

WOSENE WORKE KOSROF

BORN:

1950 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
1978 Moved to Washington, D.C.

EDUCATION:

1980 MFA, painting and drawing, Howard University, Washington, D.C.
1966 BFA (with distinction), painting, drawing, and design, School of Fine Arts, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

ONE PERSON EXHIBITIONS:

2022 Beyond Words, Sullivan Goss Gallery, Santa Barbara, CA
When Lives Matter, Stella Jones Gallery, New Orleans, LA
Simons Laufer Mathematical Sciences Institute, Berkeley, CA

2021 Words of Justice, Paul Mahder Gallery, Healdsburg, CA

2020 For Love of Words, Sullivan Goss Gallery, Santa Barbara, CA
Words Matter Two, Skoto Gallery, New York, NY

2019 My Favorite Things, Paul Mahder Gallery, Healdsburg, CA

2017 WordPlay – Wosene Worke Kosrof, Nakamura Keith Haring Museum, Japan
10th Anniversary Show, Loft Galeria, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico
Paul Mahder Gallery, Healdsburg, CA

2016 You Are Always New, Skoto Gallery, Chelsea, New York

2015 Gallery of African Art, London, UK
Hoshigaoko Gallery, Kochi, Japan

2013 Gallery of African Arts, London, UK
Loft Galeria, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

WOSENE WORKE KOSROF

- 2012 Hoshigoako Gallery, Kochi, Japan
- 2011 Wosene Worke Kosrof – Paintings from the Paul Herzog and Jolene Tritt
Collection, Fleming Museum, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT
- 2010-2011 WordPlay: The Life of Script in Paintings and Sculptures by Wosene Worke
Kosrof, National Museum of Ethiopia
- 2009 Skoto Gallery, New York, NY
Madelyn Jordon Fine Art, Scarsdale, NY
- 2008 Stella Jones Gallery, New Orleans, LA
- 2007 Mesai Haileleul's Adidis Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
Mason Murer Fine Art, Atlanta, GA
- 2006 Words: From Spoken to Seen – The Art of Wosene Worke Kosrof, Mexican
Heritage Plaza, San Jose, CA (catalog)
Skoto Gallery, New York, NY
- 2005 My Ethiopia: Recent Paintings, Newark Museum, NJ
Hoshigaoka Gallery, Kochi, Japan
- 2004 Skoto Gallery, New York, NY
- 2003 My Ethiopia: Recent Paintings, Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, NY
Galeria Botello, San Juan, Puerto Rico
- 2002 Skoto Gallery, New York, NY
Museum of Antigua and Barbuda, St. John's, Antigua
- 2001 Folkens Museum Etnografiska, Stockholm, Sweden
Stella Jones Gallery, New Orleans, LA
- 2000 Parish Gallery, Washington, D.C.

WOSENE WORKE KOSROF

- 1999 Two-person exhibition, Stella Jones Gallery, New Orleans, LA
Bomani Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 1997 Hoshigaoka Gallery, Kochi, Japan
Wright Gallery, New York City, NY
- 1996 St. George Gallery, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 1995 Hoshigaoka Gallery, Kochi, Japan
Alliance Francaise, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Bomani Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Spirits and Stone Gallery, Sonoma, CA
- 1994 Norman Parish Gallery, Washington, D.C.
- 1989-1990 Africa: The New Alphabet, Woodstock Gallery, Woodstock, VT
- 1988 World Bank, Washington, D.C.
- 1987 Graffiti Magic, Howard University Art Gallery, Washington, D.C.
- 1986 AVA Gallery, Hanover, NH
- 1984-1991 Various solo exhibitions at galleries in Vermont, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Maine
- 1974 Goethe Institute, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 1973 Belvedere Gallery, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Alliance Francaise, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 1969 National Lottery Hall, Addis, Ababa

GROUP EXHIBITIONS:

- 2022 Intersect Palm Springs Art Fair, Palm Springs, CA

WOSENE WORKE KOSROF

- Aboriginal Screen-Printed Textiles from Australia's Top End, Fowler Museum, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA
- 2021 Towards a 21st Century Abstraction, Westmont Ridley-Tree Museum, Santa Barbara; Coos Art Museum, Coos Bay, OR; Arts Fort Worth, TX; San Angelo Museum of Fine Art, San Angelo, TX; Longview Museum of Fine Art, Longview, TX (traveling exhibition)
Wordscapes, Edward Cella Art and Architecture, Los Angeles, CA
Intersect Aspen Art Fair, Aspen, CO
- 2020 Open Exhibit, de Young Museum, San Francisco, CA
- 2015 Toronto Summer Arts Fest, Toronto, Canada
- 2014 6th Calligraphy Biennial/ International Exhibition, Sharjah Art Museum, UAE
- 2010 Majlis Gallery, Dubai, UAE
Bastakiya Art Fair, Dubai, UAE
- 2009 Unbounded: New Art for a New Century, The Newark Museum, NJ
Transformations: Recent Contemporary African Acquisitions, Fowler Museum, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA
- 2008 Driven to Abstraction, Loft Galeria, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico
- 2007 Inscribing Meaning: Writing and Graphic Systems in African Art, Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington, DC (traveled to Fowler Museum, UCLA, CA)
- 2006 Parish Gallery, Washington, DC
- 2005 Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, NY
Austin Museum of Art, Austin, TX
- 2004 African Art, African Voices: Long Steps Never Broke a Back, Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA

WOSENE WORKE KOSROF

- 2003 Ethiopia Passages: Dialogues in the Diaspora, Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington, DC
- 1995 Seven Stories About Modern Art in Africa, Whitechapel Gallery, London, England (traveled to Malmon Konsthall, Sweden)
- 1992-1993 Crocker Museum of Art, Sacramento, CA
John Natsoulas Gallery, Davis, CA
Bomani Gallery, San Francisco, CA
William Zimmer Gallery, Mendocino, CA
- 1984-1991 Group exhibitions at galleries in Vermont, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Maine
Fleming Museum, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT
- 1981-1983 Franz Bader Gallery, Washington, D.C.
Pelington Gallery, Columbus, OH
Commonwealth Institute, London, England
Haitian Museum, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
- 1977 Paa Ya Paa Gallery, Nairobi, Kenya
Elan Gallery, Bethesda, Maryland
- 1975-1976 Paa Ya Paa Gallery, Nairobi, Kenya
- 1973 Paa Ya Paa Gallery, Nairobi, Kenya
- 1972 Africa Creates '72, New York City, NY

PUBLICATIONS:

African Arts

ArtWeek Magazine

"Beyond Words", *Art & Antiques*, Sept 1, 2023

Butts, Aaron Michael, "Ge'ez (Classical Ethiopic)", In the Semitic Language Family, 2nd Ed, New York: Routledge publishing, New York, 2019, pp 117-144.

WOSENE WORKE KOSROF

- Charles Chaz Bojorquez, interview with Karen Davalos, Sept 25, 27, 28 and Oct 2, 2007, Los Angeles, CA, CSRC Oral Histories Series, no. 5, Los Angeles, UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press, 2013.
- Clarke, Christa, *My Ethiopia: Recent Paintings*, Newark, NJ, The Newark Museum, 2003.
- Clyde, Jacqueline, "Retna", Widewalls.ch, (online), January 10, 2014.
- Cowcher, Kate, "A Postcard from Addis: Ethiopian Modernism(s) in the World", *New Histories of Art in the Global Postwar Era: Multiple Modernisms*, New York: Routledge publishing, 2021, pp 149-163.
- Cuguoglu, Naz, "The Art World's Tainted Love for "Discovering" Artists": 'The Case of Etel Adnan", hyperallergic.com, Mar 2, 2022.
- Dawson, Daniel C, "Wosene Worke Kosrof: Writing God's Other Names", *The Art of Wosene Kosrof*, San Jose: Mexican Heritage Corporation, 2006.
- De Memonville, Siena, "Approaching the Debtera in Context", *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* 58, 2018, pp 1001-1028.
- Donelan, Charles, "Amharic Abstractions at Sullivan Goss", *Independent*, Aug 27, 2020 El Nuevo Dia (San Juan, PR).
- Dorfman, John, "Word Power: Wosene Kosrof Merges the Ancient Beauty of Ethiopian Writing with Modernist Abstraction", *Art & Antiques*, June 2020, pp 30-34. Financial Times
- Frank, Peter, *Towards a 21st Century Abstraction*, Santa Barbara, CA: ZDS Designs, 2021.
- Friedel, Julia, "Exhibition Histories: Seven Stories About Modern Art in Africa", *Contemporary And* (online magazine), May 3, 2017.
- Gahiga, Kami, "An Interview with Ethiopian-Born Contemporary Artist Wosene Worke Kosrof", *sothebys.com*, Feb 1, 2022.
- Giorgis, Elizabeth W, *Modernist Art in Ethiopia*, Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2019.
- Golani, Daniel, "Reading Retna's Alphabet – Retna Script Decoded", youtube video, Dec 12, 2018.
- Harney, Elizabeth, *Ethiopian Passages: Contemporary Art from the Diaspora*, London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2003.
- Harney, Elizabeth, "Wordplay: Text and Image in Contemporary African Arts", *Inscribing Meaning: Writing and Graphic Systems in African Art*, Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution National Museum of African Art, Milan: 5 Continent Press, 2007.
- Hassan, Salah M, *Art and Islamic Literacy Among the Hausa of Northern Nigeria*, Lewiston, NY: Edward Mellen Press, 1992.
- Kandinsky, Wassily, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, (translated by Michael Sadler), Garden City, NY: Dover Publications Inc, 2021.

WOSENE WORKE KOSROF

- Karmel, Pepe, *Abstract Art: A Global History*, London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2020.
- Kebede, Messay, *Radicalism and Cultural Dislocation in Ethiopia – 1960-1974*, Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2008.
- Kennedy, Jean, "Wosene Kosrof of Ethiopia", *African Arts* 20, no 3, 1987, pp 64-67 & 89.
- Kennedy, Jean, *New Currents, Ancient Rivers: Contemporary African Artists in a Generation of Change*, Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992
- Knight, Christopher, "Five Pandemic Postponed Shows Worth Seeing: Dazzling Textiles Printed With Silk Screens", (review of "Aboriginal Screen-Printed Textiles" show at the Fowler Museum at UCLA, *Los Angeles Times*, May 11, 2022.
- Kosrof, Wosene Worke, "Life as a Canvas", *Agni*, issue 89, pp 130-139.
- Kosrof, Wosene, "The Pleasures and Dangers of Learning to See", *Education Through Art*, 2006.
- Kreamer, Christine Mullen, "Graffiti Magic: Wosene Kosrof", *African Arts* 21, no 3, 1988, pp 73-75.
- Kreamer, Christine Mullen and Allyson Purpura, "Visual Poetry – Performing Script: The Art of Wosene Worke Kosrof", *WordPlay: The Life of Script in Paintings and Sculptures*, Berkeley, CA: Color of Words, pp 20-31, 2010.
- Mercier, Jacques, *Art That Heals: The Image as Medicine in Ethiopia*, New York: Museum for African Art, 1997.
- Mercier, Jacques, *Ethiopian Magic Scrolls*, New York: George Braziller publishers, 1979.
- Methner, Kerrie, "Wosene Worke Kosrof Riffs on Life in Beyond Words", *Voice*, Sept 8, 2022
Newark Museum, 2005
- "NYC Art Show: Wosene Kosrof's WordPlay", *Tadias Magazine*, Apr 30, 2008.
The New York Times
- Ofori Ansah, Kwaku, *Graffiti Magic*, (catalog), Washington, D.C.: Gallery of Art, Howard University, 1987.
- Palermo, Charles, "A Project for Wholeness", *Picasso and Braque: The Cubist Experiment 1910-1912*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011.
Philadelphia Tribune
San Francisco Chronicle
San Jose Mercury News
Washington Post
Winston-Salem Journal
- Woodard, Josef, "Pairings for Art's Sake", *Voice*, Jan 7, 2022

WOSENE WORKE KOSROF

WordPlay: The Life of Script in Painting and Sculpture by Wosene Worke Kosrof, catalog (accompanying solo exhibition at The National Museum of Ethiopia, 2010-2011), Berkeley, CA: Color of Words Inc, 2010.

Wosene: Beyond Words, published by Sullivan Goss Gallery, Santa Barbara, CA, 2022
Yamanashi News

AWARDS:

1996 Rockefeller Foundation fellowship, month-long residency in Bellagio, Italy
1980 Ford Foundation Talent Scholar

TEACHING:

2017 Lecture, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

2015 Children's Workshops in creating pictures using letters and words, Sharjah Art Museum, UAE

2007 Lecture, Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit, MI

2000 - 2001 Artist-in-residence, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Sweet Briar, VA

1996 Artist-in-residence, Rockefeller Foundation, Bellagio, Italy

1995 Lecture, Alliance Francaise, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

1991 Adjunct Faculty, teaches painting and drawing, Union Institute, Sacramento, CA

1989-2000 Resident Artist, teaches acrylic painting for high school students, summer program, Vermont Governor's Institute on the Arts

1986 Lecture, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

1984-1991 Adjunct Faculty, teaches studio painting, Goddard College & Vermont College

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Teaches drawing and painting, Community College of Vermont

1984 Artist-in-residence, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Sweet Briar, VA

1975-1976 Faculty, teaches advanced painting and drawing, Addis Ababa School of Fine Arts, Ethiopia

--- Lecture, Thelma Harris Gallery, Oakland, CA

COMMISSIONS

1986 United Nations, painting for "Africa in Crisis" campaign, becomes UN stamp and part of UN permanent collection

1983 United Nations, two paintings

IMPORTANT COLLECTIONS:

Alza Corporation, Mountain View, CA

Bank of Hanover, Hanover, NH

Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham, AL

Chikamori Hospital, Kochi, Japan

City of Addis Ababa Museum, Ethiopia

Crocker Museum of Art, Sacramento, CA

Fleming Museum, Burlington, VT

Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

Fowler Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles, CA

Fritz Rudolf Fries, novelist

Guilford College Museum, Greensboro, NC

Highland Hospital, Oakland, CA

Howard University, Washington, DC

Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN

Keiko Oishi

Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Champaign/Urbana, IL

Library of Congress, Washington, DC

Nakamura Keith Haring Museum, Japan

WOSENE WORKE KOSROF

National Museum of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa
Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, NY
Newark Museum, Newark, NJ
North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh-Durham, NC
Peter Gray Museum, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico
Rockefeller Collection, New York, NY
Samuel P. Harn Museum, University of FL, Gainesville
Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington, DC
Tobias Management LLC, New York, NY
United Nations, New York, NY (two paintings commissioned)
University of CA Medical Center, Davis, CA
University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, MD
US Embassy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA
Völkerkunde Museum, Zürich, Switzerland
World Bank, Washington, D.C.
Zor Neale Hurston Museum, Orlando, FL