

All Put Together

A Solo Exhibition by Helina Metaferia



March 18 - April 17, 2022

**Opening Reception
Friday, March 18 from 6 to 8 pm**

**Performance followed by Conversation with MFA Boston curator Michelle Millar Fisher
Thursday, April 7 at 6 pm**

(February 14, 2022 -- Brookline, MA) – Praise Shadows Art Gallery is pleased to announce the solo exhibition, *All Put Together*, by Helina Metaferia. In this multifaceted presentation, the artist draws from her interdisciplinary practice to emphasize narratives centered on social engagement. Her process, rooted in the archives and history of activism in the United States, is simultaneously focused on contemporary BIPOC women, all of whom are directly involved with the artist through performance-as-protest workshops. Her work brings to the forefront untold, or unheralded, stories. Using a diverse range of media, including collage, video, sculpture, installation, and performance, *All Put Together* reminds us that progress, or the labor in pushing for progress, is never linear. It is power, it is vulnerability. It is failure, and it is success. Where we are today is the culmination of this work, and through Metaferia's meticulously rendered collage portraits, or through her sensory-filled performances, we are made aware of the presence of the bodies who have spoken out, marched, and held signs in protest.

**PRAISE
SHADOWS**
ART GALLERY

This will be Metaferia's second solo exhibition taking place concurrently in Boston. *Generations* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, is on view through April 11.

All Put Together features six collages from the artist's *Headdress* series, bust portraits of BIPOC female-identifying individuals. Following workshops she facilitated with students, faculty, and staff of Tufts, MassArt, Northeastern, and Emerson College in 2021, each participant was photographed, then adorned with a crown created using archival materials from Boston's activism history, sourced from Harvard University and Northeastern University libraries. While the image is in itself sumptuous and richly decorated, Metaferia ensures that the viewer does not take the work only at face value. Each portrait is accompanied by annotated information about the sitter and their role as an activist, as well as meticulous details on source material of the collage.

Some of the individuals featured in the collages also appear in *The Response*, an edited video taken during the zoom workshop that pays tribute to our current moment of social justice. In this three-minute video, the individuals are framed within Zoom backgrounds from black and white images of protests and marches, with protest chanting just slightly audible. Through a brief, and illuminating, declaration, we begin to understand who they are through their own voices. "I am joy; I am Marla Mcleod; I walk with my brother and my tribe; I stand for mental health."

On Thursday, April 7, Metaferia will activate the gallery space with a multi-part wearable sculptural performance titled *The Willing*, consisting of a brass crown inspired by her Ethiopian heritage decorated with archival etchings. The live performance will also feature a wearable tapestry made from silkscreen prints also using archival images and other ready-made objects. Immediately following the performance, Metaferia will be joined by MFA Boston curator Michelle Millar Fisher for a conversation about her practice and the exhibition. Registration information will be available in March on www.praiseshadows.com.

The Woke is an installation of protest signs, with language culled directly from participants at previous exhibitions who submitted their response to this call: "what is your everyday revolution?" A larger iteration of this work, on view at the MFA Boston exhibition, uses the Martin typeface, which was inspired by remnants of the Memphis Sanitation Strike of 1968. It includes phrases such as, "Overhaul the System," "Prioritize Care," and "Consider Another Perspective." This is a work that engages the individual viewer while also reminding us of the power of the collective voice. Submissions for future iterations of *The Woke* will also be solicited during Metaferia's show at Praise Shadows.

Artist Monograph

Generations, Metaferia's monograph, shares the name with her solo exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The book charts the artist's collage, video, performance, and installation work over the last seven years. Centering women of color as protagonists, the artist explores how our inherited histories inform present-day experiences of activism and community-making.

The book features 36 pages and sleeve with generous color images, an essay by Aruna D'Souza, and an interview with the artist in conversation with curators Michelle Millar Fisher and Chenoa Baker. Design by Ramon Tejada. 5.75" w x 8.75" h. \$20 per copy; pre-order on the Praise Shadows Art Shop [here](#).

About the Artist

Helina Metaferia received her MFA from Tufts University's School of the Museum of Fine Arts and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Her solo exhibition *Generations* is currently on view at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston through April 11, 2022. Other recent solo and group

**PRAISE
SHADOWS**
ART GALLERY

exhibitions include Museum of African Diaspora, San Francisco; Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Detroit; New York University's The Gallatin Galleries, New York City; Smack Mellon, Brooklyn, NY; CF Hill, Stockholm Sweden; Modern Art Museum Gebre Kristos Desta Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and Alabama Contemporary Art Center, Mobile, AL, among many others. Metaferia's work has been supported by several artist residencies including MacDowell, Yaddo, Bemis, MASS MoCA, and Triangle Arts Association. She was a participant of the 2021 Drawing Center's Viewing Program, and is currently an Artist in Residence at Silver Art Projects at the World Trade Center in New York. Helina is currently an Assistant Professor in the Visual Art department at Brown University, and she lives and works in New York City.

About Praise Shadows LLC

Established in 2020, Praise Shadows Art Gallery is a commercial gallery space in the Boston area showing the work of emerging and mid-career artists.

We believe that the art ecosystem is filled with untapped potential, and our work is grounded by partnering closely with artists to develop opportunities in emerging models of creativity and entrepreneurship — exhibitions, commissions, brand partnerships, new technologies, and original concepts that no one has ever tried before. Praise Shadows Art Partners advises artists and companies in the creative industries on strategic partnerships and marketing. Our work is local, global, and virtual.

www.praiseshadows.com

313A Harvard Street, Brookline, MA 02446

Wednesday - Sunday 11am - 6pm

IMAGE CAPTION:

Helina Metaferia
Headdress 34
2022
mixed media collage
42 x42 inches framed (approx)

MEDIA CONTACT:

Sarah Brown McLeod / sarah@department-pr.com

Exhibition Media Kit [here](#)

###