

Press Release:

Udemba's art celebrates new Temple Muse Flagship Store

(Lagos, November 13, 2019) During Lagos' vibrant art, design, photography and fashion season in November, Emeka Udemba's exhibition, *A Question of Being*, curated by SMO Contemporary Art, marked the opening of the new Temple Muse flagship store in Victoria Island.

A Question of Being presents "the vibrancy of hybrid cultures" referencing race, history, memory, gender, time, and beauty. Udemba experiments with rich colors, transparencies, words, printed paper, and textures to create multi-layered portraits which take a critical look at the emergence of vibrant multi-cultural communities and a how hybrid identity affects our sense of belonging.

Udemba is an artist of Nigerian descent, who has spent the past 25 years working in his studio in Freiburg, Germany. Through his paintings and installation, he touches on the issue of global migration and the need for people to be confident in their race, ethnic roots, and culture, and "not to let ourselves be defined by the strangers' gaze, but to celebrate the diverse colors of all humanity."

The new Temple Muse flagship store is purpose built to provide the perfect platform for large art installations. Its expansive walls and new gallery provide space for Udemba's work, which complements the vibrant cosmopolitan spirit of all things Lagos.

"Our brand new space marks over eleven years of hard work in which we have had the pleasure of showcasing the best of art, design, fashion, decorative accessories and gifts from Nigeria and the globe, as well as many other specially curated events throughout the years," explained Avinash Wadhvani, co-founder of the store with his brother Kabir. "Udemba's exhibition is the perfect way of marking this exciting next step, as we recognize many of the artists we have showcased over the years including Chidi Kwubiri, Gerald Chukwuma, Modupeola Fadugba, Kenny Adewuyi, Victor Ehikhamenor, Wura-Natasha Ogunji and many others"

"I am honored to have been given the opportunity to curate the walls and spaces of Temple Muse since 2013," said Sandra Mbanefo Obiogo, founder and artistic director of SMO Contemporary Art. "I believe Emeka Udemba's work provides a powerful and insightful next step in this exciting journey of presenting the best of global creativity in the beautiful, multi-functional spaces Temple Muse has to offer.

At the exclusive Collectors' Preview held during ArtXLagos week, the world renowned artist Yinka Shonibare MBE, encouraged local artists to understand and embrace global culture, and to have the freedom to be inspired by current events, and not have a restricted view of what has been labeled "African Art".

"I work as multi-disciplinary artist because, like the Igbo adage says "You don't stand in one place to see a masquerade, you move around it," commented Emeka Udemba, whose installation of 12 hooded figures is referenced from 14th century Spanish history. "We live in a multi-faceted world today to which we all belong. You see how colorful and sparkly the hoods are? It is playing on the premise of how colorful the world is."

The exhibition is sponsored by Zircon Marine and Villa Antinori and is open from October 29 to December 15 at Temple Muse.

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