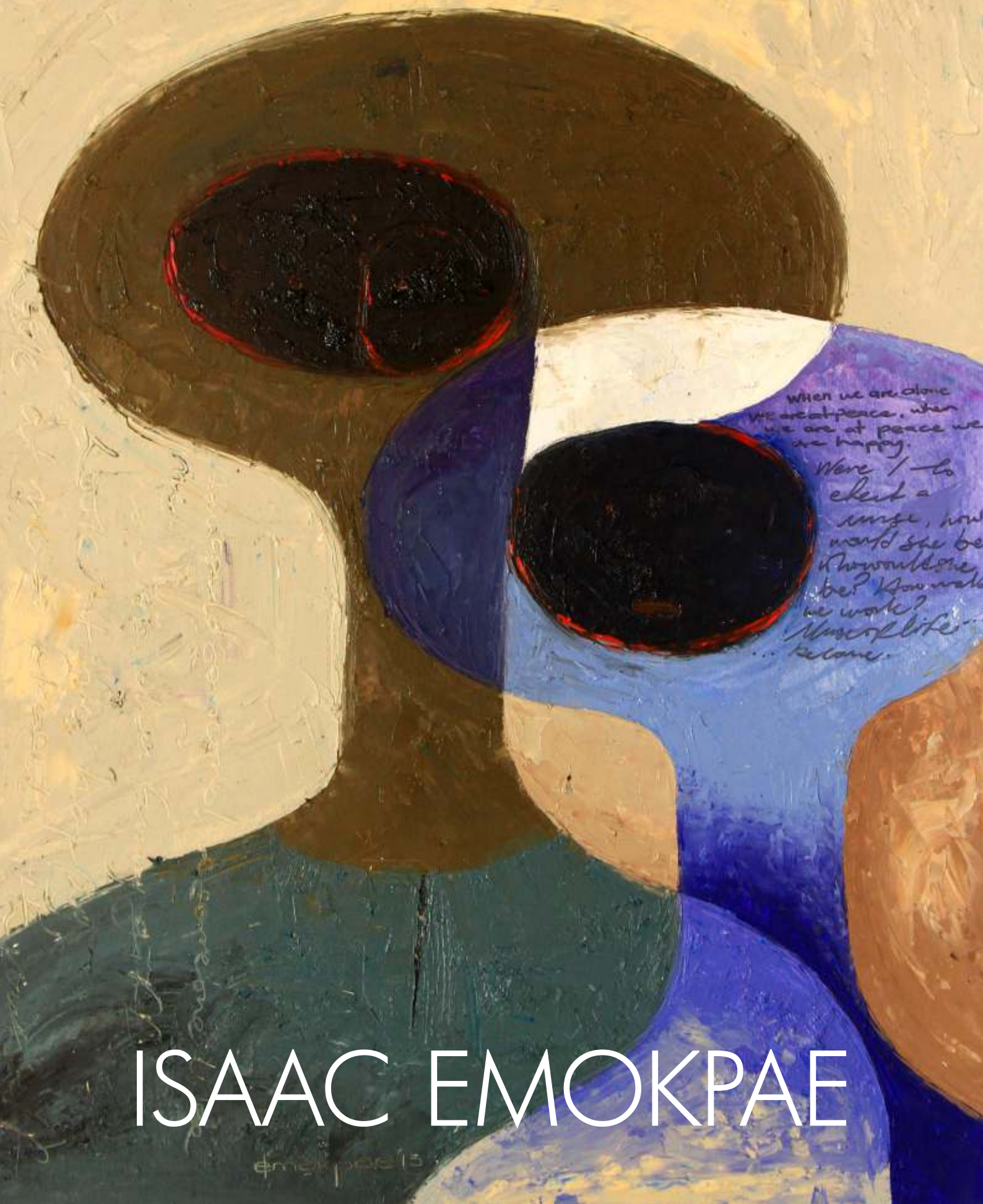


# DUALITY



When we are alone  
we are at peace, when  
we are at peace we  
are happy.  
Were I to  
check a  
surge, how  
would she be  
if how would she  
be? How would  
we wake?  
Music of life...  
before.

ISAAC EMOKPAE

emokpae 15





Cover Front: Confidant, 2013. Oil on paperboard, 23 X 30 inches  
Back: Overexposed, 2013. Oil on paperboard, 23 X 30 inches



An abstract oil painting on canvas. The background is a deep, vibrant blue. In the upper center, there is a soft, greyish-white cloud-like shape with a small, glowing orange-yellow circle inside. To the right, a green leafy branch extends from the top edge. Scattered across the blue field are four small, circular, gold-colored coins. In the lower right, there is a large, curved shape in shades of white, pink, and light blue, resembling a stylized object or a piece of fabric. The overall composition is layered and textured, with various colors and shapes creating a sense of depth and movement.

# DUALITY


presenting

ISAAC EMOKPAE

March - April, 2014  
at The Wheatbaker  
Lagos

Only for spoil, 2013. Oil on canvas, 56 X 40 inches





Harmony  
The sentiments of  
this are, all things  
coexist to one,  
that is nothing is  
anything without  
the other.  
Tomorrow may  
become today  
as quickly as yesterday  
was tomorrow.  
Eventually now  
we'll never come  
again,  
if it will always  
be now even when  
we are no more.  
Thus I hold to the  
fact that God is now.

That intangible and  
unchanging Element that  
remains stable by the  
movement of its  
surroundings as the  
elements surround it.

Therefore near  
the surroundings  
We know every other  
being but God  
the father, God  
the son and God,  
the Holy Spirit.

Truly as  
My thoughts on  
Loving

# Welcome

Isaac Iken Emokpae is a philosopher. He is wise beyond his years, and the mirror of his soul is deeply reflected in his art. The first time viewer will immediately recognize that his paintings have a profound message – a deeper meaning. The way he uses shape and color is unique. Actually unforgettable and whether you like it or not, an impression is made.

And is this not the essence of art? To move us from comfort to the edge? From known to not sure? From thought to smile, recognition or simply a shrug? With titles like a beautiful thought, haunting truths, harmony, over exposed, loose myself – we feel the tension as well as the joy and angst of a creative being, trying to express and release energy, while being stretched by the pressures of life.

Emokpae's use of color is mature, wrapped around a myriad of humanoid shapes with large heads and playful features that exist on a spectrum ranging from cartoon simplicity to opaque surrealism. His backgrounds are either dense, thickly applied color palettes, or they are a myriad of words, poems, rants or simply streams of consciousness of his inner self...

This life is a gift.  
This life is a gift!  
I must remind myself  
As often as possible  
So that I never forget  
To be grateful.  
Strive to be a better version.  
Everything good will come...  
a chance to forge a new path...

(from the painting Gift, 2013)

Each painting, whether almost completely white or in colorful shadows, expresses emotions which startle and soothe. His Autumn series, a precursor to the Monads, shows a young artist coming of age, painting tree silhouettes against an almost eerie emotion free landscape with only the sun piercing through.

Isaac comes from an artistic background. He carries his father's legacy close to his heart and while trying to find his own wings, he nurtures his precious roots. Almost everyone who hears about this exhibition is surprised. They know him as a photographer and he has made quite a name for himself. So what joy to find out another facet of this blossoming creator. We hope you enjoy a new insight into Isaac Emokpae's world of Duality!

Sandra Mbanefo Obiako  
Curator  
March 2014



This life is a gift! This Life is a gift. I must remind myself as often as possible, so that I never forget to be grateful. Each morning (no matter the mood) is like a blank canvas, it is an opportunity, a chance to forge a new path, a chance to correct the misgivings of the past; regret is now worthless, simply because it symbolizes surrender. I have made the choice not to live with regrets, not to cry over spilt milk. I look to the hope of a new sun, bright and warm. The forgiveness of my transgressions, the cleansing of my soul, and the opening of my mind to everything good. I will not struggle to make it, I will strive to be a better version of myself.

I treat those I love with love and respect. From all glory my maker, and "change to me" to "nobility of spirit". When I am alone, I look to the hope of this world, a way that only the appreciative. Someday, all will see what it is truly worth. It motivates our sub-  
or I.e.

When you make that choice that ultimately gives you of mind (no matter how fledgling) if you must love, try and love at the other as you might look at hope that they too (however imperfect) have translates to something worth saving, worth there is always someone who needs you and when first the answer to some part of your own needs and choices seem to come and go so quickly a repetitive state, alas sometime eventually for have created, in that fleeting & live of enough good for the memory of time the cherishing.

In all things though simply remember let it be beautiful, let all life be beautiful. a gift that is not let it be

Everything good will come my way I will of myself and the utmost care

I have I will never forget his or his most day trying I will give eternal salvation unwavering will of us have to believe in, what conscious to trust let it be something the blessing of peace (ing) that may be

yourself, with hope and a tinge of emptiness the potential to change and the value that sacrificing for. You are not on blame you find the person who needs, you set or expectations. All of these actions that we tend to forget them and fall into you will confront every action or inaction the time, the hope is that if we have love we have will be beautiful and worth

that you must make the effort to the aspects that sum up your lives it is now good to give beautiful.

Beautiful

W. M. Morgan  
Emokpae '13

# About the Artist

Isaac Emokpae (b. 1976) is an emerging Nigerian visual artist, who studied art at the University of Lagos under Professor Abayomi Barber. Although Emokpae studied painting he has spent most of his professional life focusing on photography in fashion and journalism for clients such as 234 NEXT, Tiffany Amber, Elan, AD Consulting and Nigeria's leading advertising agencies. He has won numerous awards including the UNESCO "Save our Treasures" art competition in Troyes, France (1996) and the Hasselblad Masters (Semi Finalist Award) for Photography in 2007.

Emokpae is slowly becoming known for his paintings on board and canvas; his art was featured in the Arthouse Contemporary Auctions in 2013. He is the son of the well known Nigerian modern artist Erhabor Emokpae (1934-1984), and has inherited his father's artistic flair and poetic depth. His art transcends his African identity and reflects a world view that is powerful and engaging.

This is his first major solo exhibition of paintings in Nigeria. The exhibition touches on two bodies of work: a few pieces from his autumn series and works from his monad series, which reflect the duality of humans, their soul and emotions.

Group Exhibitions: Peace on Earth (save our earth), Ilorin (1990), Exchange of our treasures, UNESCO, France, (1997), CCIC/VI Artists, DIDI Museum, Lagos (2000), Abayomi Barber Honorary Exhibition, University of Lagos (2002), Reconstruction in Reverse, Omenka Gallery, Lagos, (2010)  
Solo Exhibitions: Genesis (2005) & Body Only (2014), Terra Kulture, Lagos.



“In line with duality, my forms represent the semi tangible container that we call the soul, and the colours are expressive of the various emotions that we all encounter in our everyday relationships. My Monad series is inspired by the work of philosophers like Leibniz, Descartes and Santayana.”









Yellow Day, 2013. Oil on paperboard, 23 X 30 inches

Ikem Emokpae is a serious minded, highly gifted young Nigerian artist. The audacity of Iken's compositions, the vivacity and the fertility of his imagination all go to show that he has personal vision, the greatest attribute of an artist.

Although just making a formal entry in to the realm of art, he is really not a total stranger to fine art. He was in fact born, as it were, with an artistic silver spoon in his mouth, a golden paintbrush (and) aluminium palette in his hand.

Prof. Abayomi Barber  
Department of Creative Arts  
University of Lagos



Beauty is to be generated  
Controlled or not. These sensations that combine to help us perceive beauty come from a complex mixture of external stimuli. The feelings that generate beauty can be harnessed by our pleasure perception to bring beauty.

When we see something we call beautiful, we objectify it. Our imagination to create it in some way is that every beautiful object used and leased by man or the other, a specific beauty, indelible mark that it itself as the hollow.

This sad memory back to its precursor either refresh to secure the

The idea of more powerful that



first sense anything. But we amplify it in our mind. The first thing that has been someone else, in some way. Every soul that perceives takes with itself an continues to manifest memory of beauty.

in turn drives us on in a bid to the initial imprint or precursor permanently.

Beauty is probably object that the thing inspired it.



# In Conversation

## Isaac Emokpae & Amara Obiako

(AO) How did your artistic journey begin? Who inspired you to become an artist? Who were your mentors?

(IE) I specifically remember one occasion when I was very young, when my Dad noticed that I was becoming more and more “visually expressive”, literally painting and drawing on the walls! So he sat me down and took a plain sheet of paper and we had our first art lesson. Right in front of me, with just a few strokes, I saw a horse and its rider manifest with pristine accuracy. From that moment on I saw my Dad in a different light and it continues till today. So you can say my Dad was the trigger that started my quest through art.

With regards mentors, I must say a big thank you to Professor Abayomi Barber, who is one of the best cultivators of talent. His dedication to patience and ensuring students' mastery of the core skills of art helped me find structure during a very unstable part of my creative journey. Part of what drives me is the power to create new things in a variety of ways.

(AO) Does having a father who was a very successful artist put pressure on you?

(IE) There is always the false expectation that the son of a great artist will be like his father; unfortunately YES there is pressure that comes from being compared to him. However, today there are fewer and fewer people who know him, much less link us together, until it is referenced either in my work or in a write-up (like this one). A very odd form of responsibility has arisen where, I have to also re-educate people about who he was.

(AO) How do you begin your artistic process? How do you prepare for a new piece?

(IE) Ah well! The first thing I usually do when I get that itch is to say a quick prayer and then play music. I cannot work without music: Randy Crawford, Maxwell, Marvin Gaye, Terence Trent D'arby, Jessie Ware, Asa, Ali Farka Toure, Enya are just a few of the people I'd have on my playlist. Then I write about what I want to create or how I feel, this allows me to put a more unbiased context to what I will eventually create. Then I make a small sketch, from then on its mixing colours and prepping surfaces. All this time spent allows me to fine tune my burst of creativity; eventually if I can “tame” it to some extent, then I can control and ultimately hone the energy to suit my vision.



(AO) Was it hard to make the transition from fine art to photography ?

(IE) No it was not hard to branch out into photography. My Dad was a “closet” photographer same as my Grandfather. There were photographs taken everyday of almost every aspect of daily life so photography was second nature for every one in the Emokpae household. My sojourn into photography started simply because I needed references for my painting work. Initially I used magazine photos but it affected my work, because most of the models were white – and my paintings looked like black women with Caucasian features. Eventually I started taking photos myself and got hooked, and the rest is history. (PS, whatever pays the bills)

(AO) How do you hope people respond to your work?

(IE) Positively and with proper thought. It is not just about what you see, it is also about what you feel. Too many people do not allow themselves the pleasure of an experience for the sake of the experience and this limits how much we appreciate art. Before you say yes or no to something, THINK.

(AO) How has your work evolved over the years? What prompted these changes?

(IE) Over the years I have gone from realist to romanticism to surrealist to expressionist and still I continue to venture. I cannot say for sure what prompts every one of these changes however I know that each time I get restless in a medium or style it is driven by the sense that I have told this story before and I don't need to re tell it, basically “on-to-the-next-one”.

(AO) How could the Nigerian artistic environment be improved?

(IE) We need funding and enlightenment. Funding in the sense that, too many artists are thinking laterally. They create only to survive; this simply means that if they become comfortable, they lose the edge that drove them initially. We need bursaries and grants to foster pure artistic pursuits devoid of the need for profit. Then we will see an age of true genius in the visual arts sector. Now what you see is that a lot of artists get stuck within a well paying rut for too long and they wind up creatively stagnant. The enlightenment comes with less encumbered artistic expression.

(AO) What advice do you have for young artists?

(IE) Be patient and think - Why would I buy/approve of/like/enjoy what I'm about to create? How will I be remembered? Beyond these, have fun and don't just focus on material gain.





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Art builds. Art questions. Art transcends borders. Art works. With its art program Deutsche Bank is making a sustainable contribution to the development of society. Creativity is a source of innovation and progress. That's why Deutsche Bank has been enabling access to contemporary art worldwide for more than 30 years: with its substantial collection, in exhibitions, and through cooperations around the world. The "Art works" concept is an integral part of Deutsche Bank's Corporate Citizenship programme. In line with this motto Deutsche offers employees, clients and the general public access to contemporary art- through its collection at the workplace, in international exhibitions, at the Deutsche Bank KunstHalle in Berlin, as well as through educational programmes. Deutsche Bank supports joint projects with museums, art fairs and other institutions to award and encourage emerging talents, which is best shown in the "Artist of the Year" award which provides a platform to contemporary artists. The magazine ArtMag provides insight into the international art scene. These extensive global activities- designed and accompanied by a team of experts- enable increasing numbers of people to engage with contemporary art. We are creating opportunities, enabling talent and fostering creativity.

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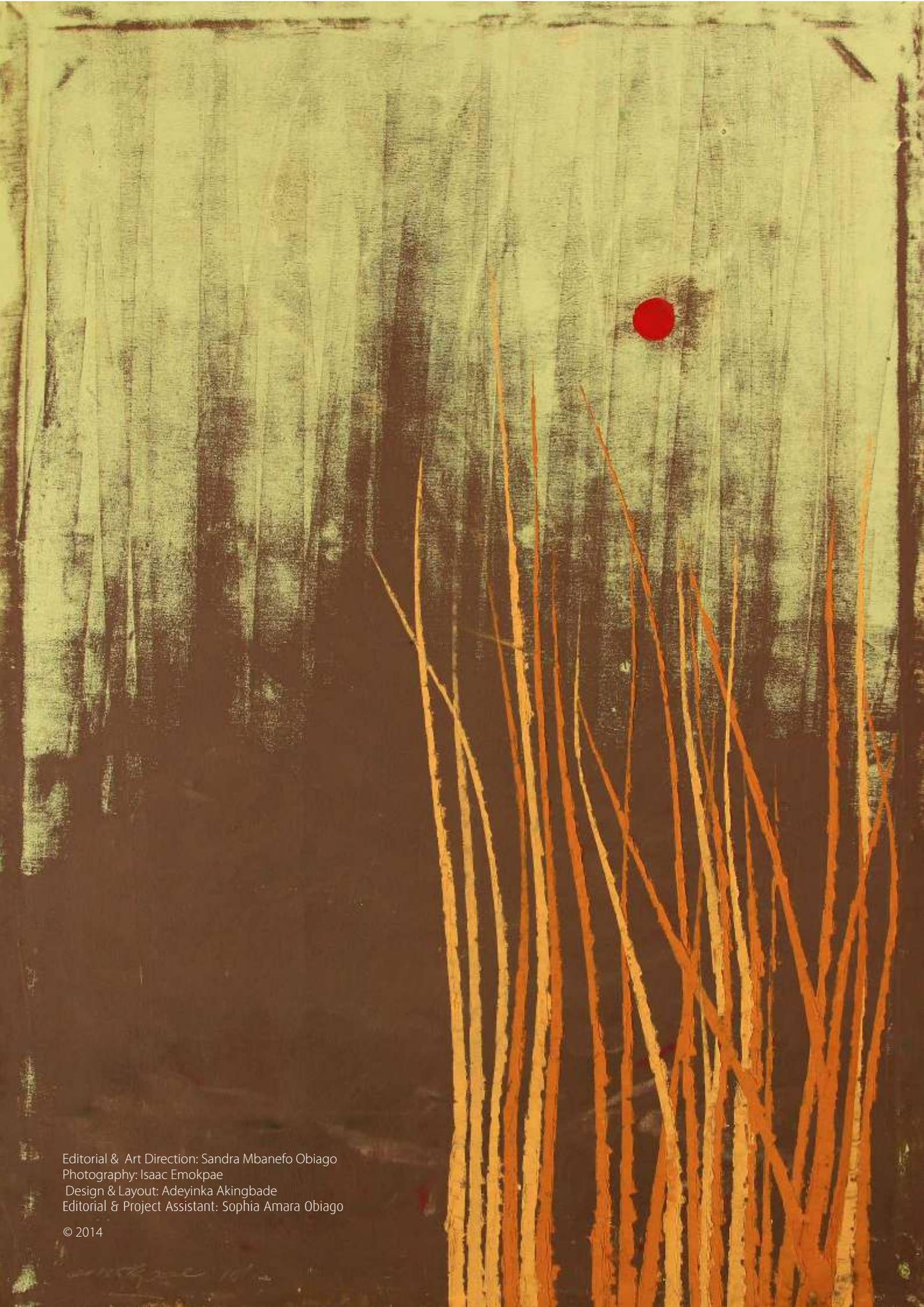


The Wheatbaker as part of the Legacy Hotel Group, has keenly supported Nigerian arts and culture since opening its doors in 2011. The hotel's commitment to celebrating the best of Nigerian creativity saw it dedicate its walls to showcasing exceptional traditional, modern and contemporary art. The Wheatbaker has hosted world class art exhibitions including The Collectors' Series showcasing Duke Asidere, Kelechi Amadi Obi & Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko (2011), Making History showcasing Ancient Nigerian Art (2012), Sequel 1a showcasing the sculptures of Olu Amoda, Billy Omabegho's metal and wood sculptures (2012), The WW Independence series by WhiteSpace, featuring Tayo Ogunbiyi, Karo Akpokiye, Folarin Shasanya, Hakeem Salaa, Toyosi Faridah Kekere-Ekun (2012-13) and Flow showcasing ceramic and mixed media sculptures and installations by Nnenna Okore (2013), paintings & sketches by Polly Alakija (2013) and photography by Lakin Ogunbanwo (2014).

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Ruinart is the oldest established Champagne House exclusively producing champagne since 1729. Founded by Nicolas Ruinart in the Champagne Region in the city of Reims the house is today owned by the parent company LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SA. As a patron of contemporary art and design, Maison Ruinart can be found all over the world, wherever the artists of today have the freedom to express themselves and exhibit their work. Ruinart is a proud sponsor of many international art events including Masterpiece London, Art Basel Hong Kong & Miami, MiArt, and PAD Paris & London.



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