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May 29, 2024

Toledo Museum of Art announces Yatreda ያጥሬዳ as 2024 digital artist in residence

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The Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) announces *House of Yatreda*, an immersive, multi-sensory exhibition by Yatreda ያጥሬዳ, the digital artist collective based between Ethiopia, Kenya and the United States, and the recently appointed TMA Labs' 2024 Digital Artist in Residence. *House of Yatreda* will open to the public at TMA from Aug. 17-Nov. 10.

Building on the success of last year's inaugural Digital Artist Residency Program at TMA and its digital arts-focused venture, TMA Labs, TMA has invited Yatreda ያጥሬዳ, an Ethiopian family art collective, to participate in the 2024 residency. Kiya Tadele leads Yatreda with assistance from her partner, Joey Lawrence. Tadele describes Yatreda as a family of artists in Ethiopia that makes art in the style of tizita—nostalgia and longing for the past.

Originating in Ethiopia and New York, the Yatreda ያጥሬዳ team is spending time in Toledo to develop and realize an immersive digital art installation, *House of Yatreda*, as part of TMA's upcoming exhibition *Ethiopia at the Crossroads*. The exhibition celebrates 1,700 years of Ethiopia's rich history, culture and artistic traditions. It will be open Aug. 17-Nov. 10 at the museum.

The *House of Yatreda* blends the ancient traditions and legends of Ethiopian culture with 21st-century blockchain technology. The immersive digital art experience will premiere Yatreda's latest series, *Abyssinian Queen*, which animates the life and travels of an imagined Ethiopian queen and her loyal followers into four black-and-white slow-motion digital artworks (NFTs). The immersive experience will be accompanied by other drops developed during the residency that integrate the rich tapestry of Ethiopian culture with local artistic narratives, fostering community engagement and promoting cross-cultural understanding.

An integral accompaniment to the *House of Yatreda* is an immersive coffee ceremony that will be performed live several times during the run of the exhibition. Ethiopia is the birthplace of coffee, and the rituals surrounding coffee are a core facet of community-building and conversation-starting in Ethiopian culture. Being invited to share coffee in Ethiopia is considered a symbol of friendship, respect and great hospitality. Accompanied by a masinquo player and coffee muse, Tadele will play the role of storyteller and narrate various customs and steps of the Ethiopian coffee ceremony in relationship to Yatreda's art.

Ohio-based painter Jordan Buschur has also been invited to participate in the digital residency as the Community Digital Artist in Residence. Buschur's work is rooted in a system of value based on mystery, sentimentality and a matriarchal connection; she is a co-founder of Co-Worker Gallery and has curated exhibitions at Cuchifritos Gallery in New York City, Spring/Break Art Show in New York City, and the Neon Heater in Findlay, Ohio.

Yatreda will mentor Buschur in digital art and the Web3 environment. As the culmination of their work with TMA Labs, both Yatreda and Buschur will create a one-of-one NFT that will be sold at a Christie's sale in the second half of the year. Bidding opportunities for these NFTs will be announced in the coming weeks.