

EVERARD READ

TAFADZWA TEGA

(b.1985 Harare, Zimbabwe)

The narrative expectations and contradictions of the diaspora experience are the central subject of Zimbabwean-born artist Tafadzwa Tega's socio-political portraits of immigrants and immigrant life.

'My work speaks to the struggles and dreams of the people of Zimbabwe. Political and economic instability over several decades has forced many Zimbabweans, including myself and some family members, to emigrate. Finding themselves in foreign countries – and, often, subjected to poor working and living conditions – Zimbabweans learn how to make ends meet while, at the same time, not forgoing ambition. These opposing currents – joy and desire on the one hand; exploitation and alienation on the other – often come to be represented in photographs. In these photographs, people dress their best; they choose glamorous settings for backgrounds; they pose. My paintings are based off of these photographs, conveying my countrymen's resilience and determination to live (or, at least, to project) a better life.

'The *zumbani* (tea leaf from the fever tree) composes the background of each portrait. Zumbani is a medicinal plant that for generations has been used to provide relief from various illnesses such as coughs, colds, headaches and, most recently, COVID-19. While its effectiveness has been disputed, I refer to *zumbani* symbolically. We, as Zimbabweans, are scattered across the globe; *zumbani* reminds us of the places where we grew up, of our mothers and grandmothers who prepared this herb for us when we took ill. In this way, the flower connects us to home and ancestry. It is a sign of national identity founded on the basis of care and, thus, serves as a talisman against grief.'

Tafadzwa Tega was born in Harare and studied art at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe. In 2008, Tega moved to South Africa, later joining Good Hope Art Studio. Tega has participated in several group exhibitions and has presented solo exhibitions in Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa, as well as Lausanne, Switzerland. His work can be found in several prominent private collections, including the Leridon Collection, the Spier Arts Trust, Nando's and the University of Cape Town. Tega is currently based in Cape Town, where he is a resident at Greatmore Studios. In 2023 he was acknowledged with the award for the best visual arts exhibition at the Aardklop National Arts Festival in South Africa.

EDUCATION

2008 Diploma in Fine Art, National Gallery of Zimbabwe

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 Chisi hachieri musi wacharimwa (A seed will take its time to grow), Everard Read, Johannesburg; Aardklop National Arts Festival, Potchefstroom, South Africa
Exodus, Mimmo Scognamiglio / Placido, Milan, Italy
Future Fair, with Martin Projects, New York, USA
- 2022 Rwendo (Journey), JD Malat Gallery (in collaboration with Africa First), London, UK
Zumbani, Mimmo Scognamiglio / Placido, Milan, Italy
- 2021 Harare Dream, Foreign Agent, Lausanne, Switzerland
- 2020 Mwana Whevu (Son of the Soil), Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2019 Africa Without Borders, Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2014 Africa Without Borders, World Art, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2012 Adolf Tega, AVA Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

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SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
Artefiera Bologna, Mimmo Scognamiglio / Placido, Bologna, Italy
- 2023 miart Fair, with Mimmo Scognamiglio / Placido, Milan, Italy
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Mimmo Scognamiglio / Placido, Cape Town, South Africa
FNB Art Joburg, with Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa
The Other's Warmth, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
Contemporary Figuration: Between Body & Metaphor, JD Malat Gallery, London, UK
- 2022 Art Miami, with Mimmo Scognamiglio / Placido, Miami, USA
Volta Fair, with Mimmo Scognamiglio / Placido, Basel, Switzerland
So Far So Good, Mimmo Scognamiglio, Milan, Italy
Dallas Art Fair, with Mimmo Scognamiglio / Placido, Dallas, USA
- 2021 A Very Loop Street Summer, EBONY/CURATED, Cape Town, South Africa
8x8, Ebony/Curated, Cape Town, South Africa
Art Miami, with Mimmo Scognamiglio / Placido, Miami USA
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Ebony/Curated, Cape Town, South Africa
Dallas Art Fair, with Mimmo Scognamiglio / Placido, Dallas, USA
Open City: Everything was beautiful and nothing hurt, FNB Art Joburg, South Africa
Foreign Agent, 1-54 London, UK
- 2020 Summer Show, Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, South Africa
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2019 #Recess, Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa
Urban Archeology, Daor Contemporary, Cape Town, South Africa
Nando's Creative Exchange, AVA Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
FNB Art Joburg, with Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa

COLLECTIONS

Leridon Collection, France
Spier Arts Trust, South Africa
Nando's Collection, South Africa
University of Cape Town, South Africa
Fundacion AMMA, Mexico
Fundacion para el Desarrollo de la Pintura, Spain
Radisson Red, South Africa