

## CHIASMUS

MUSTAFA MALUKA

April 4 – May 20, 2017

Zidoun-Bossuyt gallery is pleased to announce the second exhibition by renowned South-African artist Mustafa Maluka.

His works draw inspiration in the western pop culture and the African street art. The artist is representative of the new generation of artists who refer to their own experience as global citizens.

Mustafa Maluka is an artist and a cultural analyst. Known for theatrically confronting the intersection of contemporary culture and global politics with his provocative large-scale portraits. Maluka's imposing canvases document the artist's continued interest in the tradition of portraiture mixed with a street culture edge.

These oil and acrylic paintings are grounded by traditional techniques like massive scale and central composition, calculated to emphasize the importance of the sitter. Maluka deliberately situates them within the canonical heritage of the portrait genre. The faces of his transnational, racially ambiguous characters are densely painted. He achieves this by building up layers of splashes and washes on the canvas surface alongside bold patterns and forms that determine the mood and overall tone of the works. The emotions are silent but strong.

The many layers of paint allow them to appear as characters with a distinct personality divorced from their original context. Maluka liberates the images from their original context and recreates them in a new form. They often seem calm, composed and sublime. By denying his figures their original context, he refutes the culture industry's dictatorial power to determine how we understand these images and instead insists upon the ability of the artist to interview these images on his own terms.

Mustafa Maluka's large-scale portraits often have a provocative and direct effect on the viewer. The artist is deeply concerned with contemporary critical social theory and world politics. His bright and colourful works are stylistically closely linked to pop culture, graffiti and hip-hop.

Maluka's works refers to his own experience as a global citizen, where cultures morph and merge so quickly that even home is no longer a stable or recognizable place. Discussions around cultural identity and migration are of central importance to Maluka's work.

Born in 1976, Mustafa Maluka grew up in Bishop Lavis, in the economically depressed Cape Flats area on the fringes Cape Town Cape Town, South Africa. He studied at De Ateliers art institute and the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands and lived in Berlin and New York. He now lives and works in Turku, Finland.

Mustafa Maluka has been included in international group exhibitions at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center (2010), the Studio Museum in Harlem (2008), De Moines Art Center (2008), the Stedelijk Museum Zwolle (2006) and the Contemporary Museum of Honolulu (2006). He is part of the collections of Kamel Lazaar Foundation and Sindika Dokolo Foundation among others. Mustafa Maluka recently participated to the group exhibition *You Love Me, You Love Me Not* at Municipal Gallery in Porto, Portugal (2015) showcasing part of the Sindika Dokolo collection and also in *Us Is Them* by the Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, USA (2015). In 2009, he made the cover of the first book on african contemporary art, writing by Sue Williamson, a key figure on the South African art scene since the early 1980s.