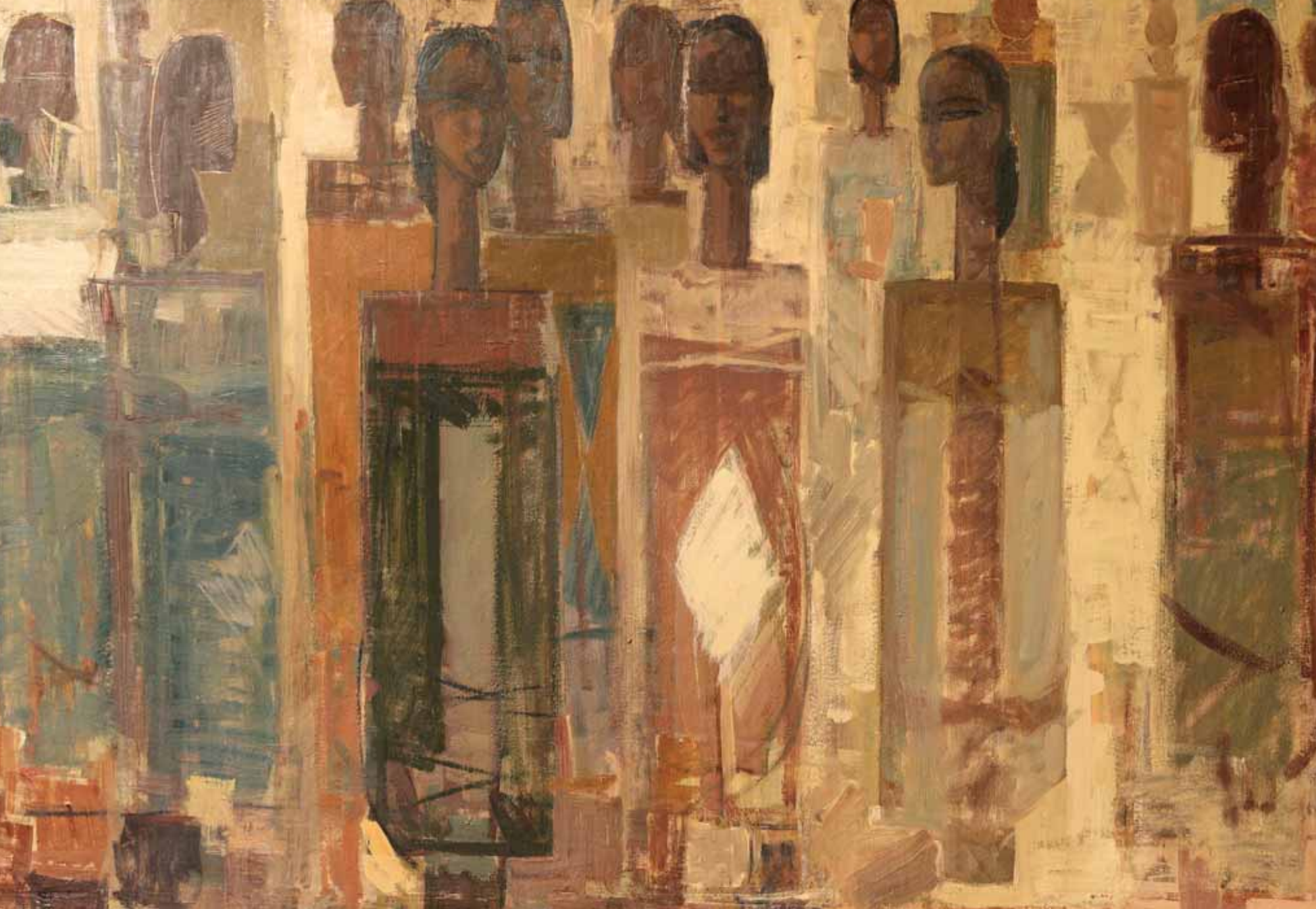




Yohannes Gedamu

Yohannes Gedamu was born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 1947. He attended the Addis Ababa School of Fine Arts (1962-67) and during the latter years as a student he worked part-time as a Designer and Scenery Artist for Ethiopian Television. Yohannes was an Art Instructor at the Haile Sellassie Comprehensive High School, Gondar (1969-71), and Designer at the Ethiopian Advertising and Distribution Agency (1969-71). He was Technical Manager of Addis Ababa Art Agency from 1971-72 before opening his very own Rainbow Art Agency and Gallery (1972-75). He moved to Mombassa, Kenya to become Manager & Partner in Artistic Studio (1976-79) before settling down as a full-time artist in Cologne, Germany (1980-98). Now he lived in Addis Ababa as a full-time studio artist.

His works, individually and in a group have been exhibited in prestigious galleries in Ethiopia, Kenya, several German cities, UK, USA and South Africa.





Tadesse Mesfin

Born in Woldia/Wello in April 29, 1953, Tadesse Mesfin attended Swedish Mission School in Addis Ababa. He attended Prince Bede Mariam (University Laboratory School) till 1967. He studied at the Fine Arts School of Addis Ababa, and in 1972 graduated with great distinction - specializing in painting. From 1973-77, he worked as a Stage & Costume Designer at the National Theatre. He attended further studies at the Repin Academy of Painting, Architecture & Sculpture in St. Petersburg, Russia and holds a Masters of Fine Arts Degree in Painting (with Honor). Tadesse won a 1997-98 MAAA (Mid-American Arts Alliance) prestigious fellowship to USA.

Tedesse's has exhibited his works in solo and group shows in Ethiopia, Djibouti, Nigeria, Tunisia, Czechoslovakia, France, Russia, China and USA. More achievements: designing Costume and Stage Scenery for 'People to People Ethiopia', the Adey Ababa Folk-Love group that toured the world; and the Ethiopian Fine Arts & Mass Media Prize for Painting in 1998.





Teshome Bekele

Teshome Bekele was born in Ambo in 1950. He Studied at Menelik II High School and later pursued his studies in Fine Arts at the Fine Arts School, Addis Ababa. His remarkable qualities as a painter were manifested at the Arts School where he completed his studies with Great Distinction in Painting and Industrial Design. Prior to working as an independent artist (1987 till date), Teshome taught art at a high school in Harar and worked as a Display Expert at the Ethiopian Retail Corporation.

Teshome's artistic drive is to establish the Ethiopian art motif as an independent entity. His fertile imagination lends an air of vigour and exuberance to the contemporary Ethiopian art scene. His individual tastes, artistic techniques and panoramic vision of traditional Ethiopia is reflected as a blueprint in his paintings. His works have been exhibited since 1970 in different Ethiopian cities, and in France, Switzerland and Canada. One of his works is part of the prominent paintings displayed at the National Museum of Addis Ababa.





Tibebe Terffa

Tibebe Terffa was born in the walled city of Harar, Ethiopia in 1948. He studied art at the Addis Ababa School of Fine Arts and Design and graduated in painting in 1976. During his time at the school, Tibebe and a few like-minded friends formed the Sixteen Young Artists Association with the aim of staging exhibitions around the country.

Tibebe worked as an Art instructor at the Medhane Alem Comprehensive High School in Harar (1973-80) before moving to Addis Ababa to work as illustrator for Kuraz Publishing House until 1983. Since 1984 he has been working as a studio artist from his residence in Addis Ababa. His solo exhibitions have been featured at several art centres in the city including the Goethe Institute and the Alliance Ethio-Francaise Gallery. Abroad, his works, solo and in a group, have been exhibited in Madrid, Spain; Washington D.C., USA; and Toronto and Winnipeg in Canada. Tibebe resided at the Saint Norbert Art Center, Manitoba, Canada from 2002 to 2004.





Lulseged Retta

Lulseged Retta was born in Addis Ababa in 1952. He graduated from the Addis Ababa Fine Arts of School with a Diploma in Painting. He did further studies at the Academy of Art Repina in Leningrad (former USSR) and graduated with an M.F.A. Degree (Very Great Distinction) in 1986.

He worked as Stage Designer and Head of Art Section at Hager Fiker Theatre (1977-79), Head of Artistic Activity Department at the Ethiopian Tourist Trading Enterprise [ETTE] (1987-96), and Senior Artist for Production (Technical Division) as well as Head of the Commercial Art Department, ETTE (1995-96). Since then, Lulseged has devoted his time to being a Studio Artist.

Lulseged's works have featured in solo and group exhibitions in Addis Ababa, Leningrad, Moscow, New York, Los Angeles, Osaka, Djibouti, Geneva, Cairo and South Africa. Some of his works are on permanent display in at the Academy of Art Repina, Sheraton Addis, galleries and in private collections in Ethiopia and around the world.

Lulseged's mission is to modernize traditional Ethiopian painting. He has lectured and presented papers on different subjects related to Ethiopian art. Lulseged's life and works have been covered by many national and international magazines.



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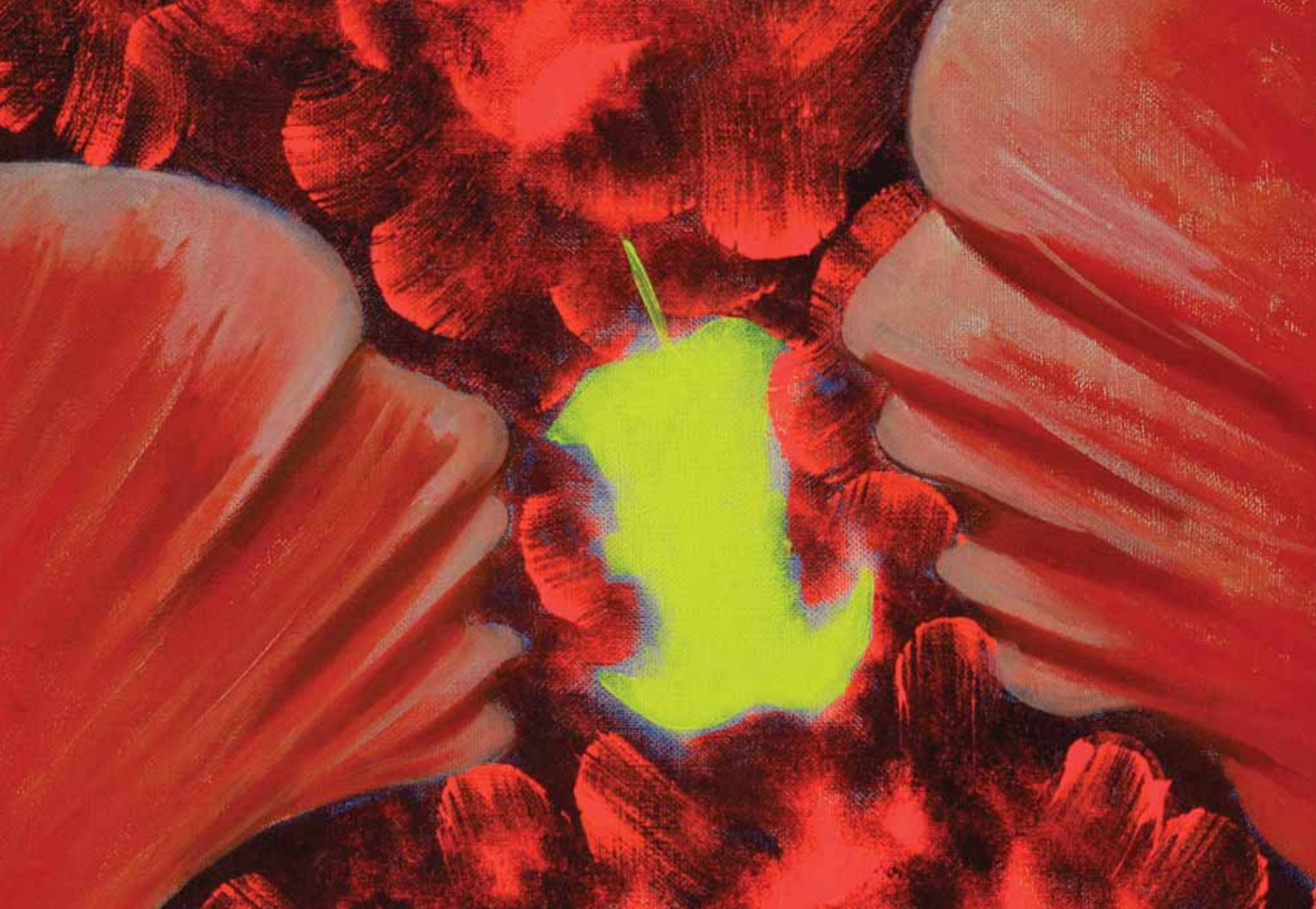


Mezgebu Tesema

Mezgebu Tesema was born on June 1960 at Enewary Town, Northern Shoa Administrative Region. After graduation at the School of Fine Arts, Addis Ababa, Mezgebu served as art instructor in the same school for a year. In 1981, he won a scholarship for further studies at the Repin Academy of Painting, Architecture & Sculpture in St. Petersburg, Russia where he received his MA degree in Fine Arts.

Mezgebu returned to Ethiopia and became an art instructor in Painting and Drawing. He served a seven-year stint (1996-2003) as Head of the Painting Department, and in 2000 became a lecturer. At the invitation of The Japan Foundation to the 'African Art Symposium 2001', he did a tour of Japan as a 'source person' for study programs in Tokyo Yokohama, Kyoto and Hiroshima.

His works has been featured as a solo exhibition at the National Museum (1984), in the Alliance Ethio-Francaise Gallery (2003) besides numerous Group art shows in Ethiopia. Mezgebu also has exhibited his works in Russia, China, Germany and USA.





Bisrat Shibabaw

Bisrat Shibabaw was born in October 7, 1965 in Addis Ababa. After finishing high school, she began her education in art at the Addis Ababa Fine Arts School. Later, she graduated with a Masters Degree from St. Petersburg Academy of Arts, Russia. Now, she is a teacher at Addis Ababa Fine Arts School.

Apart from solo exhibitions, Bisrat's works have been a part of several exhibitions at the Alliance Ethio-Francaise Gallery, and with other shows in countries such as France, China and USA.





Demessie Gurmu

One of the youngest artists in the group, Demessie Gurmu, born 1966 in Addis Ababa, graduated from the School of Fine Arts in Sculpture in 1988. He has his own workshop where he devotes time to his singular passion: sculpture.

Demessie's works has featured in group shows since 1991, and he has held solo exhibitions since 2000 at the Asni Gallery.



Photography by Photo Berhan (Wond).



We hope you enjoy Merge - The art of Ethiopia - a collection of new works by eight artists of the nation. Each artist has a unique style that has been shaped by life and its myriad experiences. Different notions of form and content have been expressed. Yet the exhibition aims to display the difference in the Group's unity and paradoxically the unity in difference.

The works represent our skill, our nature, our environment, our country and the time and era we belong to. It is how we see the essence of Ethiopia. Accordingly, this is how we prepared for the exhibition and brought it to life. As it is well known, the purpose of art is to help us understand life better. Whether it is through the vision of a single artist or a group, the essence lies in the difference our art makes.

Art needs patrons and supporters. Connoisseurs who understand its finer nuances, the skill required, and the effort and passion that goes into it. The Merge Group wishes to place on record its appreciation of the Sheraton Addis Management without whose wholehearted support, the exhibition would never have seen the light of day.

On behalf of the artists,

*Lulseged Retta
September 2008*