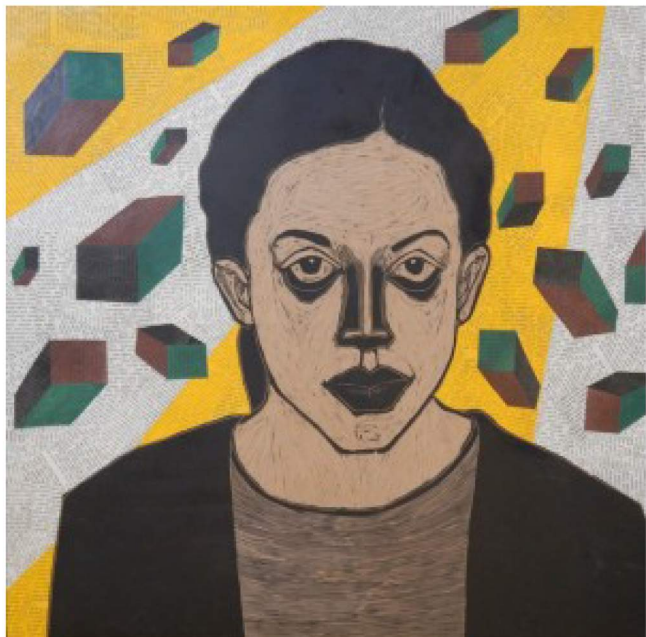


## Ephrem Solomon: Life vs Time

24/02/16 at 11:55 am by admin



**Ephrem Solomon**

**LIFE VS TIME**

**Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery London**

**24 March – 30 April 2016**

Untitled, 2015.

### **About:**

Faces peer out at you, some gazing directly, making eye contact, others coyly looking away. There are doleful faces, expressive faces, cheeky, slightly bemused faces – stark lines outlining even starker under-eye bags, laugh lines around mouths, worried furrows on foreheads. Dimples, wrinkles, they're all there in the indelible lines of woodcuts – expressions very literally graven into faces. These figures – who are they? They could be you, they could be me, they could be the lady waiting for the bus down the street or the boy sitting at the desk opposite you – all that is sure is that they are surrounded by swirls of infinitesimal text, blocks of colour in bright primary hues, teeny tiny floating chairs and geometric explosions of pure shape and form. Kristin Hjellegjerde is pleased to announce LIFE VS TIME, a solo exhibition of new works by Ethiopian artist Ephrem Solomon, who observes and presents socio-political investigations through woodcut and mixed media.



**Untitled (Life vs Time), 2015.**

Solomon's painstakingly created works present a view of the urban environment, and, within that realm, of the people that inhabit the spaces around him. These people and places come together to create a fictional world that exists beyond the present; it is a reality that is free from the limitations of anecdotal recordings of experience. Using predominantly black and white to symbolise this juncture in reality, Solomon employs the motif of the chair repeatedly, representing past, present and future authority. Indeed, in much of his work, he presents his observations through symbolism and use of archival material, providing personal and political narratives beyond his locale. However, in spite of such seemingly direct references, many of the artist's works remain untitled. "I choose to keep my works untitled to enable viewers to read their own meaning," he explains, "to recognise parts of themselves and others among the figures."



**Untitled, 2015.**

In LIFE VS TIME, Solomon explores how we occupy the space around us. From birth, the artist believes, we enter a world that is partially pre-determined according to various factors such as class, ethnicity, culture and religion. These factors are dynamic and alter over time and space. They are given shape in the various forms that are suspended in the works, representing our thoughts and the ways in which they may be shaped by our environment, circumstances and the people around us. These newer works also bear the marks of vivid blocks of colour, a departure from the more monochrome palette of previous work. "In my earlier works, I used black and white to explore the real and the imagined," Solomon explains. "I was more focused on shape and texture. In this new series, I began with using primary colours and moved onto secondary colours to explore different perspectives of forms in time and space." The medium itself – woodcut – also provides the artist with a tangibly tactile and, as he refers to it, "time-consuming medium" through which to explore ideas that are philosophical and ethereal.