

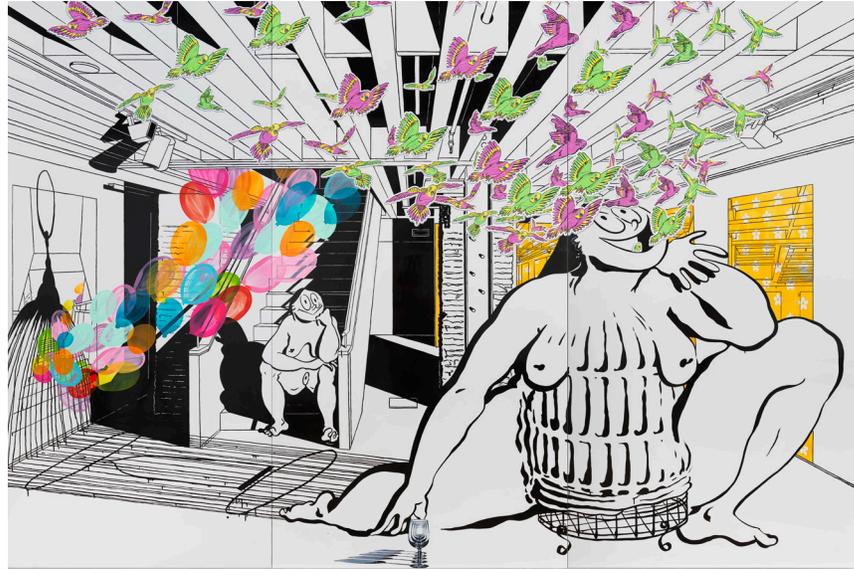
## Ebecho Muslimova: Scenes in the Sublevel

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**Free Admission**  
Wednesday–Sunday: 12–6pm



New York, NY... For Ebecho Muslimova's first solo museum exhibition, the artist presents *Scenes in the Sublevel*, a site-specific installation that includes ten large-scale mixed-media drawings. Muslimova (b. 1984, Makhachkala, Dagestan, Russia) is known for her pen-and-ink drawings and large-scale paintings that feature her bold and uninhibited cartoon alter ego, Fatebe. Her latest body of work takes up The Drawing Center's downstairs gallery as the stage for Fatebe's intrepid misadventures.

In each of *Scenes in the Sublevel's* eight-by-four-foot drawing panels (five are connected as a diptych and triptych), the viewer encounters the architecture of the space opposite the panel rendered as a line drawing, as if, in regarding the panel, one is looking into a mirror. Executed over each linear view are inventive scenes that incorporate references drawn from Muslimova's imagination and from popular culture. In one scene, Fatebe hangs clumsily upside-down from a beaded curtain; in another, she is mesmerized by the reflection of her own nude body and exposed genitalia while she splashes in a puddle of viscous liquid; and in yet another, Fatebe is rendered on all fours and with a high ponytail, her silhouette superimposed on a hyper-realistic painting of a mare enveloped in a cloud of dust as the animal gallops away from the viewer. With exuberant joy, Fatebe contorts and stretches her fantastically pliable body as she finds herself in situations both comedic and compromising. For Muslimova, Fatebe's unabashed occupation of physical space and overt confidence in her body and its many functions is a kind of language for her self-expression and personal agency.

Present throughout the installation is Muslimova's multilayered consideration of architectural space, memory, and the subconscious. She points to the self-grounding technique of describing one's physical space during panic attacks; the ancient memory enhancement strategy called the "memory palace," a mnemonic system in which items to be remembered are mentally associated with specific physical locations; as well as Sigmund Freud's idea of the memory trace in his "Note Upon the 'Mystic Writing Pad.'" As she explains, "What struck me is that the imagined architectural scenes through the ancient memory enhancement technique are probably similar in tenor to the distorted experience of the present that one has during a panic attack, and how in both, architectural space is the stage where this mental drama unfolds."

With her unflinching wide-eyed gaze and a mischievous smile, Muslimova's subversive protagonist activates each scene with her endlessly expandable body as she encounters new objects and

circumstances. The artist renders Fatebe's experience of physical and mental space in a way that both demonstrates and counters her own self-consciousness and anxieties. Taken as a whole, the installation explores the relationship between memory and narrative, the conscious and subconscious. Most importantly, in Muslimova's drawn world, Fatebe's sense of adventure and self-exploration is never exhausted; she remains fearless and ready for her next misstep.

*Ebecho Muslimova: Scenes in the Sublevel* is organized by Rosario Güiraldes, Assistant Curator.

Image: Ebecho Muslimova, *Fatebe Phantom Cage*, 2020, enamel and oil paint on Dibond aluminum, 96 x 144 inches. Courtesy of the artist, Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zürich and Magenta Plains, NY.

#### About the Artist

Muslimova received her BFA from Cooper Union in New York, NY, in 2010. She will be included in the Belgrade Biennale 2021 and has previously presented solo exhibitions at Magenta Plains, New York, NY; Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zürich; White Flag Projects, St. Louis, MO; and Room East, New York, NY. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the Swiss Institute, New York, NY; The Hirshhorn, Washington DC; Eva Presenhuber, Zürich; Kunsthalle St. Gallen; Tanya Leighton, Berlin; and Delmes & Zander, Cologne; among others. Muslimova created a large-scale mural for the 32nd Biennale of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia, in 2017. Her work has been featured in publications such as *Forbes*, *The New York Times*, *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *Mousse*, *Artnet*, *Hyperallergic*, *Cura Magazine*, and in Jeffrey Deitch's book *Unrealism*. The artist currently lives and works in New York, NY.

#### Credits

Support for *Ebecho Muslimova: Scenes in the Sublevel* is provided by Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zurich; Magenta Plains, New York; Burger Collection, Hong Kong; and Kathleen Madden & Paul Frantz.

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