

TEMPLON

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Press release

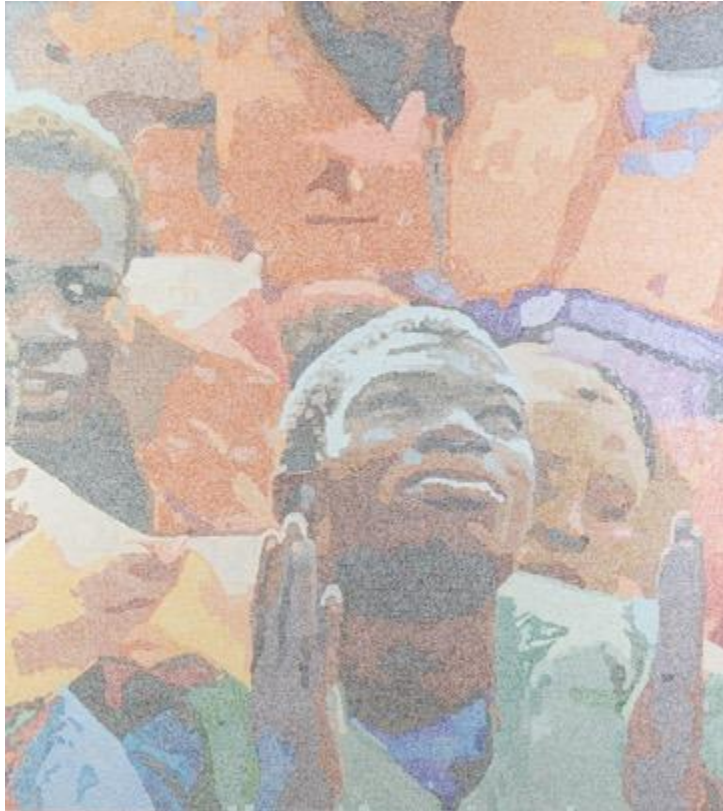
15 September 2023

ALIOUNE DIAGNE

SEEDE

6 January – 24 February 2024

Opening: Saturday, January 6 from 12 to 8 pm



La prière, 2023 acrylic on canvas, 200 x 180 cm

For his very first exhibition at Galerie Templon's Paris space, painter Alioune Diagne, who is representing his country on the Senegalese Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2024, is showing a selection of huit paintings on the theme of clandestine crossings at sea.

Alioune Diagne uses a technique he developed and has gradually perfected where small modules, which he calls "unconscious signs", cluster together to form a coherent figurative mass. He uses a complex process based on these signs, reminiscent of forgotten calligraphy, to create dynamic paintings that depict daily life in Senegal as well as the everyday experiences of the African diaspora around the world.

For Seede, which means “the witness” in Wolof, Diagne spent several weeks visiting the Senegal coastline. His canvases echo the stories of local fishermen who, equipped only with a pirogue and a net to do their work, are seeing growing foreign industrialisation of the fishing business. As Alioune Diagne explains: “To survive, some of them have had to abandon their traditional skills and resort to the illegal practice of people smuggling.”

The deep blue colour and handful of fishing nets covering the walls and floor of the Paris space give the exhibition an immersive not to say dramatic feel. “These are subjects I want to talk about,” says the artist. “Emigration is still a painful reality today. Up till now, people only envisaged living a successful life in Europe or the USA. I want to show the younger generations that it’s possible to have a future in Africa.”

Born in 1985 in Kaffrine, Senegal, Alioune Diagne lives and works in Senegal and France. After studying at the Dakar Ecole des Beaux-Arts in 2008, Alioune Diagne developed “figuro-abstro”, an imaginary script, universal language and intimate account of fragments of his private life in Dakar and on his travels. He is a socially engaged artist, paving the way for a deep-seated exploration of the major challenges facing today's world: ecology, the place of women in society, racism, and the notions of transmission and heritage. His work has featured in a variety of solo and group exhibitions in Europe, Africa and Asia, including Sink or Swim at the 11th Dakar Biennale, Villa Spivey, Dakar, Senegal (2014), Itinéraire en Couleurs at Espace Jean Drevon, Saint-Jean-de-Bournay, France (2014), the off-site show at Art Basel, Switzerland (2017), Un nouveau regard, Aosta, Italy (2017) and Ndox-Glint at the Rouen Musée des Beaux-Arts (2023). His work has also been part of the national art collection of Senegal since 2019 and was exhibited at the national theatre in Dakar for the 2022 Dakar biennale. In April 2024, the artist will have the honour of representing his country on the Senegalese Pavilion at the 60th Art Biennale International Art Exhibition in Venice. He has been represented by Galerie Templon since 2022 and Seede will be his second solo exhibition with the gallery.