

Erinah Fridah Babirye

Nigeria

Biography

Erinah Fridah Babirye about herself "I work as an artist with diverse materials, mixed media and focus on flora and fauna as a source of inspiration and my relationship with the environment. I am currently living in Kampala, Uganda. There I completed a residency program and open studio at Silhouette projects, AfriArt gallery (2020/21)."

The work: aesthetic positions

"During the pandemic, the lockdown was very stressful professionally, socially and economically. I planted plants that made it easier, as the produce provided much needed financial and social salvation and used these plants as my source of inspiration. I explore the symbolic meaning, psychological, medicinal and scientific properties of plants. With my work, I want to show the strong similarities between plants and humans by mixing facial features, flora and fauna, and creating a mysterious environment with hidden figures and images."

The Artworks

Untitled 1

Spray paint, charcoal, pastels and acrylic on canvas

2020

Size: 120 x 90 cm

Erinah Fridah Babirye: "This work was inspired by the strength and resilience I experienced during the Covid 19 pandemic. I was particularly impressed and inspired by a cactus that thrived in harsh desert conditions. Then the Monstera leaf, it creates holes to adapt to its environment; combined with a fern that symbolizes humility. These three plants are a perfect representation of the standstill and changes that Covid-19 has caused in the rhythm of life. This work is an expression of how strong plants and people can be in difficult times."

Untitled 2

Spray paint, charcoal, pastels and acrylic on canvas

2020

Size: 120 x 90 cm

Untitled 3

spray paint, charcoal, pastels and acrylic on canvas

2020

size: 90 x 60 cm

Serenity

spray paint, charcoal, pastels and acrylic on canvas

2020

size: 120 x 90 cm

Work comment by kukutana

Erinah Fridah Babirye has retreated and contemplated in and on her garden during the pandemic. Her inspiration comes from the organic forms of her surroundings. Multicolored leaves but also flowers lie densely on top of each other, forming a background reminiscent of a leaf-covered ground but also of the impenetrability of pristine forests. This ornamental surface is occasionally interrupted in her work by a human face (Untitled 3), whose eyes, nose, and mouth emerge from the biomass, or which are a component and element of this very biomass: Lifelines stretch from human to plant, both are closely connected, are part of a formation. In "Serenity" there is - a sign of hope? of serenity? - an empty, yellowish-reddish sky can be seen above the plants. Is something expected? Are the plants stretching towards a morning? A sky without people? In another work, only in the background, hidden by many forms, there seems to be something not grown, but artificially shaped. A piece of wood worked by man and decorated with an ornament? Is it the only surviving thing, the rest of the human being, which is absorbed in the organic of the biomass and thus survives, thus becomes again parts of a shaping, which does not separate and lift it out?