



For Immediate Release
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Delphine Diallo, Lloyd Toone and Ezra Wube
Under African Skies
July 14–August 19, 2011

New York City, July 14, 2011.... The collective works of Delphine Diallo, Lloyd Toone and Ezra Wube are comprised of painting, photography, video, collage and sculpture. Through different perspectives and media, these artists explore the spirituality, beauty, meaning and inspiration of various African cultures. Whether they moved here directly from Africa, are descendants of those who did, or are merely strongly influenced by those cultures, these artists are living, through their work, “Under African Skies”.

Diallo's powerful female portraits question traditional notions of beauty and challenge society's obsession with appearance. Using collage, photography and provocative language, she engages the viewer in a dialogue about African identity, history, fashion and culture. Diallo's subjects seem to radiate a sense of almost defiant freedom, and to exude power, strength and grace.

Toone's monumental and powerful sculptures of people are inspired by his travels and are made with found objects and recycled materials. He creates soulful representations that feel of the earth. Because of their familiarity and accessibility, the discarded organic objects tend to draw the viewer in and create a bond between emotion and materiality.

The work of Ethiopian painter and filmmaker Wube represents his interest in time, place and memory. He reflects on places in his homeland that no longer exist as they did in his childhood and endeavors to capture his memories on colorful canvases. In his short films he uses time-based painting which combines traditional printing methods with technology. The result is a captivating visual experience which provides the perfect referential backdrop for his paintings as well as for the works of Diallo and Toone.

Delphine Diallo

In describing her work, Diallo states:

Imagine that a part of our African history has been misunderstood during years. Imagine that this history is influencing our present. Imagine that our knowledge is not what the official history tells us. Here are the questions that inspire me every day to capture the essence and the substance of my African roots.

Diallo's artwork draws inspiration for her rich, multicultural family and personal history. Born in Paris to a Senegalese politician and French painter mother, she studied at the Académie Charpentier School of Visual Art. After working as an art designer and animator for a number of clients in the music industry, she became disenchanted with the commercial art world. She then traveled to Senegal in order to discover and document her family heritage. There she was inspired to create Magic Photo Studio, the first black and white photography studio in Mali. Here she began to combine photographs of her family with painted illustrations, compressing patterns (extracted from African textiles, totemic animals and plants) and images into single compositions.

In 2007, Diallo moved to New York. Famed photographer Peter Beard invited her to assist him in Botswana and collaborate on his art project for the Pirelli Calendar 2009. Traveling in Africa, Diallo discovered the natural wonders of rural Africa for the first time. This prompted her to return to Senegal where she was inspired to create a new body of work ("Renaissance"). Her latest series includes "Empire of Illusion", featured in *Under African Skies*.

Lloyd Toone

Toone's motivation for creating his provocative images comes from his childhood, world travels and what he calls an "innate connection" to indigenous cultures. His career has spanned five decades. His first exposure to the intricacies of colors and patterns came from watching his mother make quilts, while a love for wood and recycling came from his father, who owned and operated a

sawmill and farm. The technical style of his work shows a genuine connection to his many different materials. His individualized exploration of found objects reflects a belief that his art “represents the spirit of reincarnation and the souls of many people”.

Toone’s work has been exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the country, and can be found in the permanent collections of the Phillip Morris Corporation, The Absolut Collections, as well as in several universities and museums.

Ezra Wube

Wube was born and raised in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and moved to the United States at the age of 18. His first memories of drawing were as a child, using spices for color, such as curry for yellow. He still uses food in his artwork, noting that “coffee has a great pigment”. When he was 14, he won an art contest and with the \$50 prize money purchased his first set of oil paints and a brush. There was no looking back after that, says Wube.

Once in the United States, Wube branched out from painting and drawing to filmmaking, winning acclaim for his illustrations and animated short films. He received his BFA in Painting and Illustration from Massachusetts College and his MFA in Painting and Combined Media from Hunter College in New York City in 2009. Wube has received numerous scholarships, fellowships and awards for his work. His technique of “time based painting”, which combines traditional painting methods with technology where the art is drawn on a single canvas, photographed, and erased to start anew, creates a unique type of “stop-action” animation. In 2011 alone Wube’s own style of visual media has been exhibited in over a dozen galleries and festivals throughout the United States as well as in Ethiopia, Ghana, Romania and Germany.

After a recent trip back to Addis Ababa, Wube saw a rapidly developing city with new construction everywhere. He also noted that Ethiopia has over 70 million people and only one official school for art. It is his dream, admittedly an ambitious one, to open another art school in Ethiopia some day.

It is the mission of Tria Gallery to exhibit a balance of established artists with impressive resumes and exciting young talent, showing representational and abstract work, painting, sculpture, mixed media and installations. The common denominator is that the Tria artist has a unique, authentic voice and a compelling body of work which the directors feel should be given an audience. Tria is open during the summer Wednesday through Saturday from 12 to 5 pm, or by appointment. *Under African Skies* opens July 14 and remains on exhibition through August 19, 2011. For more information, please visit www.triagallerynyc.com.