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ARTNEWS

See a Slideshow of Works at the ADAA Art Show

February 29, 2020

by Sarah Douglas



The late artist Ficare Ghebreyesus fled the Red Terror in Eritrea in 1981. This 2007 painting, the largest by Ghebreyesus at the fair in a booth by Galerie Lelong & Co., is a nod to Matisse's vision of his studio, except this one contains an image of an African sculpture from the collection of Yale University. Ghebreyesus' wife, poet Elizabeth Alexander, wrote of him in the *New York Times* in 2018:

What do you picture when you hear the word “refugee”? What are we being asked to picture as we listen to the constant description of America as an unwelcoming place, a house with doors and windows locked shut?

Ficare Ghebreyesus, my late husband, the refugee I married. He fled death squads, hid from soldiers when they broke into his home, saw classmates disappeared. This was the norm for every family he knew. At 16, he was sent away by his mother to save his life. He journeyed on foot to Sudan, then Italy, then Germany, and from there, to the United States, eventually landing in New Haven.