

Raqib Bashorun





EVOLVING CURRENTS

Presenting

Raqib Bashorun and Chika Idu

CURATED BY SANDRA MBANEFO OBIAGO & OLIVER ENWONWU



APRIL 17 - JUNE 16, 2016

THE WHEATBAKER

LAGOS, NIGERIA



Introduction

Welcome to *Evolving Currents*, a show which intersects the amazing work of two unique Nigerian artists touching on socio-political issues from different viewpoints. *Evolving Currents* allows us to experience a world of bold symbols and detailed forms through heavy wood and metal sculptures by Raqib Bashorun and sensitively textured and layered paintings by Chika Idu.

Both artists have spent the better part of their careers teaching art and inspiring young talent to find their own expression. Both artists address Nigeria's need to progress and evolve into an equitable society through subtle political and environmental messages.

While Idu focuses on the rights of women through his portrait series, and an intense study of the plight of children living in coastal communities, Bashorun's work addresses the need to harness the power of Africa's human resources rather than continuing wanton intellectual and physical waste.

For close to 30 years, Raqib Bashorun, has fashioned re-positioned and re-valued recycled found objects into thought provoking sculptural forms. Bashorun uses diversely colored and textured wood interspersed and intertwined with metal scraps, tools, nails, or pipes to create intricately embellished and clad artworks. On the one hand he creates simplified metal forms that show deep integrity of design and symbolism, while on the other hand he sculpts complex patterned works which create a powerful ebb and flow of sculptural meaning and message.

Recently retired to full time studio work after twenty years teaching art at the Yaba College of Technology, Bashorun's philosophy is hinged on the *power of numbers*, which he expresses in his work through detail and repetition. He expertly uses nails, pegs, can tops and other re-valued materials to reflect on Africa's need to tap into its most important resource, its people, and focus on a knowledge-based economy.

"Most of my work addresses political issues and the power of numbers", Bashorun explains. "Nigeria has over 150 million people. I use repetition in my work to address this issue. We are wasting our power of numbers. We need to harness and use the power of numbers for our own advantage."

In sculptures such as *Eastern Dragon*, Bashorun's artistry comes to light in his use of heavy metal machine spare parts to create a dragon rearing its defiant head, blazing eyes fixed on its enemy while its mane of nails stands erect. The artist was inspired by the ancient Chinese dragon, a symbol of power and resilience, and Asia's ability to harness and unleash its people to become a global force.

In *Whistle Blower*, Bashorun creates a hemisphere filled with thick intertwined metal chords protruding and seemingly growing out of a satellite shaped sphere. This sculpture symbolizes the interconnectedness of life and complex digital communication while exposing and revealing secret innards.

Bashorun's prevalent use of the Socratic method of teaching comes through in his art as he requires his audience to keep questioning. In *Window Dressing*, Bashorun makes fun of the flamboyant and materialistic "Eko for Show" spirit of Lagosians by creating a female form with dramatic and flashy headdress and ostentatious oversized jewelry made out of nails and metal scraps. With humour and deft symbolism Bashorun comments on society's garish superficiality which is evolving but not progressing.

These intricate sculptures are expertly juxtaposed with Chika Idu's world of children playing in water, the shimmering under water light rays expertly reflected across his canvas and deft watercolors. We can almost hear the swoosh and muffled laughter of boys playing ball along the coast, a gentle current of childlike innocence. Yet this superficial play is juxtaposed against a sinister reality.

Idu's inspiration comes from observing daily life within coastal communities and becoming increasingly disturbed by the sight of children playing innocently in heavily polluted water. With over ten years of teaching art at the French international school in Lagos while working in his studio, Idu's work highlights the fundamental rights of children and women.

"I spent a lot of time watching children play. Children are often brushed aside, not given the respect they deserve, and their voices are not heard," Idu explains. "Due to our bad roads and traffic, I started taking the ferry to the Island. What I saw was defecation, waste, and refuse going in to the water while in the same vicinity children swam and women came to fetch water. This really troubled me."

More than half of Idu's works in *Evolving Currents* grapple with the need to protect and sanitize coastal areas. He also presents monochromatic portraits of women on heavily textured canvases, a few features highlighted in cameo against dark backgrounds with a few symbolic dashes of deep red. His almost one dimensional treatment of the female form, is the artist's comment on the sexual harassment of women in the workplace, not being treated in living color, except for smudged red lips which he says, reflect the ability of mouths to pronounce life or death. His women are intriguing and beautiful, and also haunting in his depiction of silence with gaze turned inwards.

Idu's deft technique of thickly textured palette knife oil on canvas paintings, and his mastery of subtle water color works vis-à-vis bold acrylic and multi-media works shows a painter with a rare mastery of color and light.

I hope you enjoy *Evolving Currents*, both for its artistic richness, and also for its experimental co-curation with Oliver Enwonwu, the director of Omenka Gallery, one of Nigeria's leading art spaces. Not only does Enwonwu draw on a rich artistic legacy created by his famous father and one of Africa's most celebrated modern artists, Ben Enwonwu, Oliver is an impressive artist in his own right, a talented curator and writer, who has spent the last 20 years presenting Nigerian and African art to international and local audiences.

We trust this will be the first of many more such refreshing collaborations, as we continue to provide the best of contemporary creativity at the Wheatbaker art space.

Sandra Mbanefo Obiagio
Curator, Wheatbaker
April, 2016

Broken Art, Aluminum And Wood, 23" X 80" X 8", 2014







Shirley 11/11

Curatorial Forward

EVOLVING CURRENTS: A CONVERSATION BETWEEN RAQIB BASHORUN AND CHIKA IDU

"Things are either devolving toward, or evolving from, nothingness."- Leonard Koren

Evolving Currents is a joint exhibition of recent work by well-known sculptor Raqib Bashorun (b.1955) and leading contemporary painter Chika Idu (b. 1974). The works presented are in the varying media of sculpture, installation, oil and acrylic on canvas, and watercolour on paper. Curated by Sandra Mbanefo Obiogo and Oliver Enwonwu, the exhibition is suggestive of creative currents that continue to flow between consecutive generations of artists. This notion of interconnectedness is further accentuated by the fact that though the artists work across different media and are separated by age, Idu being considerably younger, they are brought together through several points of investigation of their intriguing art forms.

Bashorun belongs to an exceptional, but older established generation of sculptors who have firmly inculcated the practice of employing unconventional techniques and media including recycled and found materials in their interrogation of the larger society. Coupled with a successful career as a member of the teaching faculty of the School of Art, Design and Printing of the Yaba College of Technology, his alma mater, Bashorun holds a preeminent position among Nigerian artists.

As so often with his previous installations, the works presented here are fashioned from his preferred media of wood and metal. However, in the last decade, Bashorun has increasingly explored new directions and possibilities with the incorporation of recycled and found material from his immediate environment, most notably metal in form of aerosol and soda cans, as well as domestic accessories like table cutlery. Graters, mechanical parts including spark plugs, pipes and springs have been introduced to his work. Though design remains central to the artist's oeuvre, a closer observation of his work reveals a heightened focus and sensibility in the manipulation of his media, and more significantly, an increasing engagement with contemporary African politics. This period can therefore be viewed as an important phase in the perfection of an aspect of his creative output, one that is already a culmination of these various experiments since his graduation from the Yaba College of Technology in 1982. *Evolving Currents* documents this critical stage in the artist's evolution and in many ways is a continuum of his second solo exhibition, a retrospective spanning over 3 decades of active practice, held at the Omenka Gallery last year.

Fast-rising Chika Idu is an exciting painter on the Lagos exhibition circuit. He graduated from the Auchi Polytechnic in 1998 and has exhibited extensively across Nigeria. His inclusion in *Evolving Currents* is incisive and facilitates a comparison of the stylistic development of both artists who are separated by almost 20 years, as they actively engage their varying realities and the complexities of their media.

The exhibition's strength is hinged on the juxtaposed placement of each artist's work; the geometric and abstract forms, as well as the rigidity and hardness of Bashorun's sculpture against the palpable impasto, delineating the more fluid figures and forms that populate Idu's canvases. Significantly, both artists are united by each other's interest in the texture and materiality of his chosen media.

Chika Idu's strongly figurative and personal style is easily recognizable, one that traces his trajectory and stylistic development. His technique involves the exhaustive priming of his canvas. This day-long treatment begins by over laying several different colours of primer with an acrylic finish to provide the "textual substance that bonds subjects to canvas and lends his work a contemporary antiquity." Working almost entirely with a knife, the process of manipulating becomes more significant than the material, betraying his chief interest in varied surface textures. Heightened with a luxuriant palette, Chika Idu's paintings at once reveal a tactile, almost sensual relationship with matter.

His broad oeuvre embraces themes such as traditional Nigerian ceremonies, musicians and landscapes. Several of his paintings are imbued with narrative content. They depict children engaging in various forms of activity—on the way to school, praying, reading or swimming. Here, the artist cleverly achieves a careful balance between the iridescent light bathing the picture plane and thick clumps of paintwork, delineating the immersed bodies, and giving the impression of suspension underwater. This skillful manipulation of light, clearly evident is reminiscent of his translucent and evocative watercolours, which earned the artist much recognition when he emerged on the Lagos artistic landscape. Interestingly, Idu is also an accomplished portraitist; his canvases portraying the beauty of the African woman with her pouted lips and lithe supple body, are built up thickly with palette knife and sometimes fingers.

Overall, the works are strongly individual, a personal journey and testament to each artist's development, and an ultimate vehicle to convey a quest for empirical truth. In turn, the collective of works is unique as a collaboration between 2 curators, an exhibition that is hopefully the first in a series that will contribute significantly to narratives of contemporary art in Nigeria.

Oliver Enwonwu, M.A Art History
Director, Omenka Gallery
April 2016





Young Acrobat, Stainless Steel, 2014

Raqib Bashorun



Raqib Abolore Bashorun (born 1955) is one of Nigeria's most avant garde sculptors. His exemplary career as an artist and teacher is marked by significant exhibitions held in the United States and Nigeria. Bashorun holds a MFA in Sculpture with a minor in Drawing (2002), and a M.Ed (Art Education, 1984) from the University of Missouri in Columbia, USA.

Bashorun recently retired as a teaching staff of the Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH). At various times, he held several important positions including Principal Lecturer at the School of Art, Design and Printing, Chief Lecturer and Head of the Department of Graphics, YABATECH (2005-2008).

For the past 30 years, Bashorun has focused on issues of waste, recycling, and environmental sustainability, skilfully using found materials which he expertly reproduces as objects of beauty, form and function.

There is no way of knowing what will work and what won't, but every failed experiment will teach you something.'

Rod Judkins

Navigating out of decades of a self consciously created comfort artistic zone, back in the beginning and back in time, I embarked on yet, this self defined creative exploration; acknowledging that, in contemporary times, "it is more important to be the best version of oneself than a bad copy of someone else".

Drawing on the creative experiences of my childhood when my thoughts were deeply rooted in the commitments and concern for my passion rather than the fear of being judged, I got freed and became childlike again. My early childhood witnessed mountains of creative involvement in all the arts.

During that period, I painted in oil and water colors, drew in pencil and pastel, sculpted in clay, carved in coconut shell and cow horn, tie dyed and painted on fabrics, weaved with cane and raffia, played the drums and harmonica, and performed at a TV station. Since my childhood, I have always been an avid lover of making things with my hands. Connecting back to that period, this moment for me represents a renewal and emergence of new creative dream.

The currents of events in my life impose experiences of ups and downs, which have direct bearings on my work. Despite the nature of the inspiration leading to the creation of these works, I continue to focus on the anticipated meaningful light at the end of the tunnel, at a time when my studio truly represent the very best space in my life. Needless to emphasize how personally satisfying, the opportunity to share my creative thoughts with people on the current full circle scale. Most of the works featuring at this exhibition began with a theme that I found compelling or a more concrete, obvious source of inspiration.

Evolving Currents is the reflection of diverse schemes necessary for the sustainability of my creative practice. Not all that glitters is gold, and not all creative endeavors are branded distinctive, but one should be happier knowing that he has done all that his heart dictated honestly. Anytime my decision to show my works in public space is in the affirmative, I run out of words and feel like I have through my works, said all that needed to have been said.

Raqib Abolore Bashorun

Arrival, Steel, 18"X 13"X 12", 2014



Arrival has to do with accomplishment. When I go to the studio I feel fulfilled. I am settled and comfortable. It's like an aircraft landing and the passengers disembarking feeling relieved.

My studio represents the best space in my life. I have been a full time artist since January 2015 after a long career. My studio is where I use my creativity to bring things into reality. I experiment with materials. I can express my freedom to create. I always tell my students I am the most blessed person in the classroom with 25-30 students who are generating new ideas. I use the Socratic method of teaching. I am taking in that creativity while the students are also looking to me to tap into my ideas.



Arrival, Steel, 18" X 13" X 12", 2014

This piece was inspired by whistle blower Edward Snowden, who was in the news a few years ago. I was thinking about the internet, collecting and disseminating information.

In my design I think about the form first and not the function. Like some great architects who don't think about the function when they are doing their design. My favourite architect is Santiago Calatrava who is an artist and read architecture and also has a PhD in engineering. His works are so amazing. He uses non-conventional materials, mostly metal and glass. Nigerians are not daring when it comes to design. We need to question what our architects have achieved in the last twenty years. It does not have to be expensive. We need to bring light into our homes. There is hope but we have to work on it.



Whistle Blower, Steel And Copper, 15" X 23" X 15", 2015





Masked Masquerade, Steel, 18" X 14" X 12", 2014





Window Dressing, Mixed Media, 9" X 62" X 7", 2015



A lady got married a couple of years back but I was not in town to witness the ceremony. But when I came back and went through the photo album of the wedding , I could not recognize her anymore, with all the make up and stuff. She looked so strange to me. At times now, you can't even recognize the same person you saw yesterday. Did you hear about the man who woke up the day after his marriage and saw a scary woman besides him? He did not recognize her because she had taken off all her makeup and he had never seen her without it. I think he charged the woman to court saying that she scared him without her make up. (laughs) So I look at weddings nowadays and its like window dressing. Like our society. We look at everything from the outside, but from the inside we are totally different human beings. We need to look at the person inside the cloth.





Scarlet Storm, Wood And Aluminum, 30" X 37" X 11", 2009



Flowers Of The Same, Garden, Wood And Aluminum







I picked up some rotten wood somewhere and I rebuilt it, just like the country. Some things are not right and we need to rebuild. We cannot ignore this. We need to reconstruct and that is what we do as artists – we break down forms and reconstruct and give them new meanings. We can't stop trying.

Reconstruction, Wood, Aluminum And Metal, 36" X 9" X 17", 2013

We are a nation that wastes everything; humans, lives, time, minds, words, energy, resources, food, money, population, land, knowledge, culture, tradition, spiritual and more. How does one see the scenario at traffic light points where you find three police officers, four traffic wardens, two LASTMA officials, four neighborhood watch men, all waiting for traffic light offenders?

How about buying Naira with Naira and paying ten to twenty percent over, just because you want to give your host new Naira notes at his or her party? Have you noticed the population of jerry can patrons at our gas stations when there is fuel scarcity? Guess what they need the fuel for? To watch home videos and the English soccer league? But I know that all that we waste on a daily basis could be converted into wealth. You know what? Even such assertions will end up in the waste basket because it will not be backed up with action. We waste even-waste; double trouble.





Ebb and Flow shows two things which don't go together. I believe in materials co-existing just like ideas co-existing. One is static and one is flowing. It reflects the good, the bad, and the ugly. The upper white part is a clear aluminum color while the flowing bottom section has colors. It's like talking about negative and positive space in work; they help one another.

Why do you use predominantly coke cans for the lower part?

Some of these things should generate conversation. Coca Cola red and white. I am seeing red and white. We need to move beyond generalization. Whether someone says it is good or bad. We should think for ourselves and what value we see in these materials.

We should look at materials and redefine them and give them new meaning; re-value materials. It's not the quality of the material that is important but how you recreate it for work.

I work with anything that speaks to me; any material I connect with, be it metal, glass, paper, wood, plastic...just name it. As long as it is durable and can stand the test of time.

I generate designs in wood and push my machines to the limit. I look at materials that can co-exist like human beings. I am very meticulous. I love detailing. Through "counterimposition", you can make out six to seven different works and ideas in a single piece.





Accumulated Virtue, Mixed Media, 14"X 52"X 6", 2015





Broken Art, Aluminum And Wood, 23" X 80" X 8", 2014

Biography:

Raqib Abolore Bashorun

PRIZES AND AWARDS

2014

Distinguished Art Scholar Award
Society of Nigerian Artists, Lagos State Chapter

2001

1st Prize in Sculpture, 42nd Annual Boone
County Art Show, Boone County National Bank
Columbia, Missouri
Recipient, Donald Barlett Memorial Scholarship
Fine Arts Department, University of Missouri
Columbia, Missouri

1998

College Merit Award for Excellence
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

EDUCATION

2002

University of Missouri, Columbia
M.F.A., Sculpture, with minor in Drawing

1984

University of Missouri, Columbia
M. Ed. (Art Education)

1984

University of Missouri, Columbia
B. Ed. S. (Art Education)

1981

Yaba College of Technology, Lagos
Higher National Diploma (HND), Graphics Design

1978

Yaba College of Technology, Lagos
Ordinary National Diploma (OND), General Art

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

1995- 2015

Principal Lecturer
School of Art, Design and Printing
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

2005-2008

Chief Lecturer/Head of Department, Graphics
School of Art, Design and Printing
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

1995 - 2005

Principal Lecturer
School of Art, Design and Printing
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

Winter 2003-Fall 2003

Visiting Assistant Professor
Fine Arts Department
University of Missouri, Columbia

Winter 2000 - Fall 2002

Graduate Instructor
Fine Arts Department, ("instructor of record")
University of Missouri, Columbia

1990- 1995

Senior lecturer
School of Art, Design and Printing
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

1986 - 1990

Lecturer I
School of Art, Design and Printing
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

1978- 1979

Art Teacher
Jubril Martins Memorial Grammar School
Abule-Nla, Lagos

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1987- 1996

Freelance Designer/Illustrator
Longmans Nigeria Plc, Lagos

1995-1996

Studio Manager/Designer
Campaign Services Nigeria Ltd., Lagos

1982
Graphic Designer/Illustrator
Campaign Services Nigeria Ltd., Lagos

1981 - 1982
Graphic Designer/Illustrator
Kanji Lake Research Institute, Kanji

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS Solo

2015
Evolving in 360, Omenka Gallery, Lagos

2014
Evolving through Waste, Omenka Gallery,
Lagos

2013
Evolving through Discovery, Terra kulture,
Lagos

2012
Inspiring Design One '0' Twelve
Art Gallery
School of Art, Design and Printing
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

2010
Rhapsody 2010, Quintessence, Lagos

2008
Punctuation, Art Gallery
School of Art Design and Printing
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

Charged Currents, Terra Kulture, Lagos

Unframed Untamed Designs, Art Gallery
School of Art, Design and Printing
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

2006
Soul Searching, Didi Museum, Lagos

2005
Past to Present, William Woods University
Fulton, Missouri

2004
Abstract Equivalent of Moral Parables
M.F.A. Thesis Exhibition
George Caleb Bingham Gallery
University of Missouri, Missouri

2002
Equilibrium, Craft Studio Gallery
University of Missouri, Missouri
Visual Delay, Russian Cultural Centre, Lagos

1997
Catalytic Experience, College Library
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

Group
2014
Scrap Book, Terra Kulture, Lagos

2013
Our Resolve, Danfo Project, Terra Kulture,
Lagos

2010
Open House, an exhibition of contemporary
Nigerian art
Visual Arts Society of Nigeria (VASON)
Mydrim Gallery, Lagos

2009
October Rain, 10th juried exhibition of the
Society of Nigerian Artists, Lagos Chapter
National Museum, Lagos

Okò-Bàbà, a visual anthropological
art exhibition
Terra Kulture, Lagos

2008
The Way We Are, Danfo Project (traveling
exhibition)
Terra Kulture, Lagos

2006
The Way We Are, Danfo Project (traveling
exhibition]
Art Gallery
School of Art, Design and Printing
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

2005
Annual Show, Committee for Relevant Arts
[CORA], National Museum, Lagos

2005
Faculty Exhibition
Art Gallery
School of Art, Design and Printing
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

2004
Faculty Exhibition
George Caleb Bingham Gallery
University of Missouri, Missouri

2003
Ideas+Interpretations, a Master of Fine Arts
group exhibition
George Caleb Bingham Gallery
University of Missouri, Columbia

2002
Articulation of Space, a celebration of art in 3D
Legacy Art & Book Works
Columbia, Missouri

Art or Madness, Annual Graduate Student
Exhibition, George Caleb Bingham Gallery
University of Missouri, Columbia

Creation in Metal, Wood and Fibre
Columbia Art League, Columbia

2001
42nd Annual Boone County Art Show, Boone
County National Bank, Columbia, Missouri

2000
Past and Present, Legacy Art & Book Works
Columbia, Missouri

Annual Graduate Student Exhibition
George Caleb Bingham Gallery
University of Missouri Columbia, Missouri

Annual Graduate Student Exhibition

George Caleb Bingham Gallery
University of Missouri
Columbia, Missouri

1998
From the Cradle
Yaba College of Technology Alumni Exhibition
Goethe-Institut, Lagos

1997
Vision 2010
National Art Exhibition
Federal Capital Territory, Abuja

State Visual Arts Exhibition
Lagos State Council for Arts and Culture
Glover Memorial Hall, Lagos

1994
Creative Relay
Society of Nigerian Artists (SNA)
National Art Theatre, Lagos

1990
American Women's Club Art Fair, Lagos

1989
Side by Side, Bankers' House, Lagos

Reflections
Society of Nigerian Artists (SNA)
National Art Theatre, Lagos

1988
Yaba at 40
National Art Theatre, Lagos
Faculty Exhibition
Art Gallery
Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

1987
Towards a Great Nation
Society of Nigerian Artists (SNA)
National Art Theatre, Lagos

MEMBERSHIPS

Society of Nigerian Artists
Danfo Art Group, Lagos



Chika Idu



Chika Idu (born 1974) is one of Nigeria's exciting emerging artists who studied painting at the Auchi Polytechnic in Edo State from 1993-1998. He was instrumental in the creation of the *Defactori Studios*, a collective of dynamic new generation artists. He also created Nigeria's first *Water Colour Society of Artists (SABLES)*. Idu has taken part in numerous group and solo exhibitions.

Idu's works are characterised by a heavy texture and hazy rendition technique, which he calls '*light against visual distortion*'. For the past 16 years, he has been committed to exposing the plight of the African child; recently he began an environmental campaign on the risks faced by children living in coastal slums. Besides teaching art at the Lycee Francais Louis Pasteur in Lagos, Idu works in his Ikorodu studio.

Talent is not enough because each person is talented in their own right. Success is relative and can be measured by various benchmarks. For me, success is personal, it's being satisfied with what I create; achieving what I set out to achieve.

Each work is like an inner voice yearning to be spoken. Sometimes there might be a hunger to express, but I might not understand what direction to take. It's like a Déjà vu experience. I see something take place, and then it hits me. Similar to hearing an inner voice, which is abstract and confusing, but then suddenly it's right in front of you and you get it. You have to seize the moment, capture it in that space, or you lose it. Life is short; not expressing these feelings is like having something to say but not saying it.





Play Time, Oil On Canvas, 91 X 122cm, 2016

The Water Series

I spent a lot of time watching children play, and in this process learned a lot about them. Children are often brushed aside, not given the respect they deserve, and their voices not heard. In my works on children, my aim is to draw attention to them and emphasize the problems they face.

The series on children swimming came about while on my commute to work from my home in Ikorodu. Due to our bad roads and traffic, I started taking the ferry to the Island. During my travels, I came to see a part of Lagos I didn't know existed, which gave me insight into what transpires in these coastal communities. What I saw was defecation, waste and refuse going in to the water while in the same vicinity children swam and women came to fetch water. This really troubled me. I had a discussion with a friend, Yiannis Tsantilas, and he advised me to put it on canvas.

This series is about environmental awareness. I want people to understand that the earth does not really need us but we need the earth. Children are primarily used to portray this in my work because children are the future. It's our responsibility to create better living conditions for them. We pass down all that is around to our children, and what we don't correct, they inherit. They are the most vulnerable in society, unaware of the danger or severity of situations, it's our duty as adults to act as guardians.





Still, Oil On Canvas, 80 X 105cm







Play Time, Oil On Canvas, 122 X 91cm, 2016





Fun Day, Oil On Canvas, 104 X 160cm (diptych), 2016





An artist is like a history keeper. There is the hunger to document what is going on before a particular issue becomes a non-issue.

My advice to young artists is to be original and don't follow the bandwagon. We are individuals with different narratives and experiences. I would like to encourage young artists to stay true to who they are. Art is becoming a hustle, and it should not be that way.



Water Plate, Acrylic On Canvas, 92 X 61cm, 2015



John M. W.

John M. W.

The Portrait Series



Face II, Acrylic On Canvas, 66 X 61cm, 2015

Hope III, Acrylic & Plant, On Canvas, 91 X 61cm, 2014



Chad & Kelli



1910 3 1/2 1911

I was born into an artistic family with brothers who were sculptors and illustrators. However, I was the only one who pursued art professionally, and had great support from my family. As a child I was inspired watching my brothers create art. A friend, Ola Balogun, was the first person I saw paint with a palette knife and he taught me that skill. I have also been inspired by personalities such as Duke Asidere, as well as a statement voiced during a Watercolor workshop: "Na art, it no dey spoil". These encourage me to be bold, and not overly careful in my creative process. Works by fellow artists spur me to keep pushing boundaries. Professor Kent Onah, a significant influence, taught me to analyze before accepting, and to always strive for better.



Mood, Oil On Canvas, 60 X 60cm, 2013

The black and white portrait series came about through my study of light, and exploring denying objects light and color. While working on this project someone I know encountered discrimination and harassment in her workplace which influenced the series. In the portraits, the black represents strength and character, and the red, which is often on the lips, represents life and death; we have the power of life and death in our mouths.

The style of some of the pieces was experimental. I was searching for ways to use acrylic but I also wanted something different from how it is typically used. I began playing around with materials I had around me which gave birth to the mixed media works in the portrait series.



Reflection, Oil On Canvas, 91 X 76, 2013

State Of Mind, Oil On Canvas, 122 X 91cm, 2014







My art technique came about with my poor vision which resulted in blurred sight. On a Harmattan day, due to all the haze in the air, the light beaming from a car created an interesting sight. It was like I could see all the dust particles in the air. Each of them received light, and then deflected it to the next particle. This led me to research light. I learned that it reflects, deflects, and influences the objects around it. This created a new perspective in which I view my objects as decomposed dust particles that are hit by light from different angles. To effectively paint this, I have to achieve texture which led me to painting with a palette knife.



Biography

Chika Idu

DATE OF BIRTH: Sept 28, 1974
 STATE OF ORIGIN: Delta State, Nigeria
 EDUCATION: Ayetoro Primary School 1981-86
 Aguda Grammar School 1987-92
 School of Art & Design Federal Polytechnic Auchi, Edo State
 National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND), 1993-98
 Federal Youth Service, Imo state, Nigeria, 1999-2000

PROFESSIONAL

Defactori Studio	Studio Coordinator	2001-2008
Studio Sables	Director	2008-date
Lycee Francais Louis Pasteur	Art Teacher	2005-date
French School Lagos Nigeria		

SELECTED SHOWS

SHOW THE LIGHT	1996	BISHOP VININE LAGOS
DISCOVERY	2002	MUSON CENTRE, LAGOS
FUSION	2003	NIMBUS GALLERY, LAGOS
NDINNTA	2003	MAISON DE FRANCE, LAGOS, SOLO
OUR EXPERIENCE	2004	NATIONAL MUSEUM, LAGOS
CHILD ABUSE AND WOMEN TRAFFICKING	2004	CCF AND UNICEF, BENIN REP.
STATEMENT	2005	NATIONAL MUSEUM LAGOS
ILLUSION	2005	MAISON DE FRANCE LAGOS
HERE AND THERE	2006	TERRA KULTURE LAGOS, SOLO
UPDATE	2007	LYCEE FRANCAIS, LAGOS, SOLO
NIGAV	2007	MUSA YARADUA CENTER, ABUJA, SOLO
ESSENCE	2008	LYCEE FRANCAIS, LAGOS
NZUKO IME EMUME	2013	AIS, LAGOS
TIMELESS	2014	TERRA KULTURE GALLERY, LAGOS
INTRO	2014	QUINTESSANCE GALLERY, LAGOS, SOLO
UNBOUNDED SPIRITS	2015	TERRA KULTURE GALLERY, LAGOS
THE OTHER WORLD	2015	ALEXIS GALLERIES, LAGOS, SOLO
THE CONTEMPORARIES	2015	WHEATBAKER, LAGOS
JOY	2016	DAR EL MARSA, TUNISIA

WEB LINKS

<https://www.pinterest.com/chisaidu/>
<https://instagram.com/chikaidu/>





Fix Me Up, Acrylic On Canvas, 91 X 120cm, 2014



Curators



Oliver Enwonwu is the director of Omenka Gallery. He is an artist, curator, art administrator, brand strategist, writer and illustrator and holds a first degree in Biochemistry, an Advanced Diploma in Exploration Geophysics (distinction), Post Graduate Diplomas in Applied Geophysics and Visual Art (distinction) and a Masters in Art History, all from the University of Lagos. Enwonwu has exhibited extensively and curated many shows all over the world. He is also president of both the Society of Nigerian Artists and the Alliance of Nigerian Art Galleries. Oliver Enwonwu is the founder, executive director, and trustee of The Ben Enwonwu Foundation and sits on the board of several organizations including the National Gallery of Art, Nigeria, and Reproduction Rights Society of Nigeria.

He is also the founder and Chief Executive/Managing Director of Revilo, leading Lagos-based publishers. He is the publisher and an editorial board member of both the NBBC Monthly, the magazine of the Nigerian-British Chamber of Commerce and Cloud 9, Dana Air's inflight magazine. His expertise is built on 11 years of developing creative and intellectual content for clients that center on interior design, curating, exhibition design, interactive, graphic design, film and photography.

Enwonwu is also founder/editor, Omenka, Africa's first art, business and luxury- lifestyle magazine. He writes regularly on art and investment for several important publications including the Vanguard newspaper, as well as speaks, moderates and participates in public events and discussions.





Sandra Mbanefo Obiabo is a multi-faceted curator, writer, photographer, poet, art collector 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.

Obiabo 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. Obiabo 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.

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, Onyema 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, Rabi 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 and Equal Rights featuring Mike Omoighe in 2016.



Veuve Clicquot
REIMS FRANCE

Founded in 1772 in Reims, France, Veuve Clicquot is among the most prestigious Champagne Houses. Champagne Veuve Clicquot is known internationally for its classically styled and full-bodied Champagne. The entire history of Veuve Clicquot Champagne is marked by mythical wines, all of which respect the demand for quality and excellence that was the force that drove Madame Clicquot who took over the House in 1805 and became one of the first business women in history. For over 230 years, the House has stayed true to its motto: "Only one quality, the finest."

Support for the arts and culture figures is at the very heart of the Parent Company Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton. LVMH's diverse patronage for the arts and culture spans several areas in France and other countries: restoration of historical monuments, acquiring works for major museums, contributing to major national exhibitions and supporting the work of contemporary artists. The support given to more than 45 major exhibitions in France and overseas has enabled millions of visitors to discover important artists from both the history of art and more modern works.



Art Direction: Sandra Mbanefo Obiagio
Curators: Oliver Enwonwu & Sandra Mbanefo Obiagio
Photography, Design & Layout: Adeyinka Akingbade
Program Officer: Nneoma Ilogu

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Chika Idu

