

## 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  
10<sup>th</sup> 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

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- 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.

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- 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

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- Aboriginal Screen-Printed Textiles from Australia's Top End, Fowler Museum, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA
- 2021      Towards a 21<sup>st</sup> 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      6<sup>th</sup> 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

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- 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, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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", *Tadías 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

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*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

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### 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  
Baltimore Art Museum, MD  
Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham, AL  
Chikamori Hospital, Kochi, Japan  
City of Addis Ababa Museum, Ethiopia  
Crocker Museum of Art, Sacramento, CA  
Davis Museum, Wellesley, MA  
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  
Hood Museum of Art, Hanover, NH  
Howard University, Washington, DC  
Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN  
Keiko Oishi

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The Kennedy Museum of Art, Athens, OH  
Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Champaign/Urbana, IL  
Library of Congress, Washington, DC  
Nakamura Keith Haring Museum, Japan  
National Museum of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa  
Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, NY  
Newark Museum, Newark, NJ  
New Orleans Museum of Art, LA  
North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh-Durham, NC  
Peabody-Essex Museum, Salem, MA  
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  
Stanley Museum of Art, Iowa City, IA  
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  
The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, MD  
World Bank, Washington, D.C.  
Zor Neale Hurston Museum, Orlando, FL