

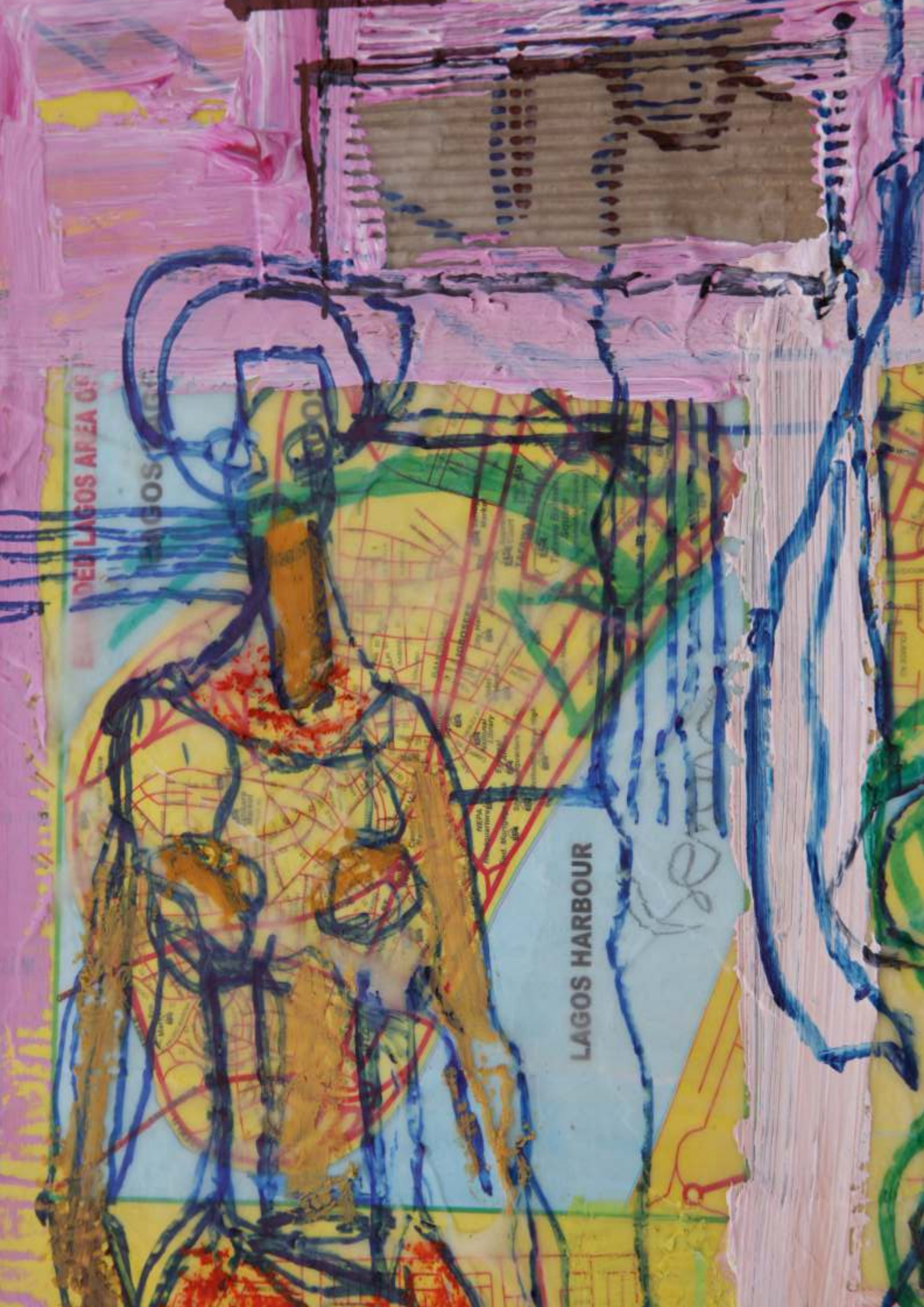


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# DU KE ASIDERE





# MENTAL SPACE

CURATED BY SANDRA MBANEFO OBIAGO



JULY 4 - SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

THE WHEATBAKER

LAGOS, NIGERIA

(Detail) Distortions facts and historical lies, Acrylic/felt pens/graphite/pastel on canvas , 68 x 180cm, 2016





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## Curatorial Foreword

### ASIDERE'S UNIQUE MENTAL SPACE

There is something so refreshingly cerebral about Duke Asidere's work. I think in his generation of artists – he is one of the most uninhibited creative intellectuals. His works touch on so many deep issues in our society, and his subtle use of headlines tease and beckon the viewer to walk up close to read the partly submerged text, and then step back smiling, when we realize the unapologetic message of the piece.

Duke Asidere's works have always had a strong global aesthetic. What I mean is that, although his inspiration comes from life in Nigeria, his figures and forms, his doodles and detailed drawings touch on universal themes of love and greed, war and peace, trade and silent meditation, play and serious discourse. His gift of analysis and his simple, fluid and swift rendering sets him apart as an artist whose oeuvre reflects the pulse of our socio-political character.

Asidere is prolific. Often he sends me 15-20 images through WhatsApp – fresh off the easel. My collectors' eye explodes from a sugar overdose in the virtual candy store of Asidere's mental and artistic flamboyance. Every time I go to his studio, I come away deeply impressed by the depth and breadth of his art. While his signature faces and seated human forms are always recognizable, it is his minimalist sketches, with graffiti like commentary, that continues to unfold a refreshing, highly suggestive and creative edge.

Asidere is not afraid to rock the boat. His bold headline "550 billion" collaged on a yellow canvas bleeding red, reminds every Nigerian of the ridiculous and obscene amounts of money missing from our national treasury. He cheekily calls his highly textured black canvas with a few specks of color "one man, one generator", an unflinching portrayal of the totally absurd lack of fuel, diesel and electricity plaguing one of the world's largest oil producing nations. His drawing of the market woman selling tomatoes with dollar price doodles scribbled in the shadows is a wry commentary on Nigeria's free fall economy and galloping inflation completely asphyxiating the sale of even locally grown produce.

Spending an afternoon in Asidere's studio is like stepping into a world of complex frenetic thought and robust color. He talks incessantly, passionately, as he flips through canvas after canvas neatly stacked against every available wall space. He excitedly brings out numerous sketch pads, which he uses to document frequent trips across the region. His compulsive sketching documents the flora and fauna as well as the emotional and physical landscape he encounters on his explorations; conversations in roadside eateries or "bukkas" confirm his philosophy that art is part of our heart beat, our national DNA, which expresses rage and humour in the same local parlance over peppered suya meat and flat beer.

This robust and uninhibited social commentary is juxtaposed expertly against his calm, measured, mostly headless, thickly layered oil on canvas portraits of classical figures, sitting mid-air on floating color, almost like characters out of an African version of *Alice in Wonderland*; a world in which bodies don't need heads to be powerful, and brains are only endowed to a few solitary figures clustered in fluidly delivered groups.

Are you a feminist, I ask him, because of the proliferation of female portraits. He sighs at my question and rolling his eyes upwards, he states quietly, "I am not a feminist, even though my mother had a strong influence on my life; I would rather say I am a humanist".









I hope you enjoy *Mental Space* as much as I continue to enjoy watching Asidere analyze and unleash yet another unapologetic commentary on our essence, our unquenchable verve, and our resilience to keep going, despite the odds.

Our deep appreciation as always goes to the Wheatbaker's singular commitment to showcasing the best of African art as they pay homage to some of Nigeria's best contemporary artists, including greats like Duke Asidere. Sincere thanks also to Guntrum wines, a new player in Nigeria, on boldly supporting great art.

Deep appreciation also to Professors Jerry Buhari and Frank Ugiomoh, as well as Chike Nwagbogwu for their long term support of Duke Asidere's creative flame, and their great contributions to this catalogue.

Sandra Mbanefo Obiogo  
Curator  
Lagos, June 2016









Back Seat Mentality, Acrylic/felt pens/graphite/pastel on canvas, 92 x 92 cm, 2015

# DU KE ASIDERE





**Duke Asidere** is one of Nigeria's most celebrated contemporary artists with a keen following internationally and in his native Nigeria. He was born in 1961 and obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree with first class honours in Fine Arts (painting) from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 1988, and a Masters of Fine Arts in painting in 1996 from the same university. He taught painting, drawing and art history at the Federal Auchi Polytechnic for five years before starting full time studio work in Lagos. He was mentored by Prof. Bruce Onabrakpeya and taught by Gani Odutokun who had a profound impact on his life and artistic expression.

Asidere expresses himself boldly through a wide variety of genre including pencil work, engravings, oil and acrylic, pastels and even transparencies. He was raised in a household of women, which is reflected in his recurring theme of the female form in his portrait and face series. His architecture series are a fresh perspective of African land- and cityscapes, and his number and spray series have underlying political statements.

Asidere has participated in and facilitated numerous international and local workshops on painting, photography, and drawing, including Colour Masters (Auchi Polytechnic, March 2011), and in a number of the annual Harmattan Workshop Series. He is well exhibited in Nigeria and internationally, his most recent being Mood Colour Harmony (Splendens Factory, Paris, May 2016).



## ARTISTS' STATEMENT

Art is a mirror of life, reflecting the eras we go through and the influence they impart on us. It is not tied to mediums, but a mental and emotional space that insulates us from all that's around. Artists should enjoy their art and create for intrinsic reasons, not on demand. Art is not only for the present. It is a documentation of the present, projects the future, and outlives the artist. Each artist must work in these three spaces - the present, the future, and then leave a legacy. It's not about the quantity produced, but the quality and drive.

Duke Asidere

Victims of Information, Acrylic/felt pens/graphite/pastel on canvas, 92 x 77cm, 2015





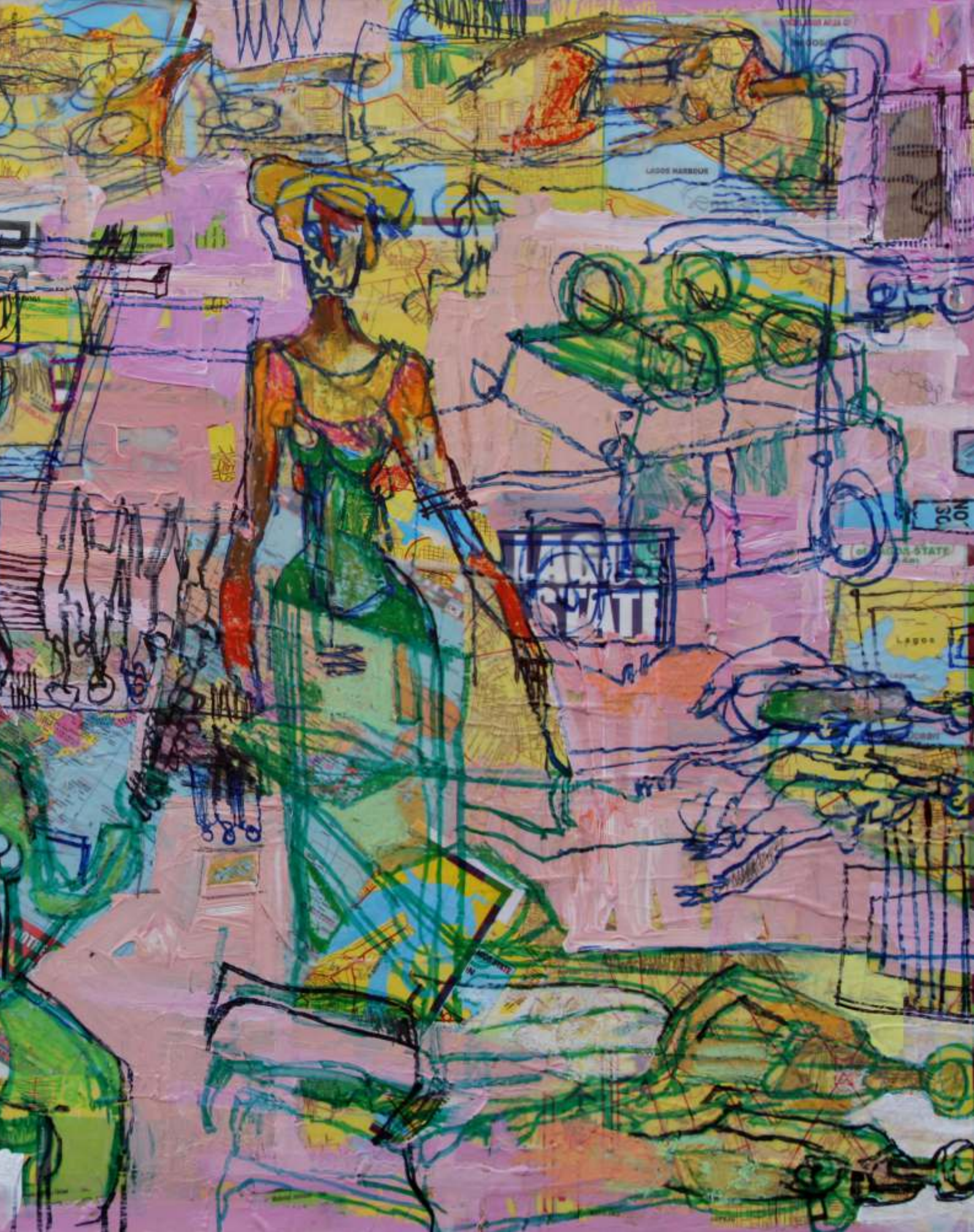






Distortions facts and historical lies, Acrylic/felt pens/graphite/pastel on canvas , 68 x 180cm, 2016













## THE "GAMES" DUKE ASIDERE PLAYS ON TWO DIMENSIONAL SURFACES

If one was looking for an artist who has an intensely explorative approach to the human figure in contemporary Nigerian art, then Duke Asidere must be counted among the foremost. His artistic career presents us with a highly intellectual interpretation of the human condition. The overall presentations before us in *Mental Space* are studies of human figures that are sometimes simple and other times complex interpretations we can all relate to.

A sampling of Asidere's works for this exhibition clearly suggests an artist who has made the human figure his central object and subject. Three aesthetic strategies are employed in what may constitute artistic dialogue; they are the two dimensional picture plane, drawing and colour.

Asidere's figures appear to have been first drawn in a deliberately sketchy and suggestive rendition on a flat surface. Then a combination of cool and warm colours are applied contemplatively to enhance the sketchy character of the drawings. The result presents art works that are visually interactive. It is as if the artist, using the gestural approach to picture making, wants the viewer to participate in the creative process. The seemingly unfinished quality of some of the works speaks to artistic boldness and confidence.

In Asidere's works, drawing and painting exist side-by-side, one complimenting the other, sometimes one attempting to erase the other. His works can often look like coloured or painted drawings. This multiple suggestiveness gives his works the most refreshing visual experience.

In the work titled *Friends* the artist chose to eliminate the head, hands and limbs of the two figures. By such a presentation the sacredness of friendship beyond physicality is brought to the fore. Such is the power and message his works command. Asidere's figures are critical statements of our humanity where he playfully uses minimalist visual elements to interpret.

When he takes on socio-political commentary he comes with a hard punch. Consider the work, *One man, One Generator*, in which one is forced to rethink all the consequences of electricity shortages in Nigeria. For example one can recall the generator called "*I pass my nebo*"... In the work titled *Power & Darkness*, power would seem to



represent not only electricity but also the *power(s)* that legislate and regulate who, when, and how electricity is generated and distributed in Nigeria. The question was once raised about what would happen if African governments had the power to regulate the use of oxygen. *Darkness* too is another form of power. It is the power to deny electricity, knowledge and access to basic amenities that make living bearable. It is only an artist like Duke Asidere who is at home with his palette that can deliberately choose not to use it in creating a work.

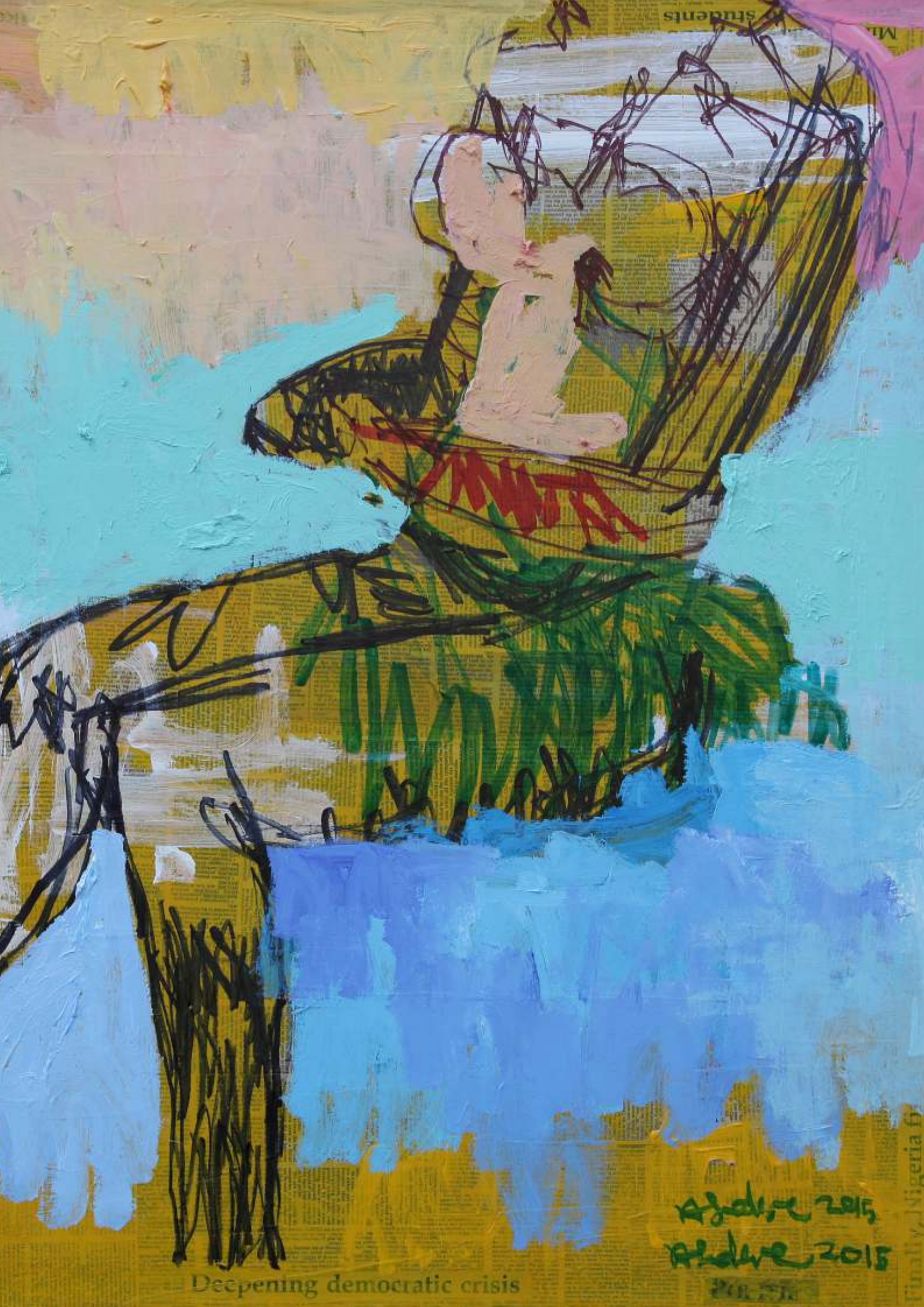
Duke Asidere's drawings and paintings bring us a refreshing look at how we all *live, manage, and patch* life and develop alternative economies for survival. This is what I see when I contemplate on Duke's works. The works can also be seen as his drawn and painted autobiography. He is a complex and an eccentric artist; a true artist without pretense. The works are the artist, the artist the works. What a harmony.

Professor Jerry Buhari  
Department of Fine Arts  
Ahmadu Bello University  
Zaria, Nigeria  
June 2016

Re-assessment, Acrylic on canvas, 92 x 92cm, 2015







Adore 2015  
Adore 2015  
POLSKA

Deepening democratic crisis

Finally, Nigeria fr





# POWER SERIES





Reconstructing Life 1, Acrylic on canvas, 92 x 92 cm, 2015





Reconstructing Life II, Acrylic on canvas, 92 x 92cm, 2015











## A PROFOUND ARTIST

Duke Asidere bears the status of a profound artist. He engages the world of images, in prospect, to give back to his fellow humans; different contrivances and contradictions they have crafted in their common commerce with reality. He captures these realities in visual fictions or metaphors that allow an understanding of their principles and the nature of reality they so address in their themes and titles.

In *Mental Space*, Asidere brings to notice a body of work that addresses contemporary concerns, the way he envisions them. In relating with this body of work, the curator provides a categorization that is fascinating; such as, portraits on paper; classical human forms with no heads, floating on canvas in seated position; political mixed media works essentially humanoid, and political headline pieces on uni-colour canvases. The above categorisation initiative on Asidere's work distinctly presents a trend. The tendency is the domination of the female subject addressed in diverse states of reflection, actions or moods. Asidere explains why the female is a prominent motif in this exhibition thus; "women epitomise hard work, more so during an economic downturn, and are, an index of the pathos, also in a community. In all, these female images enthrall, considering their persuasive posturing as they are made to sit as if confronting their world alone. However; it is with the face that expressions make meaning to humans and with humans.

A search for the delight these figures evoke rests in accompanying portraits that carry evocative titles. In this regard, such titles found with the portraits as *The Blue Day*, *Thinker*, *Expectations*, *Friendly Frown*, *The Blind Fold*, *We Wear Life*, and *The Future is Here* in diverse ways lodge into the titles without heads such as *Re-assessment*, *Preservation*, *OSAGHAE*, *The Brain Analysis*, *The Red Hot Red*, and *Seated*. The point to note is that the painted word is fictive. In this regard, it allows conjecture in such ways that allow for multiform reconstructions for the purpose of making meaning out of metaphor.

One is thus in confrontation with the coincidences Asidere creates here. The compositions were created independently of each other. However, the artist, as an author, generates metaphors that strewn together because of their homogeneity and filiation,

yields uncertain meaning. By way of coincidence, the titles given to the portrait heads are more evocative than the seated figures. Hence, they are also the assumed pointers to the theme of this exhibition entitled *MENTAL SPACE*.

Asidere's palate, on the other hand, is of moderate hue, even when he employs the reds and its related analogues. What accounts for such restraint is his disregard for complementary colour pairs. In this way, he softens the passions that drive his creative energy to actualise civil harmony and order in the polity. The disposition towards human cordialities and the way dark energies are inebriated reflects in the titles *One Man*, *One Generator* and *Power and Darkness*. These two compositions along with their dark and textured overcasts invert what may be ominous in a grimy, dark world, usually devoid of light, in the nuanced flickers of red and or white that broker hope.

In these compositions, Asidere directs thought to the "ought to be". In this instance he addresses a seeming hopelessness that contemporary sociocultural space enacts on a global scale; however, he speaks from Nigeria, one of the hotspots of civil conflicts. For such a profound and inventive persona as Asidere, all bright flashes (seen in his colour palate) or happy moments in time, do not command attention the way reality is conditioned. Indeed, in our world, nature relishes in the contrasts of opposites, the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, the enchanting and the disgusting. The negativities above, as valid truths, interrogate the essence of human existence.

As an artistic personality, Asidere is consistently drawn to these negative confrontations and their reality that tend to diminish our collective humanity. He shuns the metaphor of the unurbane in bold, creative exploits that are salutary to him as an artist and his audience. His witty titles emerge from this ideological stance, and they tease and effect catharsis. Asidere is in tune with the origin above his conceptual roots when he says that; "The past few years have not been good on the psyche of Nigerians - the quality of governance, and the state of the economy. People are forced to deal with issues different from that which they are accustomed to. During this process, art becomes therapeutic to the artist and observer; a means of escape and self-expression."<sup>1</sup>



In Duke Asidere's work Michel Foucault is reincarnated in this great thought; "One 'fictions' history on the basis of a political reality that makes it true; one 'fictions' a politics not yet in existence on the basis of a historical truth."<sup>2</sup> Asidere's work here is an authentic document of time for it addresses the challenges confronting the contemporary time in history. Asidere's narratives would be meaningless, were they to actuate catharsis merely. Foucault's note implies more. It instructs that metaphor, as a representation of the past be the ground to create a desirable future. One that is devoid of

the sociocultural pains that ensnare Duke Asidere and his confrontation with reality.

Frank A. O. Ugiomoh (Ph.D, fsna, fpaca)

Yemisi Shyllon Professor of Fine Art and Design

Professor of History of Art and Theory

University of Port Harcourt

#### End Notes

1. Duke Asidere in conversation with the curator

2. "Postmodern History - Worldviews - AllAboutWorldview.org." <http://www.allaboutworldview.org/postmodern-history.htm..> N.p., n.d. Web. 08 Jun. 2016.



The theft looting & bad governance, Acrylic on canvas, 92 x 92 cm, 2015

















One Man One Generator, Oil on canvas, 87 x 37cm, 2014









Discovering ORELOPE Street, Acrylic on board, 122 x 122 cm, 2013





Power & Darkness, Oil on canvas, 92 x 77cm, 2014









Relationships & Restorations, Acrylic on canvas, 92 x 87cm, 2015

"Duke is prolific. He loves painting, and he never pretends nor offers apologies over what he paints. He never tries to justify anything ! He will tell you - well I just feel like painting it."

" Duke may be young, but he looks at painting from the lens similar to that of many older masters. This is the lens of simplicity - the lens of sincerity. When I look at the paintings of Duke Asidere, I remember what a painter like Philip Guston thinks of painting. I remember De Kooning and it also reminds me of Africa's own Ablade Glover. Duke possesses the kind of sincerity that has brought enormous recognition to all the above mentioned artists. These are artists who feel the urge to say something and will not like to be inhibited no matter how unpalatable to the society, what they might have to say. They will not create even a square centimetre of a picture just to please. But paint they will, to express an inner urgency. Duke belongs to this fold."

" One of the hallmarks of Duke's touch is the uniqueness of his lines. From his drawings, you can tell his paintings and vice versa. They are unmistakable signatures. No masks, no disguises. He strikes me as one of the very few individuals on this dangerous planet who have nothing to hide. It takes such naked individuals to sing to us, and in their prophetic tones, reveal to us the realities of existence. Here comes the naked man. Here comes Duke Asidere"

Gani Odutokun  
Department of Fine Arts,  
Ahmadu Bello University,  
Zaria.

January, 1992





# SKETCHES



"There are many Kings, queens and princes but there is **only one Duke of art**. His world and mental space have **no borders and boundaries** as he guides us through his personal metanoia in each and every painting."

Chike Nwagbogu  
Creative Director, Nimbus Gallery & Bogobiri House

Bukky, Acrylic wash on paper, 56 x 38cm, 2014





## IN CONVERSATION WITH DUKE ASIDERE AND NNEOMA ILOGU

**Nneoma Ilogu:** What is art to you?

**Duke Asidere:** Art is not only for the present. It is a documentation of the present, projects the future, and outlives the artist. Each artist must work in these three spaces - the present, future, and hereafter (leaving a legacy). It's not about the quantity produced, but the quality and drive; what are the forces behind his works, and reasoning behind the mediums he chose. Art is a mirror of life, reflecting the eras we go through and the influence it imparts on us. There are times when you can't think it, your body can't create it, and you're tempted to abandon it. At other times, you only have certain supplies available and have to make do. Therefore, art is not tied to mediums, but a mental and emotional space that insulates you from all that's around. Artists should enjoy their art and create for intrinsic reasons, not on demand. Art becomes cumbersome the older artists get, it's a challenge of staying in the excitement, youthfulness, and 'play' that marked the younger years.

**NI:** How did your artistic journey begin?

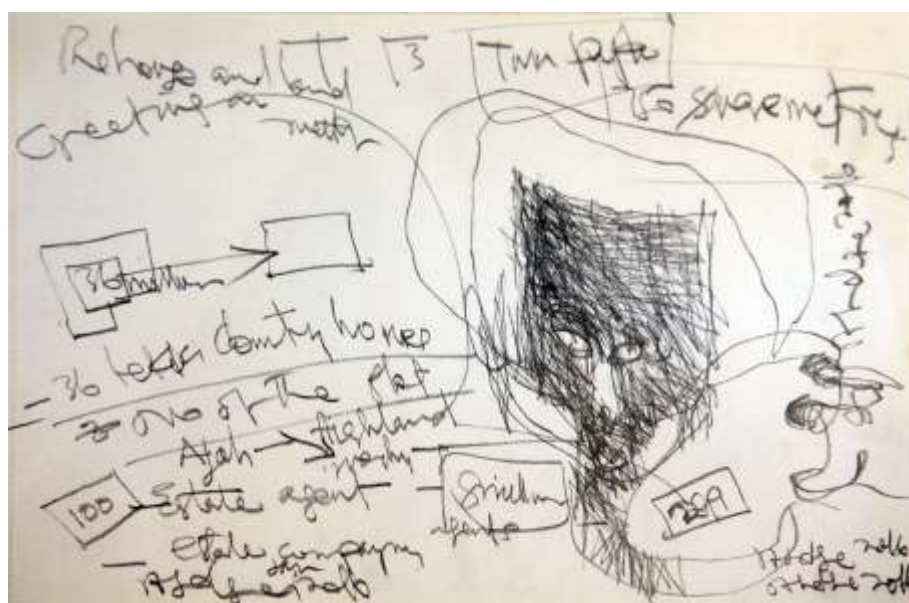
**DA:** I began Secondary school wanting to be a Physicist, but always had a flare for art. I eventually made the switch at Ahmadu Bello University, where I got my first degree as well as Masters in Painting; these laid the foundation of my art journey. Art school doesn't make an artist; it simply provides a certification of proficiency.

Being an artist is a deeper calling to constant dedication in addressing things deep in your thoughts.

My first life paintings were done in 2004. I showed them to Chike Nwagbogu, who has a huge of passion for art; he loved them and decided to hang them. One early morning, he called to say he'd sold them all. This happened on several occasions. He encouraged, and also gave critical feedback; urging that I never leave out the "soul" aspect of my art. I believe there must be a dialogue between an artist and the person who represents or curates their work. The curator has the ability to see things the artist might not, and with dialogue, is able to steer the artist and his artwork to the next level. This is an essential component needed in the art scene.

**NI:** Who inspired you? Who were your mentors?

**DA:** In University, you find people who teach and inspire you based on what they are doing. However, Gani Odutokun was a key mentor during those years. Most times, not everyone likes or understands your works, but he gave me the freedom to push the limit of expression. He was also someone who could give critical advice and give direction without forcing his ideas on you. In terms of inspiration, I get inspiration from everything around me, especially family. In 2001, I did a series titled Joshua's Cars with my son. One evening when I was leaving the studio, he asked me to draw a car for him. I began drawing





a series of cars on large sheets of paper, and using pastel on it; this drove my works into a different direction. In my works, I'm influenced by everything that happens around me. Even my emotions and personal issues dictate the direction of my works.

**NI:** What is your artistic process in preparing for a new piece?

**DA:** Sometimes something hits you, it could be a colour or anything around. The works I enjoy the most are spontaneous works. These works are done with no sketches, so as I work, I'm correcting, moving to a path, and deciding what to do. This in itself is a process. There are other times I start works with some detailed sketch in my head, or a fixation of where I want the work to go. When I work, my person spills into the works, making it an authentic Duke Asidere.

**NI:** What is the driving force behind your recent works?

**DA:** I'm always searching for what's next, figuring ways to take my art to the next level. The past few years haven't been good on the psyche of Nigerians - the quality of governance, and state of economy. People are forced to deal with issues different from that which they are accustomed. During this process, art becomes therapeutic to the artist and observer, a means of escape and/or self-expression. You begin to create art that is linked to what is going on in the society.

I keep what you could call a visual diary, in which I draw my adventures and happenings around me. I take it with me everywhere, especially when I travel. It helps me engage with my environment, and also inspires my works. Influence can't always be seen directly, sometimes it sinks into your subconscious, and is poured out without your knowledge; recognized only in retrospect. Not all my drawings are, or can be translated on canvas. Looking back on the drawings transports me to those settings, such as the tomato seller whose tomato prices are inflated due to rise in the dollar, or the bar with flat beer and a cheerful host.

**NI:** What does the title Mental Space mean to you?

**DA:** It's two ways for me. First the mental refers to the use of the mind, and space as multiple spaces meaning what drives my work is not limited to just me, but everything around me. When I come to work, there's an enthusiasm to create works that outlive me, works that I'm happy about. Putting the Mental Space together, it refers to works driven from the inside. Everything can be internalized. I call my space the play sport studio, a place where I come to play. Sometimes in the past, I would play football in the studio. Everything I did prepared me to create works. I want to create works that transcend just hanging pieces.







**NI:** You have a good amount of works that deal with political issues; can you please walk us through the 'why'?

**DA:** I think the purpose of art will always expand by the day. I bother about these issues because they affect me. Today, we have run the generator for 5 hours already and will have to run it through the day, this is at a vast cost; I'm losing money. When it comes to the issue of power, I believe the government went on holiday a long time ago. They are not aware of the issues average Nigerians contend with on a daily basis. When you're stuck with these issues, it impacts everything. The lack of power robs us from performing basic tasks. Also, with the dollar increase, the price of paint and other supplies also increases. However, when it comes to dealing of art, everyone expects the cost of art to be cheaper when production costs have gone up. In the midst of all of this, the artist must play a role in the betterment of society. If everyone keeps silent, the issues don't get resolved.

**NI:** How did your newspaper collages come about?

**DA:** I've always done collages. With newspapers, I would buy them in traffic, and by evening it would become stale news that I didn't want to read. This forces me to think of what to do with them - turning them into collages; I begin to see possibilities beyond just reading the newspaper. I look at the information encased in the

newspapers from a new perspective. I take them out of context and explore it. Most of the information we get from newspapers, we have already received from the late night news. So for many, the purchase of newspapers is habitual, a routine of some sort. If we're not careful, the artistic career will become a routine, which it shouldn't be; it should be more of an encounter.

**NI:** Most of your works are of females, would you describe yourself as a feminist?

**DA:** My mother had and still has a huge impact in the development of my character; her discipline and wise counsel formed me into the person I am. I choose to paint female figures, and in painting them, I do it with great respect. I believe in humans having dignity and being able to express themselves. I wouldn't classify myself as a feminist, rather as a humanist. I believe in the human spirit. I read a lot of blogs that speak often on the rights of women, I believe children should be trained to be assertive, and females held to the same standards as males, and vice versa.

**NI:** You taught for a few years, how has teaching impacted your art, and what made you transition from a teacher to an artist?

**DA:** I began teaching at a young age, and it was good to teach at that time. Teaching is great because in order to teach, you have to be knowledgeable and abreast with all new





A place to think, Graphite pastel on paper, 56 x 38cm, 2016

information and techniques, which has a way of opening your mind and pushing you. It also creates a lot of opportunities, as you have to work with lecturers who are a lot older, have more experience, and are probably your ex-teachers. You are under people, so you are forced to learn. Teaching was an eye-opener. Now we have the Internet that provides a vast amount of knowledge and learning opportunities; it's the new school. While I was teaching, I would paint in the mornings before heading out. I transitioned to full-time painting because I got tired of teaching. In the average Nigerian school, both the students and employers feel they are doing you a favor; I typically rebel against such mentality. There was also the issue of petty school politics, which I didn't want to get involved with. Beyond all this, I wanted to spend more time working on my pieces, and looking back I believe I made the right choice.

**NI:** Based on your expertise, how do you think the Nigerian artistic environment can be improved?

**DA:** There should be more commitment from teachers to the artistic development of students. Interactions and constant workshops for people with three-dimensional experience to share their knowledge should be brought into schools. Students should be well informed on the professional side of art, to adequately prepare them upon graduation. Also, artists should take their work seriously, be more honest with their work and give it their best. There should be more cooperation between those who run galleries, market, promote, and support art to bring about more documentation of art. Finally, in the support of art, there should be close monitoring of funds to ensure it's being used for the right things.

**NI:** What advice do you have for emerging artists?

**DA:** Give your best consistently and abstain from copying. The young artist must always put their best foot forward, and avoid living on excuses.





Yellow Days, Acrylic/graphite/felt pens on paper, 56 x 38cm, 2014



The Day Off, Graphite/pastel on paper, 56 x 38cm, 2016





Looking Ahead, 56 x 38cm, acrylic on paper, 2015



Story Time, 56 x 38cm, Acrylic on paper, 2013





FACES









The Future is here, Acrylic on paper, 56 x 38cm, 2016

Friendly Frown, Acrylic on paper, 56 x 38cm, 2016



The blind fold - darkness, Acrylic on paper, 56cm x 38cm, 2016



The Windfold  
Dorset  
1910

1910





We Wear Life, Acrylic on paper, 56 x 38cm, 2016

The Blue Day, Acrylic on Paper, 56 x 38cm, 2016









# SIGNATURE FORMS



Re-introduction, oil on Canvas, 92 x 92cm, 2016













The Red Hot Red, oil on canvas, 92 x 92cm, 2016









Black, oil on canvas, 92 x 92cm, 2016















Seated, oil on canvas, 92 x 92cm, 2015











OSAGHAE's table, oil on canvas, 92 x 92cm, 2015







The Brain Analysis, oil on canvas, 184 x 122cm, 2015-16









Lagos-Nigeria 1983, oil on canvas, 82 x 82cm, 2015



















The Blues Shop, oil on canvas,  
92 x 77cm, 2015









The Blues Shop II, oil on canvas,  
92 x 77cm, 2015



BIO

**Born:** 1961

**1988:** BA FINE ARTS, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA  
(FIRST CLASS HONOURS)

**1990:** MFA PAINTING, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA

**SOLO EXHIBITIONS:**

2016: MOOD, COLOUR, HARMONY, SPLENDENS FACTORY, PARIS, FRANCE  
2015: CONVERSATIONS, PHOTOGARAGE, LAGOS  
2015: THE ARTIST AND HIS MUSE, OMENKA GALLERY, LAGOS  
2008: PRIVATE VIEWING, PAN AFRICAN UNIVERSITY, LAGOS  
2002: THE WORLD ACCORDING TO DUKE ASIDERE, NIMBUS GALLERY, LAGOS  
1995: THE NEW OEUVRE, THE EMBASSY OF LEBANON, LAGOS

**GROUP EXHIBITIONS:**

2015: INFINITE TREASURE, TERRA KULTURE, LAGOS  
2015: THE CONTEMPORARIES, THE WHEATBAKER, LAGOS  
2015: NEW CONVERSATIONS, THOUGHT PYRAMID GALLERY, ABUJA  
2014: TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES, MALL GALLERIES, LONDON  
2014: TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES, THE GALLERY IN CORK STREET, LONDON  
2014: WHAT THE EAGLE SAW, THOUGHT PYRAMID GALLERY, ABUJA  
2014: DISTINCTION 2, TERRA KULTURE, LAGOS  
2013: 13<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PASTEL EXHIBITION, MYDRIM GALLERY, LAGOS  
2013: DISTINCTION, TERRA KULTURE, LAGOS  
2012: CONVERGENCE, SVENGALI DESIGNS, LAGOS  
2011: THE COLLECTORS SERIES I, THE WHEATBAKER, LAGOS  
2011: THE LAST PICTURES SHOW, PARIS, FRANCE  
2010: LAST PICTURES SHOW VII, TERRA KULTURE, LAGOS  
2009: LAST PICTURES SHOW VI, MAISON DU PARTI, DOUALA, CAMEROUN  
2001: VELVERTY DREAMS, MYDRIM GALLERY, LAGOS  
2001: WOMEN, MUSON CENTER, LAGOS  
2001: CENTER STAGE, SHERATON HOTEL, ABUJA  
2001: A HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN ART, MUSON CENTER, LAGOS.  
2000: BEYOND AESTHETICS, NIGERITE MARKETING TRAINING SCHOOL, LAGOS  
1999: AMOS TUTUOLA SHOW, NATIONAL GALLERY OF ARTS, LAGOS  
1997: THE TIMES FOR BOOKS, FRENCH CULTURAL CENTER, LAGOS  
1995: NEW CURRENTS, RUSSIAN CULTURAL CENTER, LAGOS  
1992: THE AUCHI ART SCHOOL, NATIONAL MUSEUM, LAGOS  
1992: THE TRIPARTITE BLEND, NATIONAL MUSEUM, LAGOS  
1992: STEEL ON CANVAS, RUSSIAN CULTURAL CENTER, LAGOS

### **SELECTED AUCTIONS**

2016: "THE SYNDROME PASTEL", TERRA KULTURE (SOLD)  
2014: "UNTITLED AND YELLOW (PAIR)", ARTHOUSE (SOLD)  
2013: "PREPAID METERS", ARTHOUSE, (SOLD)  
2013: "PALM GROOVE FOR US ALL", BONHAMS, (SOLD)  
2012: "EXPLORING PALMGROOVE", BONHAMS, (SOLD)  
2011: "MONEY AND HIV", ARTHOUSE, (SOLD)  
2011: "BROAD STREET", ARTHOUSE, (SOLD)  
2010: "ARADHE, ARADHE", ARTHOUSE, (SOLD)  
2010: "YELLOW HOUSE", ARTHOUSE, (SOLD)







## GRATITUDE

I am grateful to God for His mercies.

I am grateful to Mrs Sandra Obiagio and her very committed staff for putting this exhibition together. Thank you so much Nneoma Ilogu.

I am grateful to all the sponsors who have supported this exhibition.

To my teachers, Gani Odutokun and Professor Jerry Buhari at Ahmadu Bello University who laid the foundation, I say thank you.. I am eternally grateful...

I am grateful to Professors Jerry Buhari and Frank Ughiomoh for their critical and intellectual analysis of my works.

Thank you Chike Nwagbogwu, my brother and friend.

I am grateful to my studio assistants Olawale Adeniyi and Bukola Adegbeimi who help with the day to day studio activities.

I am extremely grateful to my family. My children Joshua, Israel and Grace. I love you all...

Duke Asidere



## SPONSORS



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 and Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko (2011), *Making History* showcasing ancient Nigerian art (2012), *Sequel 1a* showcasing works by Olu Amoda, *Recent sculptures* by Billy Omabegho (2012), the *WW Independence Series* featuring Tayo Ogunbiyi, Karo Akpokiere, Folarin Shasanya, Hakeem Salaa, Toyosi Faridah Kekere-Ekun (2012-13), *Flow* showcasing mixed media installations by Nenna Okore, *Here & There* showcasing paintings by Polly Alakija (2013), photography by Lakin Ogunbanwo, *Duality* showcasing paintings by Isaac Emokpae, *Unfurling*, showcasing photography & poetry by Sandra & Amara Obiako (2014), *Eko Moves* showcasing photography by Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko (2014) and *AKALAKA* showcasing paintings by Tayo Adenaike and sculptures by Obiora Anidi, *The Contemporaries*, showcasing Nnenna Okore, Duke Asidere, Uchay Joel Chima, Gerald Chukwuma, Raoul Olawale da Silva, Anthea Epelle, Taiye Idahor, Chika Idu, Tony Nsofor, Onyeama Offeodu-Okeke, Tony Nsofor and Adeyinka Akingbade, and *Save Our Art! Save our Heritage!*, a charity exhibition supporting the restoration of the Osun Groves UNESCO World Heritage Site that featured 18 artists including Sangodare Ajala, Adebisi Akanji, Rabiun Abesu, Buraimoh Gbadmosi, Kikelomo, Ajibike Ogunyemi, Bisi Fabunmi, Jimoh Buraimoh, Muraina Oyelami, Prof. Bruce Onabrakpeya Chief Nike Okundaye & Chief Tola Wewe, Polly Alakija, Wura-Natasha Ogunji & photographer Adolphus Opara in 2015-2016

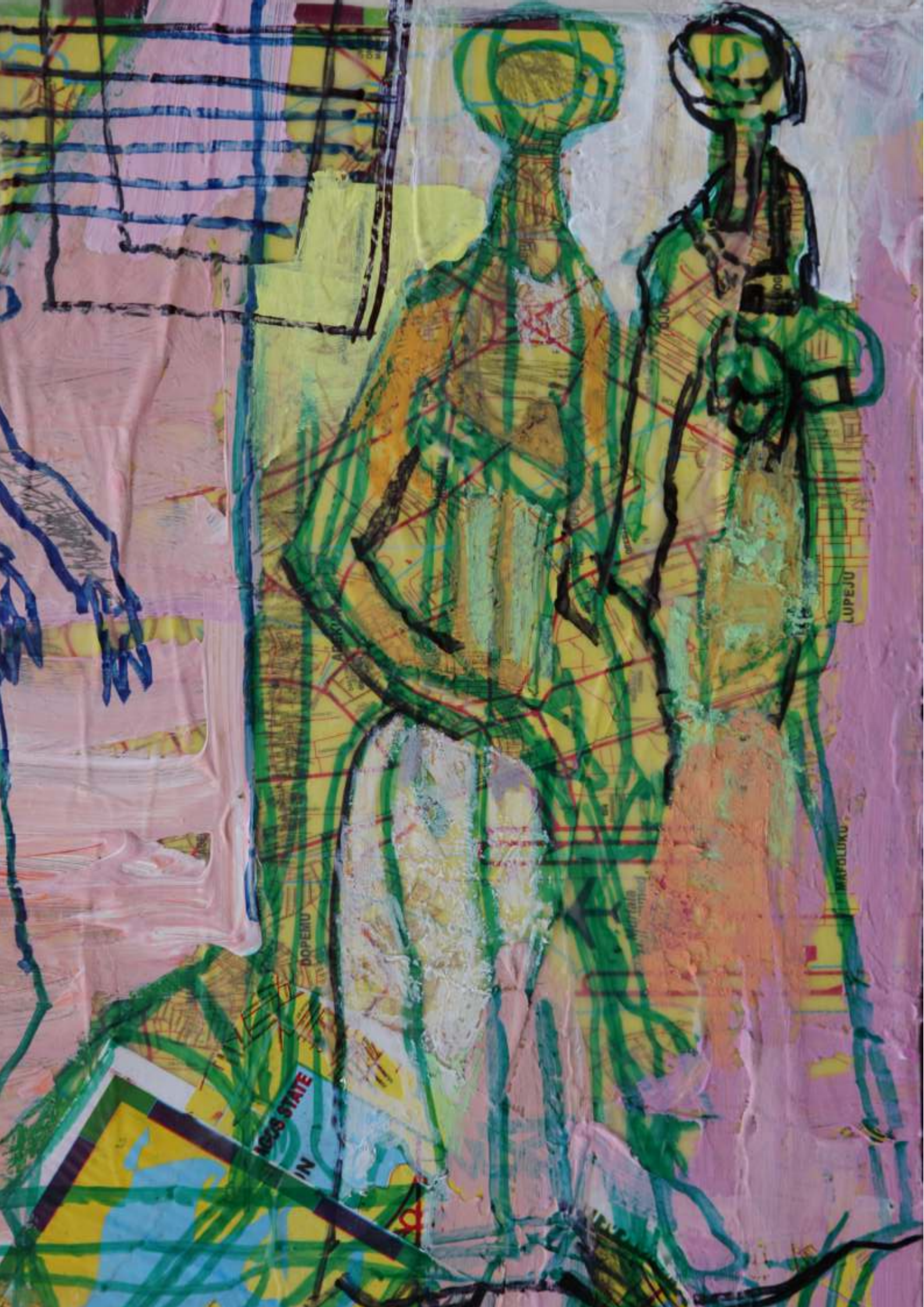


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Louis Guntrum award winning wines are enjoyed in over 80 countries worldwide. A newcomer in the Nigerian market, Guntrum wine is pleased to support African creativity.







## CURATOR

Adolphos Opara



Sandra Mbanefo Obiako is a multi-faceted writer, photographer, poet, art collector & curator, and award winning filmmaker. She has curated art shows and worked with the local creative industry to promote the best of Nigerian art.

She ran the communications program in Sub-Saharan Africa for environmental group, WWF International for eight years before founding and running Communicating for Change, a media for development social enterprise in Nigeria for fourteen years. She is a social activist and her campaigns, films, radio programs and publications have touched on themes such as human rights, women's empowerment, health including HIV & AIDS, environment, democracy and good governance. She organized conferences, workshops, and symposia for Nigeria's growing film industry and helped develop a course on *Media Enterprise* at the Pan African University.

Obiako produced and directed many films over the years, including a five-part documentary film series, *Red Hot: Nigeria's Creative Industries*, featuring artists from the film, music, performance and visual arts sectors. She was Associate Producer of the feature film, *Half of A Yellow Sun*, adapted from the award winning novel by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

She has been involved in many community initiatives and served as a trustee of the Convention on Business Integrity (CBI), was a member of the Advisory Council of the Nigerian National Film Institute and has served as a member of the jury of the *Nigeria Media Merit Awards* and the *African International Film Festival (AFRIFF)* awards. Obiako is a Fellow of the Aspen Institute's *African Leadership Initiative for West Africa (ALIWA)* and has served as Sunday School teacher since her teens. She received an M.A. in Telecommunications from Michigan State University, and a Bachelor of Education degree in English and German from the University of Manitoba, in Canada. She is happily married with three children.



Editorial & Art Direction: Sandra Mbanefo Obiogo  
Photography, Design & Layout: Adeyinka Akingbade  
Exhibition Project Officer: Nneoma Ilogu

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Simple Dreams, Acrylic wash on paper, 56 x 38cm, 2015

Back Cover Art: Friends, oil on canvas, 72 x 72cm, 2015



Sample 1  
1/2 inch  
2 inch scale





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