

Press Release

# Skate Create Liberate: Women Artists and the Future of Radical Space in Ethiopia

Curated by **Betelihem Zena**

On view:

**Oct. 18 - Nov. 22, 2025**

**Tuesdays - Sundays, 9am - 8pm**

Opening Reception:

**Saturday, Oct. 18th, 6 - 8pm**

Location:

**Michael Tsegaye creative studio.**

**Bisrate Gebreal, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

Featuring work by:

**Medina Mohammed - Tsion Haileselassie - Iri Di - Hanna Leka - Mulu Legesse**

*Skate Create Liberate: Women Artists and the Future of Radical Space in Ethiopia* explores the radical possibilities of movement, sisterhood, and artistic resistance through the lens of Ethiopian women artists and the Ethiopian Girl Skaters collective.

Each week at Addis Skate Park, a group of girls gathers to skate, teach, and build community. Their presence is both playful and political; a reclaiming of space, voice, and visibility in a society that often sidelines young women. In a culture shaped by surveillance and silence, these girls make noise. Their movement is not only kinetic; it is symbolic, liberatory, and visionary.

The exhibition uses the energy of these skaters as a powerful metaphor. What does it mean to claim ground, to move freely, to fall and rise again together? How can such radical space-making extend beyond the skate park into the inner and outer lives of Ethiopian women artists?

Through photography, painting, collage, and audio installation, the exhibition traverses motion and stillness, visibility and intimacy. It explores resistance as healing, presence as protest, and creativity as a form of survival. *Skate Create Liberate* becomes a site of gathering; between art and action, between girlhood and womanhood, between memory and movement. It celebrates those who skate, create, and liberate.

This exhibition was selected through apexart's Open Call. For more information and images visit <https://apexart.org/zena.php> or contact [maryam.ghoreishi@apexart.org](mailto:maryam.ghoreishi@apexart.org).

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**Betelihem Zena** is a creative practitioner working across design, research, and curation. With a background in architecture, her work explores memory, imagination, and archival resistance. She creates liberatory frameworks that challenge erasure, expand collective consciousness, and invite transformation through care-driven artistic inquiry and experimental, boundary-pushing forms.

**apexart's** program supporters past and present include the Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation, the Kettering Family Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Buhl Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Spencer Brownstone, the Kenneth A. Cowin Foundation, Epstein Teicher Philanthropies, The Greenwich Collection Ltd., William Talbott Hillman Foundation/Affirmation Arts Fund, the Fifth Floor Foundation, The Puffin Foundation, the Trust for Mutual Understanding, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, public funds from Creative Engagement, supported by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and administered by LMCC, funds from NYSCA Electronic Media/Film in Partnership with Wave Farm: Media Arts Assistance Fund, as well as the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the New York State Legislature.

**#SkateCreateLiberate**

**apexart - addis ababa**



Hanna Leka, *skating with netela*, 2024

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