



Babacar Mbaye Diouf,

an African scribe

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In ancient China, the scribe mastered the art of drawing and writing since the brush and the pictogram are the tools of both.

Babacar M'Baye Diouf's work evokes the proximity between writing and drawing, visual arts and literature. But make no mistake.

This artist knows what he is doing: there is no confusion in his propositions.

*It is indeed a fine art that weaves its way into the canvas and creates original symbols that raise our curiosity : what is it about? Well-orchestrated calligraphy laid out in an orthogonal grid in a sequence of towers of words, **a tower of Babel of symbols.***

The black lines on cream or white background confirm the impression that writing is to be seen.

Is it an urban landscape, an ancient prose, a palimpsest of forgotten writings, a baroque musical score? Whatever?

Some of the artist's work take on the form of human body like a sculpture of writing.

*The bodies gather and come together like letters or sentences, they associate themselves in a **supertext to form a welded ensemble** for better or worse.*

*A metaphor of humanity. **The artist hopes to actually touch the unity in all of us and find a style that speaks to everyone.** Léopold Sédar Senghor and his great humanism are not far away.*

The artist's paintings, like fine embroidery, reveal a patient hand and a precise regard.

African societies are often qualified as oral. The philosopher Iba N'Diaye Ndiadji, considers them primarily visual. The various objects of everyday life, head rests, masks, etc. indeed show a remarkable mastery of form. A mastery that we find in his work.

Let us not forget the numerous African writings ignored, for far too long by an ethnocentric European ethnology, as they are not always alphabetically: the writing found on the talibes tablet is written in Arabic. There are many others, including the unique Bamun writing from Cameroon, invented by King Njoya.

The Bambara and Dogon people used pictograms which have a visual grammar. And there is also Egyptian and Ethiopian writing, which displays a remarkable ideographic wealth.

Babacar M'Baye Diouf, imbued with the knowledge of his ancestors, creates a visual representation of African history, nestled between a past rich in teachings and a future full of promise.

