

Ebecho Muslimova *Fatebe Digest*

23 November–23 December 2021
24 Grafton Street, London



Ebecho Muslimova, *Fatebe Leaking Vessels*, 2021

© Ebecho Muslimova

Courtesy of the artist, Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zürich, Magenta Plains, NY, and David Zwirner

David Zwirner is pleased to present an exhibition of new works by New York–based artist Ebecho Muslimova, *Fatebe Digest*, at the gallery’s London location. This will be the artist’s first solo presentation in the United Kingdom.

This selection of new work will feature Muslimova’s character Fatebe, a plump and exuberant personality who subsumes the neuroses and anxieties of her creator. Fatebe was first conceived during the artist’s days as an undergraduate at Cooper Union in New York. Muslimova’s surrogate shamelessly manipulates her naked body into unimaginable contortions and is found in slapstick and at times abject situations. Set in fantastical painted landscapes or rendered solo in flowing brushwork, Fatebe explodes the social expectations of the female body through brazen displays of sexuality, vulnerability, and humour. As the artist observes, ‘This performance, this slippage through the challenges I constantly make for [Fatebe], is what interests me and pushes the search for new scenarios.’¹

In Muslimova’s recent drawings, Fatebe continues to cavort through various scenes with loose-limbed self-possession. Referencing Piero Manzoni’s *Merda d’artista* (Artist’s Shit) (1961), *Fatebe 60° Anniversario* (2021) shows her commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the creation of the controversial work by the Italian conceptualist—in a celebratory but scatological display. Appearing, in Muslimova’s words, as the ‘representative of any mental drama [she is] experiencing’, the character splits into interior and exterior selves in *Fatebe Burnt* (2021)—impish and fatigued—and *Fatebe Inner Peace* (2021)—petulant and peaceful.² Splaying her legs wide open, she relieves herself while perched on a fluted pedestal. Muslimova inserts Fatebe into the domestic sphere: She hangs enthusiastically from her backside on a coat rack. Her body is neatly divided by USM modular furniture. In these depictions, Fatebe both is and is more than the expression of a joke. As the artist Mitchell Anderson writes, ‘the varied executions, placement, and scale are also central to a total project that reflects on the ridiculousness of life and art and the ways in which one manages to physically and emotionally survive.’³

Muslimova has created two paintings on canvas of Fatebe for *Fatebe Digest*. Having introduced her in this medium four years ago to incorporate colour and texture into the character's world, Muslimova further expands Fatebe's universe to literally occupy the surrounding built environment. In *The Upper Room*, Muslimova will create a site-specific rendering of her surrogate in a presentation similar to recent inclusions in the 2021 Belgrade Biennale and the 2021 group exhibition *Smashing into My Heart* at The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago.

¹ Ebecho Muslimova, interview by Rosario Güiraldes, The Drawing Center, New York, spring 2021, accessed online.

² Muslimova, interview by Rosario Güiraldes.

³ Mitchell Anderson, "Narcissus and Echo: The Singular Multiverse of Ebecho Muslimova," *Flash Art* (14 April 2021), accessed online.

Born in 1984 in Makhachkala, Dagestan, Russia, Ebecho Muslimova received her BFA from Cooper Union, New York, in 2010. The artist lives and works in New York.

Since her first solo exhibition at Room East, New York, in 2015, Muslimova has shown work at galleries and institutions worldwide. Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zurich, presented a two-person exhibition with her and Bailey Scieszka's work in 2017 and a solo show of Muslimova's work in 2020. Magenta Plains, New York, organised solo exhibitions of Muslimova's work in 2018 and 2019. In the spring of 2021, The Drawing Center, New York, presented the artist's first solo museum exhibition, *Ebecho Muslimova: Scenes in the Sublevel*, a site-specific installation of ten large-scale mixed-media works.

Her work was featured in the 2021 Belgrade Biennale and is part of the fall 2021 group exhibition *Smashing into My Heart* at The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago.

A monograph of Muslimova's work published by JRP|Editions is forthcoming in 2021. The artist was included in *Unrealism: New Figurative Painting*, edited by Jeffrey Deitch and published by Rizzoli Electa in 2019, and *Vitamin D3: Today's Best in Contemporary Drawing*, published by Phaidon in 2021. Illustrations of her character, Fatebe, have been collected in volumes published by onestar press in 2016 and by Three Star Books in 2018.

Work by the artist is represented in major museum collections, including the Dallas Museum of Art; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; Institute of Contemporary Art Miami; Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain (MAMCO), Geneva; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

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