

Press Release

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Adewuyi Kenny Unveils “SOLE TO SOUL”: A Landmark Solo Exhibition Spanning Over 35 Years of Bronze Sculpture

Lagos, Nigeria — 13th June, 2025 — SMO Contemporary Art in partnership with Temple Muse is proud to present “*SOLE TO SOUL*,” a powerful and long-anticipated solo exhibition by renowned Nigerian sculptor **Adewuyi Kehinde Ken**, professionally known as **Adewuyi Kenny**. Opening this June, the exhibition marks Kenny’s return to the Nigerian art scene with a stunning body of work that spans from 1993 to 2024. Curated over a decade since his last solo outing, this exhibition is a rare and intimate invitation into the mind, methods, and spiritual essence of a true master.

This retrospective is more than an artistic showcase — it is a profound reflection on the human experience. With bronze sculptures that are both emotionally raw and technically masterful, Adewuyi Kenny explores themes of suffering, resilience, societal decay, and the silent strength within human fragility. Works such as “*Poor Boy*” and “*The Other Side of Life*” cast light on issues like displacement, migration politics, and psychological struggle, grounding each piece in deeply rooted African symbolism and personal spirituality.

From his early days studying sculpture at Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria —where he earned distinction with awards for Best Sculpture and Best General Drawing— to his present-day studio practice between France and Nigeria, Adewuyi has cultivated an art practice deeply rooted in discipline, process, and soul. He has remained committed to the painstaking art of lost wax bronze casting — a process he executes entirely by hand. His sculptures are instantly recognizable: elongated forms with oversized feet and diminished heads, metaphors for grounded resilience and the weight of lived experience.

“My work reflects what I see around me — the unspoken stories of hardship, hope, and spiritual transformation,” says Kenny. “Art for me is not decoration — it’s dialogue. Each piece invites the viewer to reflect, question, and connect.”

The exhibition features **life-sized sculptures for the first time in Nigeria**, some standing over one and a half meters tall. These towering figures, shaped with exaggerated anatomy and textured patinas, tell stories of human endurance and spiritual journeying — each title a prompt for emotional reflection: “*Don’t Lose Hope*,” “*Why Me*,” “*Come to My Aid*,” and “*It’s Not Over Until It’s Over*.”

His sculptures carry not only the physical weight of the material but the emotional and spiritual journeys of humanity. The artist's reverence for process—building kilns from scratch, sourcing found metal, and mastering the lost-wax method—is central to the meaning of his work. Each sculpture is not merely a product, but the culmination of prayer, fire, and transformation.

As **Professor Jacob Jari** reflects:

"The reward for creating a work is not the outcome, but the experiences undergone by the artist. Adewuyi's bronzes embody this ethos. The small heads and large feet speak of resilience, hardship, and quiet strength—the fulfilment of life's stipulations through process, not product."

These pieces stand as testaments to the artist's ongoing evolution and relentless pursuit of craftsmanship.

According to curator **Sandra Mbanefo Obiango**,

"Adewuyi's sculptures remind us that life is experienced through the feet, not the head. His rough and smooth surfaces speak a universal language—one of faith, love, despair, and renewal. The feet are exaggerated, not for drama, but because they carry us through all that is seen and unseen."

Adewuyi's exposure to international workshops, particularly his ongoing relationship with France's **CPI-FAC** (Centre de Potiers et Initiation à la Faïence et à la Céramique), has significantly enriched his practice. He has mentored and taught generations of artists. As French ceramicist **Céline Laurent Desor** puts it:

"Kenny's bronzes are born from techniques both raw and delicate. His vision of the world is carved into bodies rooted in earth, carrying burdens that neither release nor grow—but remain—resilient and unmoving. He is an artist of rigorous honesty."

Curated by SMO Contemporary Art and hosted by Temple Muse, the exhibition also includes rare works from Adewuyi's student years and select pieces never before shown to the public.

"Before the heavy flow of molten bronze fills the mould, Kenny prays—and those prayers travel far," says French academic and ceramist Olivia Lefevre. "His creative process radiates a vibration that is as human as it is cosmic. It connects us all, in respect of the mystery and the breath of life."

"We are delighted to host Kenny's second exhibition, as one of Nigeria's foremost contemporary sculptors," said **Avinash Whadwani, Executive Director of Temple Muse**. "His work stands out in the local and global art space; he is a master artist whose celebrated works are a part of important art collections."

"*SOLE TO SOUL*" is more than an exhibition; it is an immersive testament to the philosophy that process is divine. It is the story of a man who builds his art from the ground up—literally and metaphorically—infusing each piece with spirit, memory, and a profound reverence for the human condition.

Exhibition Details:

Title: SOLE TO SOUL

Artist: Adewuyi Kenny

Curator: SMO Contemporary Art

Venue: Temple Muse

Opening Date: June 21, 2025, Lagos

Exhibition Duration: June 21 to July 22, 2025

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About the Artist:

Adewuyi Kenny is a Nigerian-born sculptor whose practice spans over three decades. A master of bronze casting using the lost wax technique, Kenny's works are noted for their expressive forms and socio-spiritual depth.

Kenny, born in 1959, earned his B.A. (Hons) in Sculpture in 1985 and M.F.A. in 1996 from Ahmadu Bello University (A.B.U.), Zaria. He lectured at the College of Education, Sokoto from 1986 to 1992 before transitioning to full-time studio practice. His work focuses on exploring and exaggerating figurative forms in bronze sculpture.

Kenny has exhibited widely in national and international venues, including the Africa Now auction at Bonhams (London), Drouot (Paris), ART HOUSE Contemporary (Nigeria), and the 1:54 Art Fair (London). His art is held in both private and public collections worldwide.

He received awards for Best Student in Sculpture and General Drawing (1985, A.B.U.) and Best Art Educator in Nigeria (1990, Federal Ministry of Education). He is a member of the Society of Nigerian Artists (SNA), Guild of Professional Fine Artists of Nigeria (GFA), and Maison des Artistes (France). He is married with three children and splits his time between Nigeria and France, where he continues to exhibit, teach, and innovate within the medium.

PRESS & MEDIA ACCESS:

High-resolution images, artist bios, and interview requests are available upon request.
