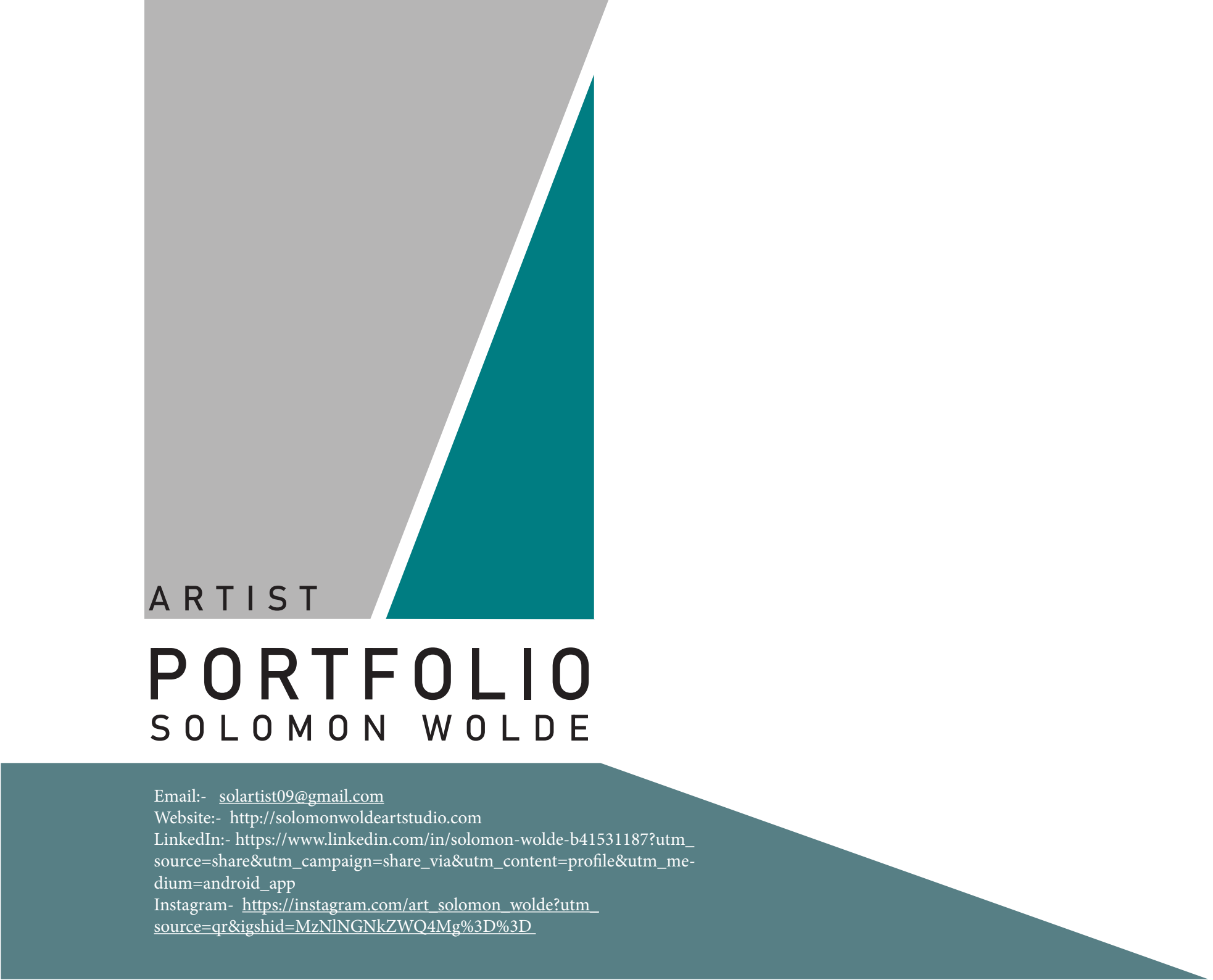




ARTIST

PORTFOLIO

SOLOMON WOLDE

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INTRODUCTION

"How do patterns and spaces shape the way we perceive identity, culture, and our connection to the cosmos?"

Welcome to the artistic world of Solomon Wolde, where I invite you to embark on a journey through the interplay of memory, community, and the infinite energy grid of the universe. My work is a reflection of my personal experiences growing up in a utopian community, now dispersed and fragmented, and my ongoing exploration of the patterns that define our existence through cultural heritage, spiritual exploration, and architectural abstraction converge to create mesmerizing visual narratives. Through a combination of traditional techniques and contemporary vision, I invite you to embark on a journey through time and space, delving into the depths of human experience and cosmic energy.

BIOGRAPHY

Solomon Wolde is a visual artist and educator based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. His work explores culture, identity, and the cosmic interconnectedness of human existence, focusing on themes of community, balance, and spirituality. Working primarily in oil and acrylic, Solomon's practice is rooted in childhood memories of his harmonious Arcadian community in Merkato, the largest open-air market in Africa. This vibrant cultural hub shaped his worldview and inspired his artistic narratives of unity and belonging.

Born in 1982, Solomon grew up immersed in Merkato's rich diversity, where the dynamic interplay of cultures and traditions left a lasting imprint on his sensibilities. His art highlights the invisible forces that sustain communities, with particular emphasis on the role of women as pattern-makers, guardians, and designers of social order and time. This conceptual focus informs his exploration of African masks, patterns, and rituals as metaphysical tools for accessing cosmic energies.

Solomon holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts (2007) and a Master of Fine Arts (2017) from Addis Ababa University's Ale School of Fine Arts and Design. In 2020, he earned a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from Hope University College, further enriching his understanding of space, structure, and form. His multidisciplinary edu-

cation allows him to integrate the symbolic and structural aspects of art and architecture in both his creative practice and teaching.

Since 2007, Solomon has exhibited extensively in Addis Ababa, showcasing his work in solo and group exhibitions that celebrate Ethiopian art and culture. His efforts as a workshop organizer and fellowship coordinator have fostered collaborative spaces for artistic growth and dialogue.

A major milestone in Solomon's career came in 2024 when several of his pieces were acquired by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts for their African Art Collection, marking his international breakthrough. As an educator, he has taught fine art, art history, and aesthetics at the Ethiopian Institute of Architecture, Building Construction, and City Planning (EiABC) at Addis Ababa University.

Through his art, Solomon seeks to bridge the ancestral and the contemporary, exploring the enduring legacies of African cultures and their relevance in today's world. His work resonates with universal themes of identity, order, and the quest for harmony, offering a profound meditation on humanity's connection to the cosmos.



ARTISTIC MOTIVATION

My artistic journey is a deeply personal response to loss, displacement, and the search for identity. It is shaped by the fractures of my past and guided by a desire to heal, reconnect, and create meaning.

I was born in Mercato, the vibrant open-air market at the heart of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Life there was a rich tapestry of culture, sound, and color, anchored by a tightly-knit community. My Ethiopian father and Eritrean mother embodied unity in a household where diversity was celebrated. However, this idyllic life was shattered by Eritrea's independence and the Ethiopia-Eritrea war. Political tensions dissolved the harmony I had known, tearing apart families, neighbors, and my sense of belonging.

The demolition of my childhood home due to government development projects scattered my community further, leaving me to navigate the void of disconnection and loss. The pain deepened when I lost both my father and brother in the same year, leaving me grappling with profound grief.

In the face of these upheavals, I turned to art, memory, and spirituality as a refuge. Ethiopian Orthodox Christian traditions, with their sacred icons, crosses, and murals, provided solace. Their tranquil, abstract patterns and timeless narratives offered a space for contemplation and healing. Similarly, Ethiopian talismanic art inspired me, with its intricate symbols evoking protection and resilience, reflecting my desire to rebuild amidst brokenness.

African masks profoundly influenced my artistic voice, their bold

abstractions and symbolic depth echoing my inner turmoil and fragmented identity. These cultural elements became essential tools for exploring displacement, memory, and belonging.

My background in architecture further shaped my perspective, reinforcing my belief that spaces—whether architectural or artistic—are inherently spiritual. Architecture's ability to unify and shape human connections mirrors the harmony I seek to create in my paintings.

Central to my work is the spiritual force of women, whom I see as the architects of society and protectors of community. This belief aligns with the Ethiopian concept of adbar, unseen guardians of shared spaces, and informs my use of geometric mosaics. These fractured yet unified patterns symbolize the tension between disintegration and renewal, loss and healing.

My paintings are vessels for memory, spirituality, and resilience. Through fragmented compositions of triangular and polygonal shapes, I reflect the dislocation of my past and the hope of reimagining harmony. Each piece is a meditation on the human spirit's ability to endure, adapt, and connect.

Art has become my sanctuary, offering a way to transform grief into beauty and alienation into belonging. It carries the weight of my personal history while tapping into universal themes of identity, healing, and spirituality. My journey continues to evolve, as I explore new ways to reconcile the fragments of my story and create art that speaks to the shared resilience of the human spirit.

ARTIST STATEMENT 1

Ancestral Echoes: The Convergence of Masks and Crystal Realms

In Ancestral Echoes: The Convergence of Masks and Crystal Realms, my artistic exploration delves into the intricate intersections of African cultural heritage and cosmic energy. Inspired by the rich symbolism of African tribal masks and the enigmatic beauty of crystalline structures, I investigate the infinite cosmic grid that connects and shapes all existence, from subatomic particles to celestial bodies.

Central to my work are African masks, which act as vessels of ancestral wisdom and cultural memory. These masks embody the rituals and rhythms of African traditions, which seek to attract, balance, and harmonize cosmic energies in order to solve societal and individual challenges. Each mask becomes a portal, inviting viewers to reflect on their own identities while contemplating the shared heritage of humanity. These elements remind us of the timeless relationship between the spiritual and the material, the ancestral and the universal.

To amplify this narrative, I situate the masks within fragmented, crystalline architectural spaces. These surreal backdrops evoke a multidimensional realm where materiality dissolves into ethereal abstraction. The crystalline forms symbolize the interconnectedness of all things, representing both the structures of the universe and the fluid nature of energy. Through the interplay of light, shadow, form, and void, my work challenges viewers to transcend physical boundaries and engage with the infinite potential of the human spirit.

ARTISTIC PHILOSOPHY

My artistic philosophy is rooted in the transformative power of art as a medium for healing, connection, and spiritual transcendence. Art, for me, is not merely a creative expression but a bridge between the personal and the universal, the seen and the unseen, the fragmented and the unified. It is a way to confront and process the complexities of identity, belonging, memory, and community, while also engaging with the timeless spiritual forces that shape human experience.

I draw deeply from the spiritual traditions of Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, with their meditative icons, intricate patterns, and symbolic narratives. These traditions, alongside the enigmatic visual language of African masks and talismanic art, inspire my exploration of art's ability to evoke tranquility, transcendence, and a connection to something larger than oneself.

Architecture also plays a vital role in my philosophy. I view it as a spiritual discipline, a force that shapes human interaction, fosters community bonds, and creates harmony in the spaces we inhabit. This belief extends to my artistic practice, where I seek to integrate the structural and the spiritual, creating works that reflect the intricate, interconnected patterns of life.

Ultimately, my philosophy is grounded in the idea that art is not only a means of self-expression but a tool for social and spiritual integration. Through art, I strive to preserve and reconstruct the utopian ideals of unity and belonging that I experienced in my early life, while also offering a space for reflection, healing, and the celebration of shared humanity.



Adbar Collider

This series explores the adbar as an invisible cosmic force—a protective energy field that orders, connects, and entangles villages, cities, and communities. Through dynamic compositions of fragmented architecture, glowing energy grids, and ancestral motifs, the paintings depict the adbar's dual role as both a guardian and an invisible architect of harmony. The series visualizes the interplay between chaos and structure, tradition and modernity, capturing the unseen threads that bind and sustain collective existence.

Title-Adbar Collider: Spirit and Structure I
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-45cm x 33cm
Year-2024



Title-Adbar Collider: Spirit and Structure II
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-33cm x 45cm
Year-2024



Title-Adbar Collider: Spirit and Structure III
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-45cm x 33cm
Year-2024

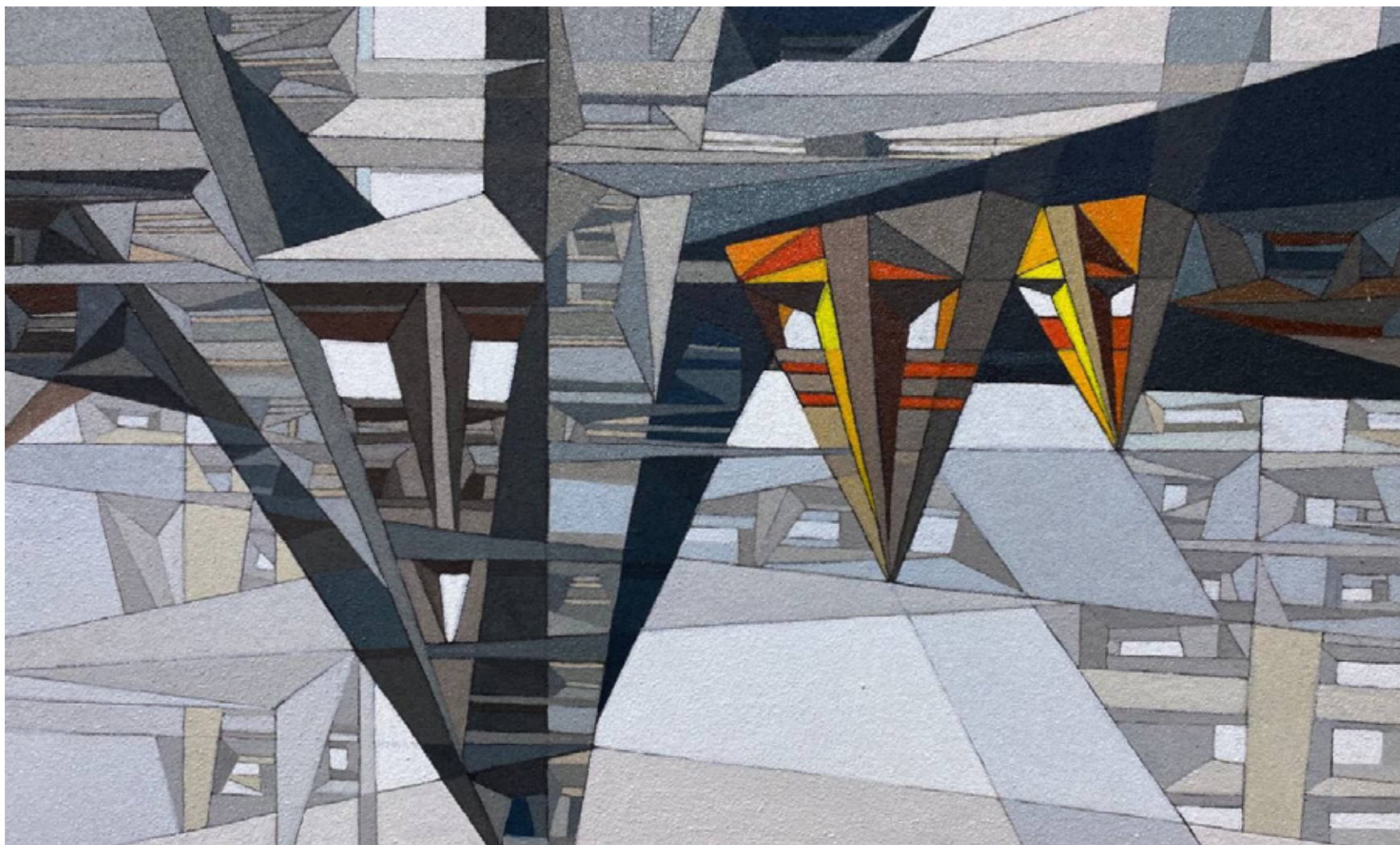
MATTERNS

In my paintings, I use triangular patterns, which I call Matterns, to express the essence of invisible feminine forces that have guarded my village for generations. These patterns dominate my compositions, varying in size, direction, and color, and are woven into every form and space. They are the lifeblood of my art—the DNA from which all my creative expressions emerge. Each Mattern is a fragment of memory, a detail that births new compositions, evolving endlessly into forms that echo the persistence of memory through time. Through their details and fragments, the continuity of life, and the birth of new forms from old ones.

I do this in my paintings to honor the feminine energy that protects and nurtures my village. The Matterns are my way of expressing the unseen, yet deeply felt, presence of these guardians—the spiritual forces that connect individuals to their land, their community, and their past. Painting them is my way of preserving their essence, of making the invisible visible.

The triangle itself holds profound meaning for me, rooted in the ancient traditions of Ethiopian art. It represents the unity of divine and human, the sacred and the profane, the micro and the macro. In my work, the triangle evolves further, symbolizing the unity of feminine spirit, energy, and the land. Each pattern becomes a visual language through which I explore how these forces interweave to form the fabric of existence.

By using Matterns, I express my belief in the invisible order that bonds people, spirit, and nature. My work becomes a reflection of the continuity of life, the re-birth of memories, and the sacred harmony of community and soul. I paint this way because I feel compelled to visualize these forces, to honor the guardians of my heritage, and to explore how their essence persists, transforms, and inspires.



Title-Adbar Collider: Spirit and Structure IV
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-33cm x 45cm
Year-2024

WEB OF LINES

The use of line in my work is deeply personal—it is my primary language for expressing who I am, what I feel, and how I navigate the world. For me, painting is not just a process of creating images; it is a way of connecting with my past, exploring my identity, and finding meaning in the fragments of life. The line is where it all begins. It is my way of organizing chaos, giving form to emotions, and creating a bridge between my inner world and the outside.

I use lines because they are direct and ambiguous, capable of carrying raw emotion and complex ideas at the same time. Each line I draw is deliberate, yet it also allows for spontaneity, guiding me into uncharted territory. Lines contract and expand, much like the rhythms of thought and feeling. They help me deconstruct and reconstruct my experiences—memories that are often fractured and blurred, like puzzle pieces scattered across time. Through these lines, I explore the tension between clarity and ambiguity, between control and freedom.

On a technical level, my use of line is rooted in movement. Painting, for me, is an act of searching—searching for the right mark, the right connection, and ultimately, the right way to convey what cannot be said in words. Lines in my work trace the flow of time and thought, capturing fleeting moments and vanishing memo-

ries. They allow me to explore space in ways that are not fixed but fluid and evolving, mirroring the fragmented and shifting nature of human experience.

Culturally, the line connects me to my roots. Growing up in a highly integrated, multicultural community, I was surrounded by invisible forces—relationships, traditions, and shared values—that held people together like a web. I paint lines to express these connections and to acknowledge their fragility. This web of lines is also a way of revisiting the collective harmony that once existed in my village and grappling with its loss. The cultural traditions of Ethiopian Orthodox art and the symbolic black thread worn around the neck inspire me to see lines as more than marks—they are boundaries, ties, and pathways.

Ultimately, I paint to express my humanity. The fractured forms, the vanishing perspectives, the endlessly moving lines—they all represent my ongoing attempt to make sense of who I am, both as an individual and as part of something greater. My intention as an artist is not just to create something beautiful or evocative, but to share a piece of myself, to artistically reconstruct what is lost, and to connect with others through the universal language of line.



Title-Convergence of Masks and
Crystal Realms I
Media-Oil on Canvas
Size-100cm x 100cm
Year-2023
Recent collection of virginia
museum of art USA

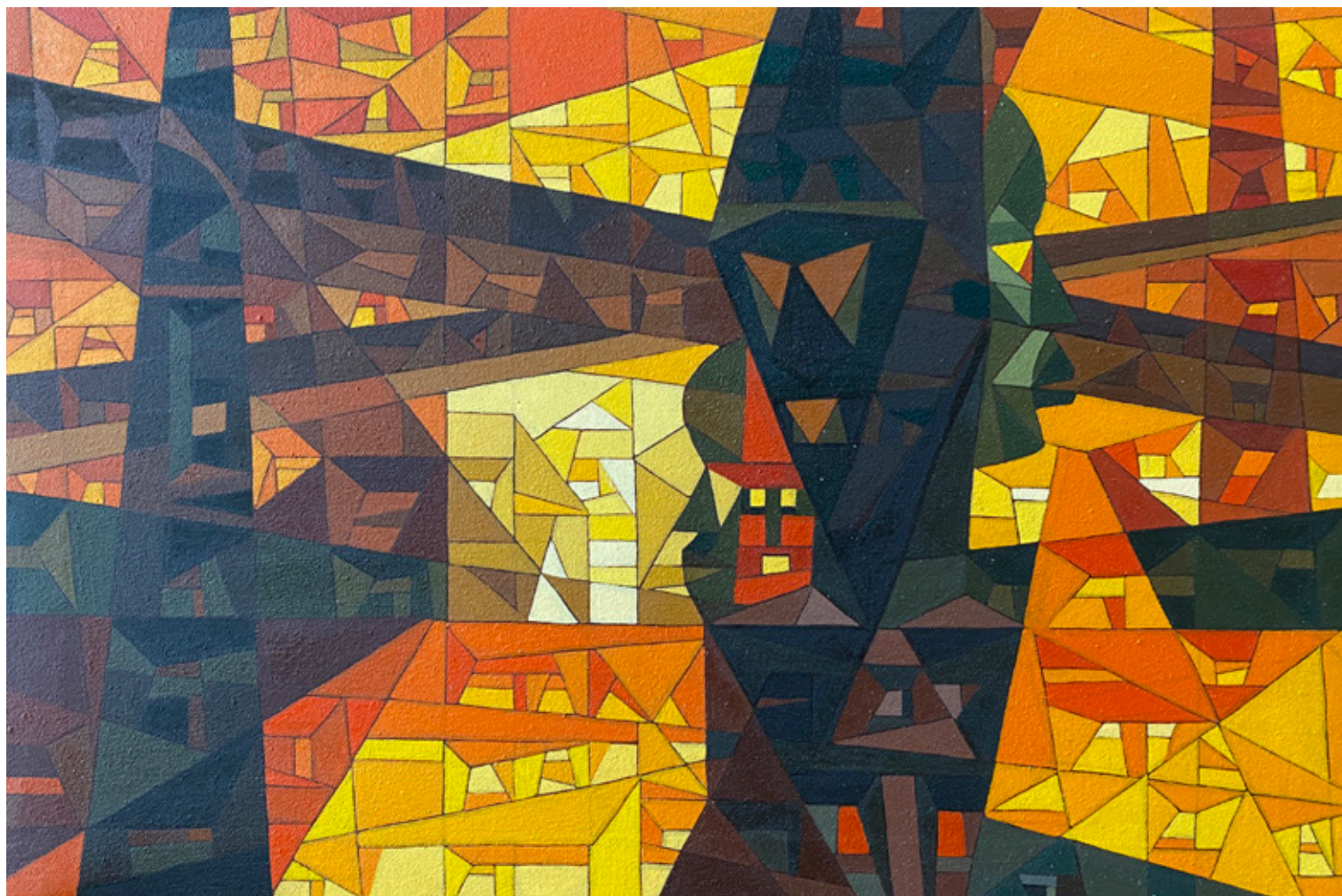
COLOR PALETTE

The transformation of my color palette to achromatic tones and muted, tinted, and burned colors is deeply personal, rooted in my reflections on memory, identity, and the passage of time. Black, white, and gray remind me of the images of destruction and aftermath, of the old times and the fading echoes of a shared past. These colors, stripped of intensity and brilliance, resonate with the way memories dim and lose their clarity, yet their essence lingers like a taste or scent that persists long after the source has vanished.

Each muted piece in my work is a metaphor for the individuals, places, and events that shaped the communities of the past. These fragments, veiled by time and eroded by distance, still carry a presence. As I paint, I search for the muted colors of each tesserae in my mosaic-like compositions, deliberately choosing hues that reflect the tension between what is lost and what endures. Each piece holds a story—faded, fragmented, yet undeniably alive—echoing the bittersweet beauty of human memory.

The process of creating these works is as much about rediscovery as it is about preservation. Each tesserae is painted individually, juxtaposed side by side, creating a dialogue of differences and similarities. This interplay mirrors the complexity of memory: mismatched and unclear, yet threaded with a sense of unity. It explores my struggle to retrace and recover the past, to find coherence in the fragmented pieces of identity and time.

By embracing a subdued palette, I aim to express my experience of remembering—the loss, the persistence, and the beauty of fragments that refuse to disappear. My work becomes a meditation on the fragile yet enduring nature of memory, the passage of communities through time, and the tension between forgetting and holding on. This transformation in my art is not only an exploration of color but also a reflection of my humanity—a search for meaning, connection, and the essence of what remains when brilliance fades.



Title-Convergence of Masks and
Crystal Realms II
Media-Oil on Canvas
Size-40cm x 60cm
Year-2023

ARCHITECTURE

I paint architectural backgrounds in my work because they allow me to explore the interplay between interior and exterior spaces. These spaces are drawn from my memories and are deeply personal—they reflect an analogy between community and individuality, showing their variegation and integration. I believe architecture is not just a physical structure; it is an invisible force, an order that shapes individual and social behaviors. To me, it parallels the feminine, invisible force in villages that nurtures and controls social interactions, roles, and relationships.

Architecture plays a central role in my paintings not only because I graduated in architecture but because it reminds me of my idyllic past. It brings back memories of harmony within the community, of sitting under the shade of a shared spirit with neighbors and family. In my work, the architectural backgrounds are shattered, disintegrated, and fractured across the picture plane. This fragmentation expresses the fragility of community, the vanishing of its structures, and the destruction of the memories tied to it. These backgrounds feel like ruins—remnants of ancient civilizations—and reflect the relentless passage of time.

Through my art, I retrace and excavate these memories. I seek to piece together the stories, events, and feelings of the past, even as I acknowledge the impossibility of capturing every detail. The process becomes a way of searching for resolution, of revisiting and reimagining the past through art. While the fractures speak to the disappearance of memories, they also allow me to dig deeper into imagination and creativity, to create something new from what has been lost.



Title-Masked Memories I
Media-Oil on Canvas
Size-60cm x 40cm
Year-2023



Title-Masked Memories II
Media-Oil on Canvas
Size-58 x 43cm
Year-2023



Title-Masked Memories III

Media-Oil on Canvas

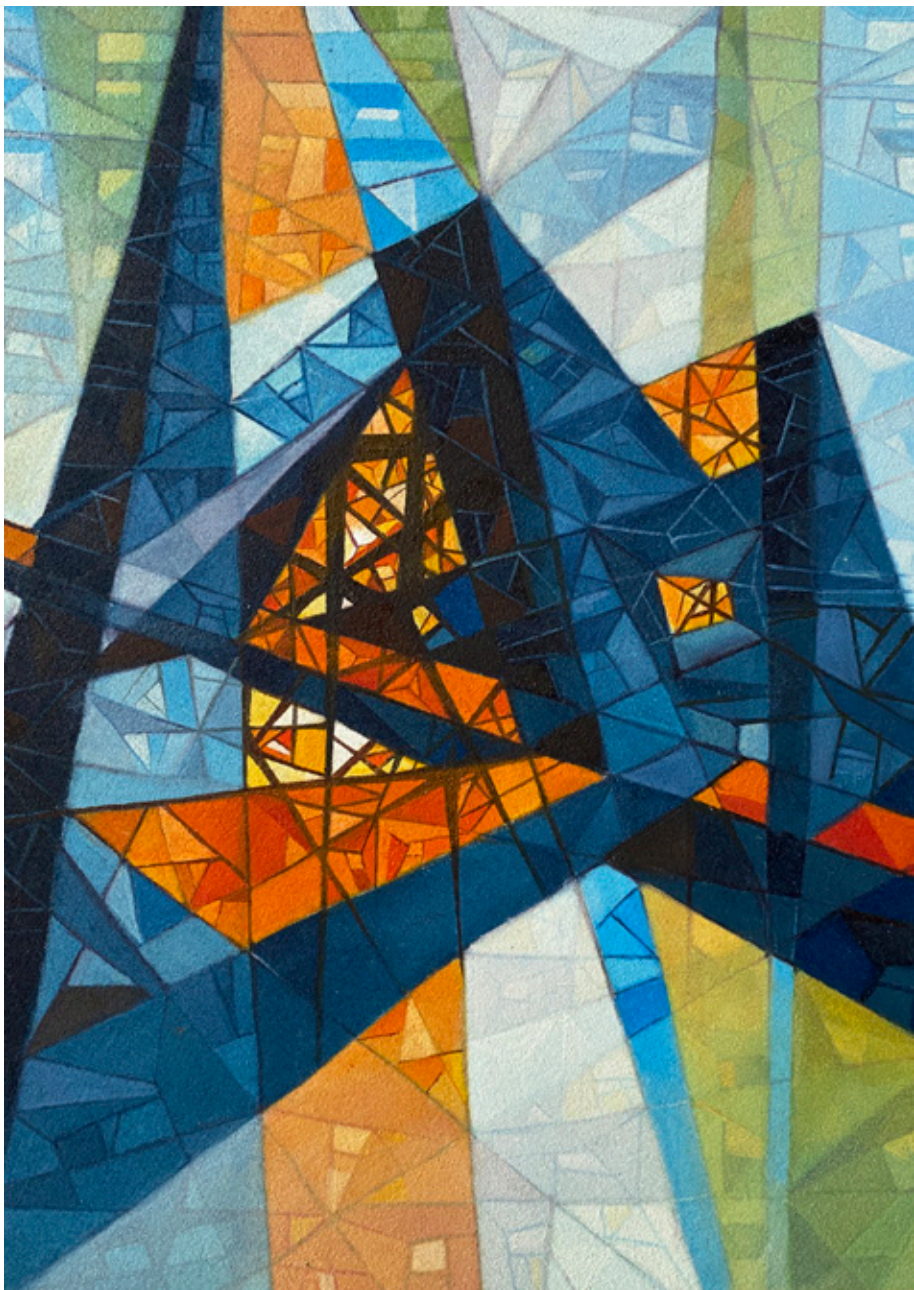
Size-56cm x 90cm

Year-2023

Recent collection of virginia
museum of art USA



Title-Masked Memories IV
Media-Oil on Canvas
Size-28cm x 56cm
Year-2023



Title-Dreamscapes of Debris
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-45cm x 33cm
Year-2023

ARTIST STATEMENT 2

Inspired by his childhood memory of almost idealistic integration of utopian community in which he grew up. After the village demolished, and the community dispersed to another location, the artist began to sketch, paint, and study the remained fragment of houses. He explores the remains of ruined village searching for patterns of partially defined spaces, forms and order. The experience which he gained from the aftermath of once happy community intrigues him to ask what was the invisible force which design and maintain that urban Arcadian physical and mental environment?, how am I affected by it?.

From the debris of the village he seeks order and explores geometrical patterns which the artist calls "matterns" as a building block, unifying elements of his painting. He disperses these "matterns" all over his picture plane visually integrate the figures with their dream like interior and exterior, macro and micro spaces. Figure and ground merged as one acted the same role, dance the same dance and sang the same music. He considers his compartmentalized figures are entirely calm, tranquil, and poised classical Arcadian female figure as well African masks poised to be monumental in appearance as invisible yet connecting forces which physically and spiritually glue communities spatial patterns of behavior and their ancestor. They are the guardian, nurturer, and creator of event, behavior, and norm of the society. He regarded his semi abstract figures as timeless and eternal phenomenon which presides in the Parnassus of artist's memory.

His medium is oil and acrylic paint on canvas.

He experiments on new supporting media celastic which is used in artisan crafts for fabricating: puppets, marionettes, mascot character, and shoes. He argued that his flat geometrical planes of various size and color introduces and recalls the trauma, surprise, instability, and dynamism he experienced.



Childhood Echoes

In "Childhood Echoes," I delve into the remnants of my childhood village, seeking to uncover the invisible forces that once shaped our environment. Through a blend of painting and sketching, I capture the partially defined spaces and forms that linger amidst the ruins, to reflect on the passage of time and the resilience of memory.

Title-Childhood Echoes I
Media-oil on canvas
Size-90cm x 100cm
Year-2023



Title-Childhood Echoes II
Media-oil on canvas
Size-60 x 40cm
Year-2023



Title-Childhood Echoes III
Media-Oil on canvas
Size-90cm x 70cm
Year-2023



Medium Exploration

While my primary medium is oil and acrylic on canvas, I also experiment with unconventional materials such as celastic. By incorporating flat geometrical planes of various sizes and colors, I introduce elements of surprise, instability, and dynamism into my compositions. Through these material explorations, I aim to evoke the trauma and beauty inherent in the human experience.

Title-Guardians of the Matterns
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-45cm x 33cm
Year-2023



Monumental figures reminds me of classical Arcadian sculptures and African masks. seems to me stand as guardians of the matters, nurturing societal norms and behaviors shaped by our collective past. These figures symbolize the timeless and eternal phenomena that reside within the depths of my memory.

Title-Childhood Echoes IV
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-45cm x 33cm
Year-2023



Title-Childhood Echoes V
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-45cm x 33cm
Year-2023



Title-Guardians of the Matterns II
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-34cm x 45cm
Year-2023



Title-Guardians of the Matterns III
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-45cm x 34cm
Year-2023



Fragmented Memories

A series of paintings titled <Fragmented Memories> depicting the remnants of the utopian community, where geometric patterns intertwine with dream-like landscapes. These pieces transform me to an imaginary voyage of the interconnectedness of past and present, memory and reality.

Title-Fragmented Memories I
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-46cm x 33cm
Year-2023



Title-Fragmented Memories II
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-33cm x 45cm
Year-2023



Title-Fragmented Memories III
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-33cm x 45cm
Year-2023



Title-Fragmented Memories IV
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-33cm x 45cm
Year-2023



Title-Fragmented Memories V
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-33cm x 45cm
Year-2023



Title-Fragmented Memories VI
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-33cm x 45cm
Year-2023



Title-Fragmented Memories VII
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-33cm x 45cm
Year-2023



Title-Fragmented Memories VIII
Media-Oil on Celastic
Size-45cm x 33cm
Year-2023



Title-Eternal Echoes II
Media-Oil onCanvas
Size-80cm x 100cm
Year-2024
Recent collection of virginia
museum of art USA



Title-Eternal Echoes I
Media-Oil on Canvas
Size-100cm x 80cm
Year-2024
Recent collection of virginia
museum of art USA

VOICES ON MY ART

News Highlights

1. Three Paintings Selected by Virginia Museum of Art

In 2024, three of my paintings were selected by the esteemed Art Historian, and Curator of African Arts, Dr. Ndubuisi C Ezeluomba (PhD), to be part of the African Collection at the Virginia Museum of Art. This inclusion represents a significant milestone in my artistic journey, showcasing my work on an international stage among some of the most treasured African artworks.

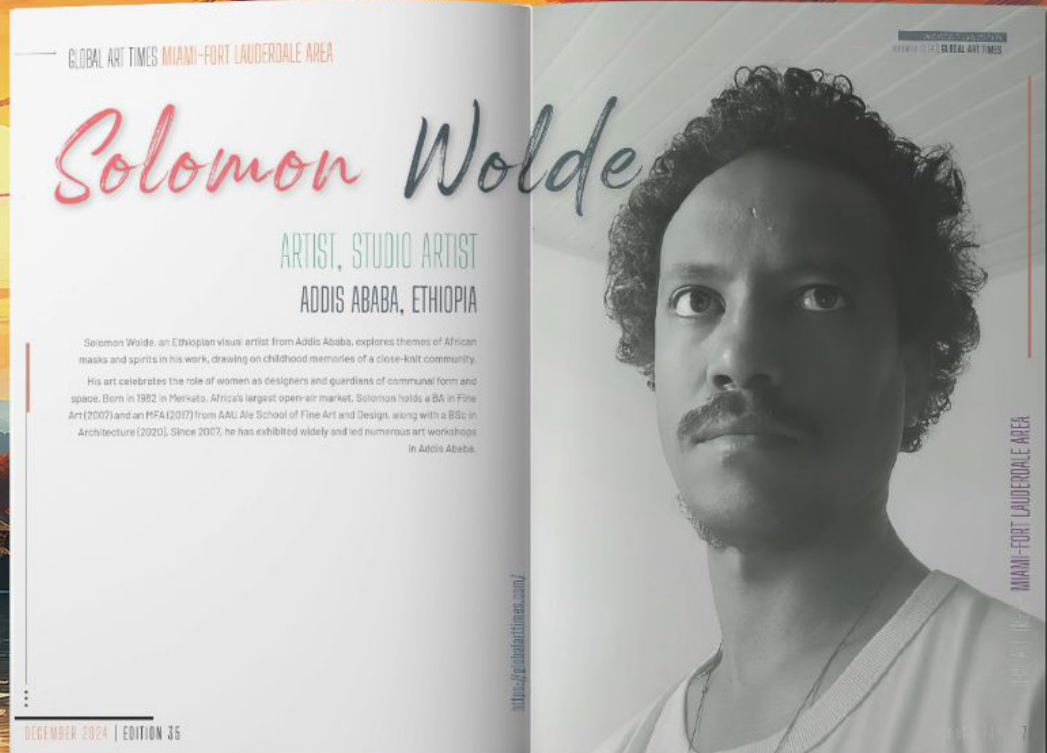
2. Two Paintings Featured in Martos Art Gallery, Spain

Curator Carlos Rodolfo selected two of my paintings to be featured in the prestigious Matos Art Gallery, an online art gallery based in Spain. This opportunity connects my work to a broader European audience, highlighting its relevance and resonance in contemporary art circles.

3. Feature in Global Art Times Magazine

Four of my artworks, along with my biography and artist statement, were prominently featured in the December 2024 issue (35th edition) of Global Art Times Magazine. This recognition underscores the impact of my creative expression and offers readers an in-depth look into my artistic process and vision.





TESTIMONIALS



Geremew Feyissa (PhD),
Art Historian, Curator, and Ethnoarchaeologist.

"As an art historian and ethnographer, I am captivated by Solomon Wolde's ability to merge tradition with modernity in his work. His exploration of African masks and architectural elements is more than an artistic endeavor; it is a cultural reclamation and celebration. His paintings reflect the spirit and history of Ethiopia, offering a profound and timeless connection to our roots."



Ms. Aynalem Emiru,
Art Historian, curator, and Museologist.

"Solomon Wolde's art is a symphony of culture, spirit, and innovation. His unique use of geometric compartmentalization and crystalline forms evokes a sense of sacredness and order. His paintings inspire both awe and introspection, making them invaluable contributions to Ethiopia's artistic heritage and beyond."

CONCLUSION

"Art transcends boundaries, weaving together the seen and unseen, the ancestral and the contemporary. My work invites you to explore the forces that shape identity, space, and community. Let's connect to share ideas, collaborate, or create a piece that tells a story uniquely yours. Whether you are a curator, collector, or fellow art enthusiast, I welcome you to reach out, visit my studio, website, social media, or discuss opportunities to bring these visions to new spaces. Together, we can celebrate the universal quest for balance, harmony, and connection." For exhibitions, collaborations, or inquiries, please contact:

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Facebook :- <https://www.facebook.com/solomon.wolde.56?mibextid=ZbWKwL>

Tweeter:- <https://x.com/solomon79331772?t=5Jt62DMI6801nntX4aH1fA&s=35>

Linktree:- <https://linktr.ee/solomon.wolde.art>
