

Press Release:

Obi Okigbo returns to the Nigerian art scene with 'CONVERGENCE'

(Lagos, November 24, 2019) Win celebration of a comeback to the Nigerian art scene, the Wheatbaker concludes its 2019 art program by hosting a much anticipated solo exhibition of 50 paintings and drawings on paper, canvas, linen and silk by Brussels based artist, Obi Okigbo, curated by SMO Contemporary Art.

The exhibition explores the artist's fascination with how our belief systems, behavioral patterns, and aesthetic values have been shaped by ancient art and mythology from different cultures and eras. Okigbo's experimentation delicate paintings using Indian ink and pigment, touch on universal themes of transcendence. Her powerful portraits of heroes of African descent are "a celebration of collective memory, the archetypal quest for the Self and the truth of our existence".

Okigbo grew up in Nigeria, and practiced architecture in London, Rome and Paris before moving to Brussels in 1995, and becoming a full time studio artist. She has exhibited in Nigeria, United Kingdom, Dubai and Belgium, and established the Christopher Okigbo Foundation in 2005, which focuses on researching and preserving the legacy of her late father, the poet Christopher Okigbo. Convergence is Okigbo's second major solo exhibition in Nigeria since 2003.

"We are pleased to host the culturally significant works of Obi Okigbo in what can only be described as a well-timed homecoming for the artist," said Mosun Ogunbanjo, Director of the Wheatbaker. "Obi's *Convergence* presents fascinating portraits of the who-is-who of heroes of African descent along the hotel's corridor's providing not just fantastic art, but a veritable history lesson for our esteemed guests. "

"Obi Okigbo's creativity is a visual *Convergence* of global mythology, literature, philosophy, and culture presented on a rich tapestry of art," said Sandra Mbanefo Obiago, the exhibition curator and founder of SMO Contemporary Art. "By presenting her works alongside poetry by her late father, the famous poem Christopher Okigbo, she invites us to "step back into the belly of memory" drawing from generational stories and personal experience spanning across time and space.

A few years ago, Nigeria's Nobel Laureate, Prof. Wole Soyinka, described Obi Okigbo as "belong(ing) to that sturdy artistic stock that increasingly finds its place among the best anywhere in the world. Her canvases provide shifting visions of reality, her sense of juxtaposition is always deft and eloquent, not arbitrary or faddish. The continent, so rich in many artistic traditions, should be proud to have this talented addition, who has taken the basics of form and texture into a self-renewing language of expression for a modern age."

The exhibition is supported by the Wheatbaker and sponsored by Louis Guntrum wines and is open to the public from from November 25, 2019 to February 16, 2020.

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