



*Like a telephone game ,
A play of trust and error,
a long distance romance.*

Mendes Wood DM is pleased to present *Rumors and Whispers*, the first solo exhibition by Ebecho Muslimova in São Paulo.

Bringing together eight anecdotal images of the artist's anti-heroine and alter ego, Fatebe (*FAT-E-be*), the exhibition is a playful conversation between two parallel shows, *Rumors* in Brazil one week and *Whispers* in Zurich the following week. The shows intertwine with each other, each painting having a counterpart in the other city, linked by a narrative thread akin to the game of Chinese whispers/telephone. In this game, a whispered word travels down a line of children, often distorting by the end. These connections reflect our ability to create, interpret, and conceal rumors, mirroring the changing ethos of painting throughout history.

Prior to appreciating Ebecho Muslimova's painting qualities, one encounters a narrative quality, a cartoonish part of herself, often subjected to humiliation and exaltation, as she delves into the boundless realms of her desires and fears. The humor embedded in her figures and scenarios leads us into the depths of her psyche, serving as a mirror reflecting her inner self.

Her imagery suggests that we construct our sense of self through external images, be they reflections or caregivers, fostering an idealized "I" that individuals continuously strive to achieve. This process establishes the ego's reliance on external stimulation, which evolves within social and linguistic frameworks as individuals mature and engage with society, thereby shaping their personalities and wishes. In works like *Farm to Table* and *Four Corners*, the artist explores Fatebe's body as a landscape, as a place of unrealistic possibilities. These acts of freedom in creating a figuration are also explicit in more sexual images like *Kettle Vision* and *Clown Boudoir*.

Moral prescriptions are irrelevant in Fatebe's realm. There is no concept of madness or absurdity, either. She has discovered a universe utterly detached from our understanding of constraints, authority, and currency. This feral and unsocialized behavior invert our notions of limits. She is providing a liberating escape through her ingenious remedies.

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Expanding beyond painting, Muslimova's exhibition takes over the gallery walls with murals and drawings, immersing the viewer into the universe of the character created by the artist. A universe that encompasses sex, tragedy, and humorous witticisms. The critical qualities of these images engage in a delightful dance with liberty; they are an exercise in violent freedom. Her drawing style possesses an effortless quality, leading the viewer into a youthful exuberance of mature proportions.

Muslimova received her BFA at Cooper Union in New York, NY in 2010. Muslimova has presented solo exhibitions at **Magenta Plains**, New York, NY; **Drawing Center**, New York, NY; **David Zwirner Gallery**, London; **Galerie Maria Bernheim**, Zurich; **White Flag Projects**, St. Louis, and **Room East**, New York, NY.

Her work has been included in group exhibitions at **Kunstmuseum Basel**, Basel; **ICA Miami**, Miami; **Renaissance Society**, Chicago; **Zuzeum**, Riga; **Hirshhorn Museum**, Washington, D.C.; **Swiss Institute**, New York, NY; **Kunsthalle St. Gallen**, St. Gallen. Her large-scale murals have been commissioned for biennials such as *The Dreamers*, 58th Edition of *October Salon*, Belgrade, and the 32nd *Biennale of Graphic Arts: Birth as Criterion*, Ljubljana. In 2022, Muslimova was the recipient of the Borlem Prize, honoring artists whose oeuvres bring awareness to mental health issues & struggles. Her work has been featured in publications such as *Forbes*, *The New York Times*, *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *Mousse*, *Artnet*, *Hyperallergic*, and *Cura Magazine*, among others. Muslimova is included in Jeffrey Deitch's book, *Unrealism*, featuring 27 artists and major essays by Johanna Fateman, Alison Gingeras, and Aria Dean.

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