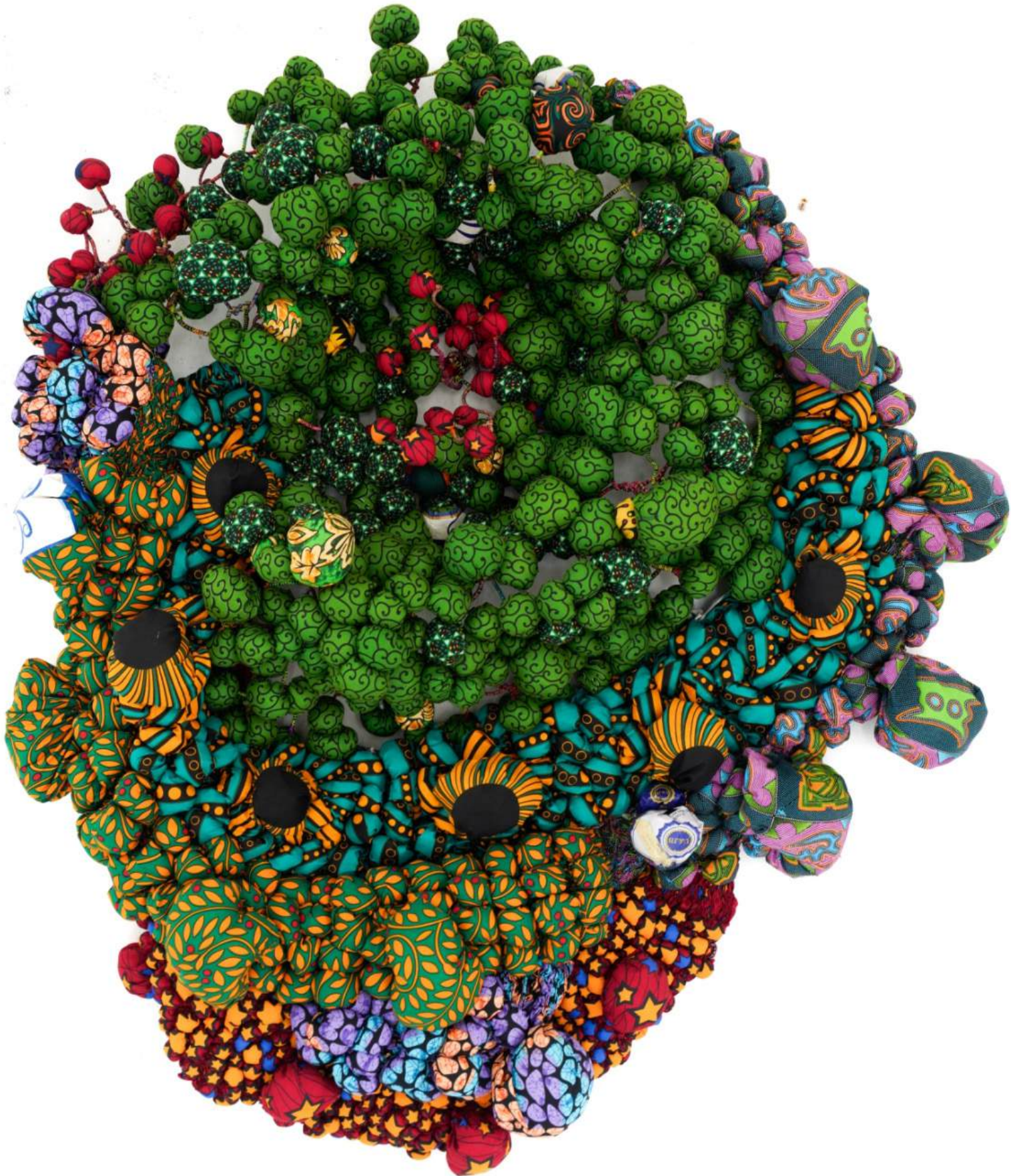


Celebration



Celeb^eation



Cover work: Beginning of Something by Samuel Nnorom

April 2, 2026

Presenting

Adeniyi Adewole

Adewuyi Kehinde Ken

Alex Nwokolo

Ayoola Gbolahan

Badru T. A.

Chika Idu

Christopher Samuel Idowu

Geoffrey Mukasa

Nathalie Djakou Kassi

Nelson Makamo

Raoul Olawale Da Silva

Samuel Nnorom

Somi Nwandu

Uchay Joel Chima

Victor Butler



Celebration

SMO Contemporary Art is delighted to curate the walls of L'Ori Hospitality Ltd., as a wonderful way of fusing gastronomic artistry with visual creativity. Throughout history, fine dining and art have always been perfect companions. SMO has successfully placed art in non-traditional spaces for many years, showcasing the best of creativity from across the African continent and the Diaspora.

By showcasing carefully curated exhibitions in leading hospitality spaces, we have inspired exciting new conversations which reflect the very best that life has to offer. When we “break bread together” we open our hearts and senses to enjoy the warmth and hospitality of delicious food set in beautiful spaces - a sensory delight. With its rooftop setting and views of Lagos, the space naturally lends itself to moments of gathering and celebration.

For the opening of L'Ori, we present CELEBRATION, an exhibition showcasing works by fifteen African artists from Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, Cameroon, South Africa, the United States, France & Switzerland. The works explore creativity across diverse mediums including textile, wood, metal, lenticular and mixed media, and sculptural forms in bronze, ceramic, wood, and fiberglass, created by both master artists and emerging talent, we have also included some rare works from a private collection in Lagos, to deepen the presentation.

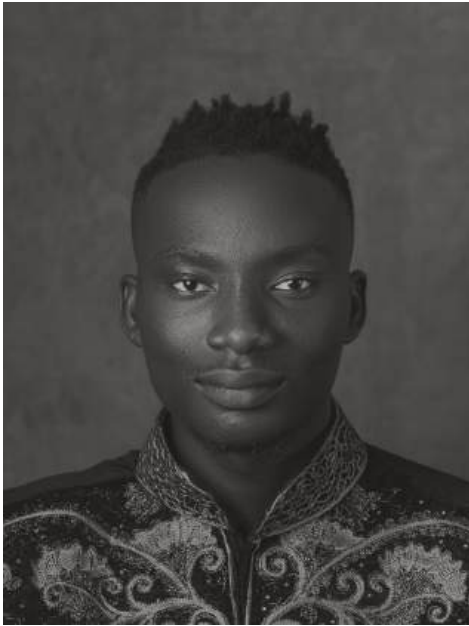
The showcase considers how art can exist within everyday acts of connection and presence while representing celebration in many forms. We hope you enjoy this rich selection of artworks, and invite you to join our bespoke calendar of events hosted by L'Ori and curated by SMO. Join us as we embark on an exciting journey celebrating the best of African creativity and the art of fine dining!



Celebration isn't singular. It emerges across atmospheres and ways of being. SMO Contemporary Art's presentation for L' Ori explores celebration as a personal and collective ritual, within the context of contemporary life in Lagos. We are called to inquire the relationship between gathering and sensory experiences within a shared social space. Here, celebration unfolds in multiple ways - through the rituals that bring us together, and how we exist alongside the works, expressed through form, colour, line, texture and medium. We engage with celebration both individually and collectively: in moments of communion, through expression, through the senses, and through custom and reflection.

This collection of artworks serve as an anchor and participant within the rhythm of dining, showing how art can heighten our experience of aesthetics and culinary pleasure. With a focus on atmosphere and visual flow, guests are called to encounter the works intuitively, allowing meaning to unfold through diverse creative expressions.

Adeniyi Adewole



born in 1994, is a contemporary figurative sculptor.

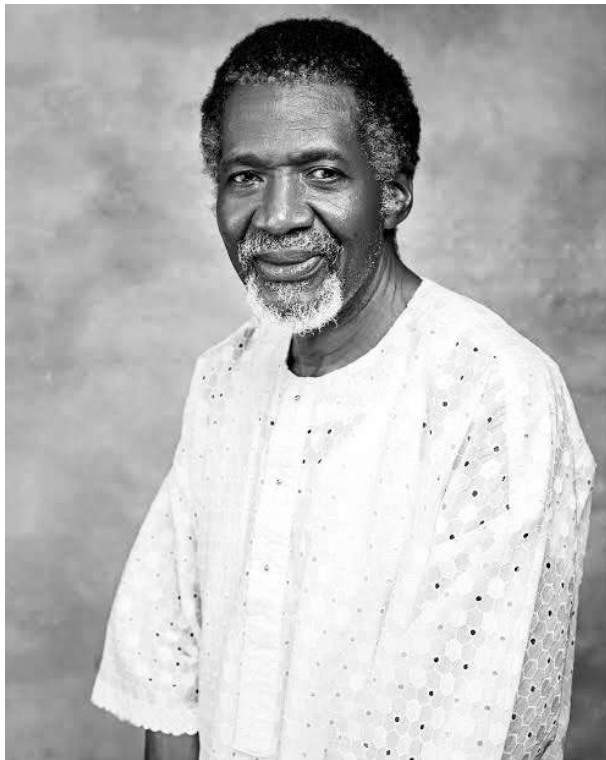
He holds both a diploma in General Arts and Sculpture from the Yaba College of Technology. He currently lives in Lagos State, and works as a studio artist.

Adewole enjoys modeling with clay and fiberglass casting, and also accentuates his subjects with a lavish use of colour. His oeuvre explores concepts such as human and animal characterization, life's complexities and contradictions, and his own personal experiences.

Heavy as a Balloon, 2025
195.5 x 91.4 x 81.2cm
Fibreglass



Adewuyi Kehinde Ken



born in 1959, graduated from Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Nigeria with a Bachelor of Arts (HONS) in sculpture (1985) and a Masters of Fine Arts (1996). He also trained at the Musee d'Art Ancien et Contemporan, in Epinal France (1997).

Adewuyi explores elongating and exaggerating figurative sculpture in bronze, using the lost wax techniques dating back to the ninth century in Eastern Nigeria. He is a master observer, and his forms speak of the rise and fall of life's twists and turns. He expresses humanity through rough and smooth surfaces, careful hues and meticulously chosen patina, and simple poses.

As an award-winning draughtsman, he understands anatomy on a deeper level. His works celebrate his subject's feet, referencing both vulnerability and the strength needed on our life journey.



It Takes Time, 2004
25 x 24 x 42cm
Bronze



It Has Happened, 2022
72 x 14 x 19cm
Bronze

Alexander Nwokolo



born in 1963, spent most of his early childhood building bird cages and setting traps made of okpa bamboo. This period would later have an impact on his artistic career, developing into his mastery of mixed media forms of expression.

He enrolled at the Federal Polytechnic, Auchi in 1986 and produced works full of bold colours and imagery. He left Auchi in 1991 to become a full time studio artist. His works are usually characterized by themes such as Lagos rooftops, cathedrals, forests and Lagos party women. His style perfectly captures the exuberant energy of life in Lagos.

Nwokolo's works are experimental and he often uses the technique of creative colouring and the effect of light and dark on colours. His canvases and corrugated galvanised steel sheets are laced with textural qualities, often incorporating found and recycled materials. Nwokolo's oeuvre explores the urban Nigerian space, aesthetics and politics.

Urban, 2002
112 x 122cm
Mixed media on wood
From a private collection in Lagos



Ayoola Gbolahan



born in 1977, is a Nigerian multidisciplinary artist whose work explores human behaviour, cultural identity, and collective memory through sculpture, installation, and mixed media. He graduated with a Bachelor's in Fine/Applied Arts from Obafemi Awolowo University in Ife, Nigeria in 2002.

Ayoola's practice engages archaeology and history as structured systems of knowledge, mechanisms through which societies document, organise and legitimise experience over time.

He uses materials such as acrylics, pastels, lead, bronze, charcoal, earth, wood, canvas, linen and paper to create paintings and sculptures that connect us to our history and tradition.

Through his practice, the artist continues to question cultural identity and placement.



Cartography of Recall, 2025
182.9 x 153.4cm
Acrylic, Pastel and Bonded Earth on Canvas



Chronology (Fragmented), 2026
243.8 x 426.7cm
Acrylic, Pastel and Bonded Earth on Canvas

Badru T. A.



Badru Temitayo Abiodun, is an artist focused on the exploration of culture and spirituality especially in the Yoruba context.

He is particularly influenced by the traditional dyeing techniques of Abeokuta where he earned a degree in sculpture and textiles at the Federal college of education. He went on to obtain a B. A and M.F.A in fine and applied arts with a major in textile design at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile- Ife, Osun state.

His work highlights the epistemology of the traditional Adire Eleko patterns and ranges from abstract images to hand embroidery to sculptural installations. Barry's work is deeply cultural and revolves around the folklores, myths and proverbs of his heritage.

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Toast III (Series), 2020
56 x 61cm
Acrylic on Canvas
From a private collection in Lagos

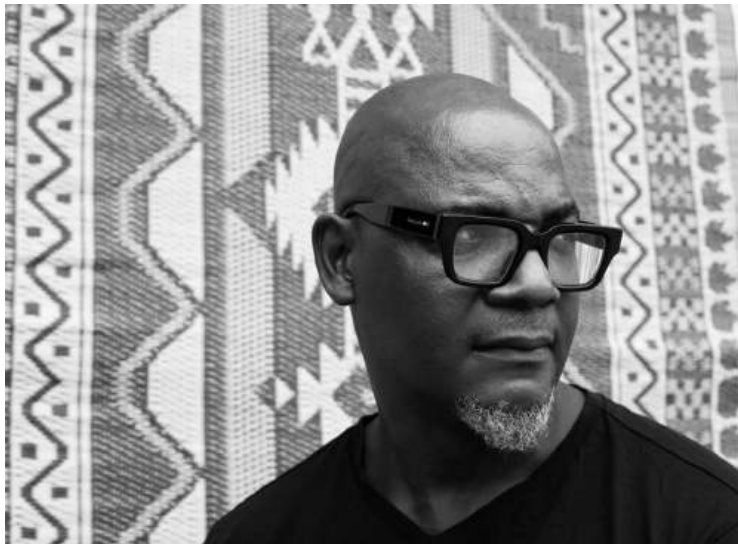


Odogwu (Chop My Money Series), 2020
61 x 61cm
Acrylic on Canvas
From a private collection in Lagos



The Toast (IV Series), 2020
56 x 61cm
Acrylic on Canvas
From a private collection in Lagos

Chika Idu



born in 1974, is a multi-media artist from Delta state. He majored in Painting at Auchi Federal Polytechnic, Edo(1998). He was instrumental in the creation of the Defactori Studios and Nigeria's first Water Colour Society of Artists (SABLES).

His works are a reflection of his fascination with how light particles are reflected in water, mist, fog, and dust - which he calls "light against visual distortion." His works explore the influence of cultural and societal issues and how they impact women and children. Idu is committed to environmental sustainability and through his art, raises awareness on the risks and pressures faced by children living within fragile coastal communities.



How I Speak to Me, 2025
90 x 72cm
Acrylic on Canvas



How I Speak to Me 2, 2025
90 x 72cm
Acrylic on Canvas

Christopher Samuel Idowu



born in 1995, is a visual artist from Badagry, Lagos. He studied at the Yaba College of Technology (2021) where he majored in painting and currently works as full-time studio artist.

Through photography and diverse mediums such as context crayon, charcoal, watercolor, acrylics, oils and printmaking techniques, Idowu collects images and materials from his surroundings to document fleeting earthly and lasting ethereal moments.

His use of earthy tones and the patina of deteriorating photographs serves as a poignant reminder of the transience of time, encapsulating the statement that “from dust to dust we return.” He challenges a deeper reflection on the importance of marginalised communities in rural areas. His community engaged projects nurture hope and invite reflection.



More than conquerors II (man and his inheritance), 2023
37.9. x 27.7cm
Conte crayon, acrylic, spray paint, and silkscreen printing on paper



More than conquerors III (man and his inheritance), 2023
38 x 27.4cm
Conte crayon, acrylic, spray paint, and silkscreen printing on paper

Geoffrey Mukasa



born in 1954 in Kampala, was the son of a prominent doctor and the grandson of Apollo Kaggwa, a former prime minister of Buganda and is one of Uganda's most prominent artists.

He studied Fine Art in Lucknow, India and graduated with a degree in Fine Arts in 1984. On returning from India, he was employed in Ugandan Television as a graphic designer which did not accommodate the young artist creative outlets.

Mukasa experimented with local materials such as old newspapers and gave them "new life". His paintings are often figurative and brightly colored. He passed away in 2009.

Untitled, 1997
56 x 76cm
Mixed media on paper
From a private collection in Lagos

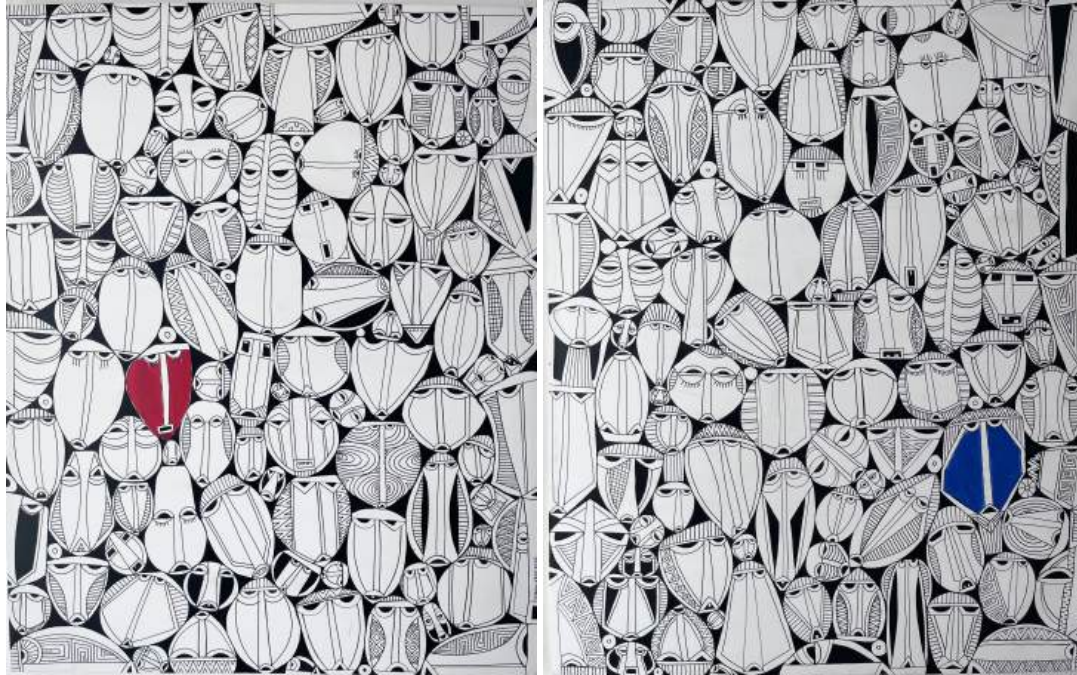


Nathalie Djakou Kassi



born in 1975, studied ceramics at the 'Institut Samba Supérieur' on a full scholarship. She later joined the Centre d'Art Appliqué of Mbalmayo in Cameroon as a ceramist and as chief manager of the ceramic studio where she introduced the "material technology" course.

In 2011 she served as vice president of the Craft Association of her local government for 3 years. She relocated to Nigeria in 2015 and has since become a member of the Society of Nigerian Artists and a member of the Sculptors Association of Nigeria. Her works are inspired by nature and people's volatile interaction with the environment. She explores these themes through clay, bonded stone, wood, bronze and works on canvas.



Standing by you, 2026
121.9 x 152.4cm each
Ink and Acrylic on Canvas



Taking a break, 2026
83 x 75 x 15cm
Glaze Clay



Tribals, 2026
67 x 95 x 59cm
Smoke Terracotta



Hospitality, 2025
190 x 75 x 35cm
Mahogany Sapele

Nelson Makamo



born in 1982, is a South African contemporary artist known for his captivating and expressive portraits that explore the depth of human emotion from the perspective of the African child. Born in the vibrant township of Modimolle, Makamo's artistic journey began at a young age when he discovered his passion for storytelling through art.

Makamo's work is characterized by its attention to detail, vibrant use of color, and a unique ability to capture the essence of his subjects. His subjects are often children and young individuals, reflecting the hope and innocence he finds in the youth of South Africa. His portraits are not just beautiful representations; they are windows into the souls of his subjects, portraying a wide range of emotions, from joy and curiosity to contemplation and introspection.

Nelson Makamo's art has been exhibited and celebrated internationally, earning him critical acclaim and a dedicated following of art enthusiasts. His work transcends cultural and geographical boundaries, touching the hearts of people all around the world. His art can be seen as a celebration of life, a reflection of the human spirit, and a testament to the enduring power of art to move and unite us all.

Untitled
100 x 70cm
Oil on Canvas



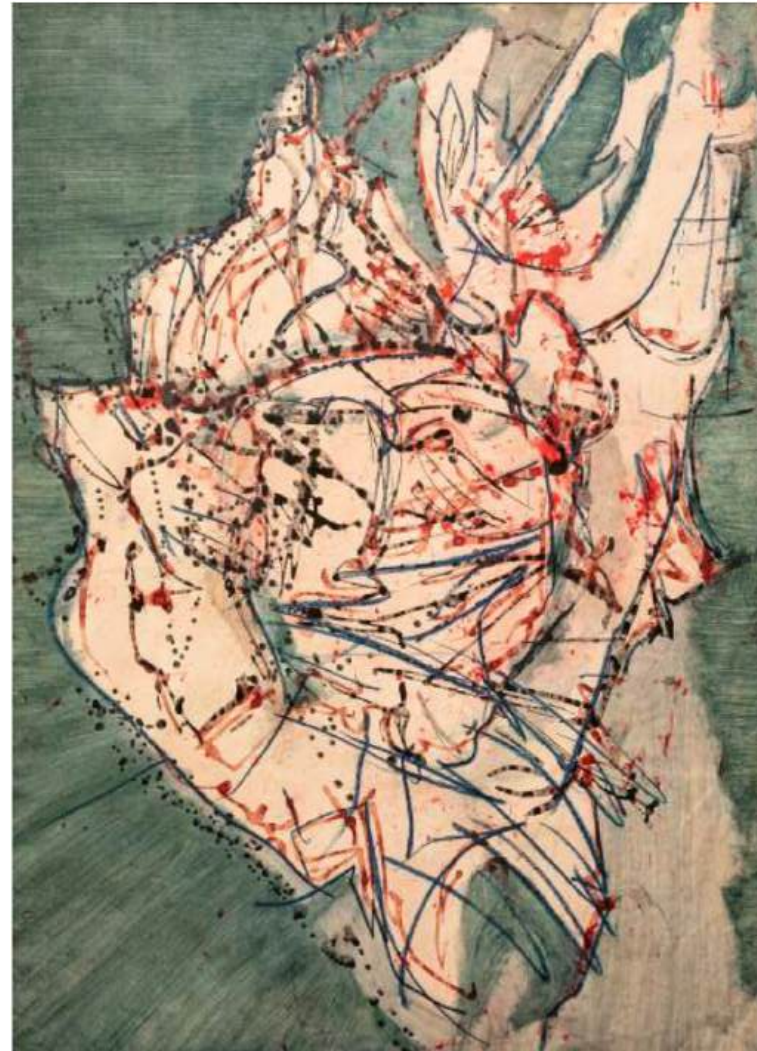
Raoul Olawale Da Silva



born in 1969, is an artist of Nigerian and Swiss origin. He grew up in Lagos and began his artistic journey at the Nigerian National Museum in Onikan where he attended summer art classes as a child. After his childhood schooling in Lagos he engaged in four years of an in-depth apprenticeship in cabinet making before completing an arts degree at the School of Applied Arts in Lucerne, Switzerland.

His is a multifaceted creativity finding expression through different media: painting, photography, craftsmanship, music. Raoul's works invite the viewer into his world and a certain kind of communication takes place between the viewer and his work. His works are mostly abstract and untitled and therefore people can bring their ideas and experiences into the work.

Untitled
88.5 x 125cm
Acrylic on paper
From a private collection in Lagos





Samuel Nnorom

born in 1990, is a multi-award-winning artist whose work crosses tapestry-like sculpture and pre-loved Ankara wax fabric.

Elements from his childhood have shaped and developed his contemporary practice, from sketching portraits of customers who visited his father's shoe shop to playing with colourful scraps from his mother's tailoring workshop.

Through actions like sewing, rolling, tying, stringing, and suspending, he poetically navigates the boundaries between textile, painting, and sculpture. He holds an MFA in sculpture from the prestigious University of Nigeria and belongs to the New Nsukka School of Art.

In Nnorom's award winning public installations, he uses fishing and mosquito nets on a monumental scale that engages his audience seeking to interrogate social, emotional, political, and economic challenges faced by migrants and displaced persons around the world.

Using Ankara textiles, whose origins are complex in the history of the continent, Nnorom explores its protean symbolism and reappropriates a contemporary fabric common in his community.



Supper and Wining, 2025
358 x 260 x 20cm
African Wax Print Fabric



Beginning of Something, 2025
113 x 135 x 26cm
African Print Fabric



Somi Nwandu

born in 1993, developed an interest in photography and exploring digital software alongside expressing her creativity through writing, painting, drawings and fashion sketches. Her work bridges art, technology, and identity

She moved to New York at the age of 17 to study Fashion Design, Business Management, and Trade and Marketing at the Fashion Institute of Technology and graduated in 2016.

She also obtained two degrees in Fashion Business Management, and International Trade & Marketing for the Fashion Industries from the renowned Fashion Institute of Technology.

She completed an MA in Global Creative and Cultural Industries from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) University of London while actively pursuing her art in photography, fashion and the digital world.

Nwandu's work explores Uli, a celebrated traditional Igbo artform, referencing acts of inheritance and invention. They draw from ancestral marks, gestures remembered, silences carried, and symbols created in the absence of what was lost.



The Soft Architecture of Nsogbu, 2025
61 x 86.5cm
Digital Mixed Media on Lenticular Lens



The Tender Gaze of Ife Nkili, 2025
61 x 86.5cm
Digital Mixed Media on Lenticular Lens



The Silent Bravery of Nchèta, 2025
81.5 x 117cm
Digital Mixed Media on Lenticular Lens



The Still Pulse of Ife N'etiti, 2025
61 x 86.5cm
81.5 x 117cm
Digital Mixed Media on Lenticular Lens

Uchay Joel Chima



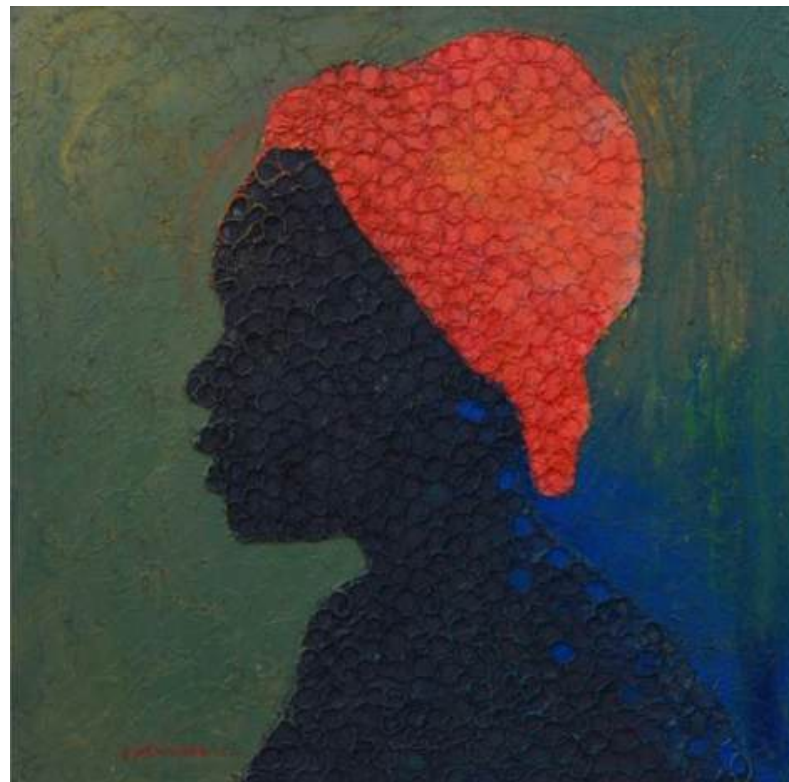
born in 1971 and graduated in 1997 from the Art School of the Institute of Management and Technology in Enugu, Nigeria.

Uchay is a multidisciplinary artist working with strings, sand, wax, charcoal, old sacks, paint and many other mediums. He creates stylistic thought provoking works that often question social and environmental issues. He works with memory, imagination, societal happenings and emotion and unconventional explorations that address the realities of lived experience.

Chima founded and runs the Museum of Contemporary Art (MoCA) in Lagos, and is a leading voice in the use of upcycled materials to explore critical issues around migration, sustainability and history.



He Who Holds The Horizon, 2025
106.6 x 106.6cm
Acrylic on Textured Canvas



She Who Wears The Sun, 2025
106.6 x 106.6cm
Acrylic on Textured Canvas

Influential Figures I, 2025
426.7 x 243.8cm
Aluminium pieces from Can Drink
Containers and Chunks of Charcoal



Unseen Figures, 2025
365.7 x 243.8cm
Charcoal, Copperwire, Aluminium Pieces from
Can Contrainers, Acrylic and Wood Fiber



Victor Butler



born in 1964. He is a self-taught artist from Ghana, with over 25 years of studio practice. He studied medicine and has worked at the cutting edge of auto mechanics, information technology, and furniture design.

Victor Butler works mostly in a surrealist, abstract or figurative style. His work is exemplified by themes of memories, and quiet contemplation which provides insight into the delicate tapestry of lived experiences.

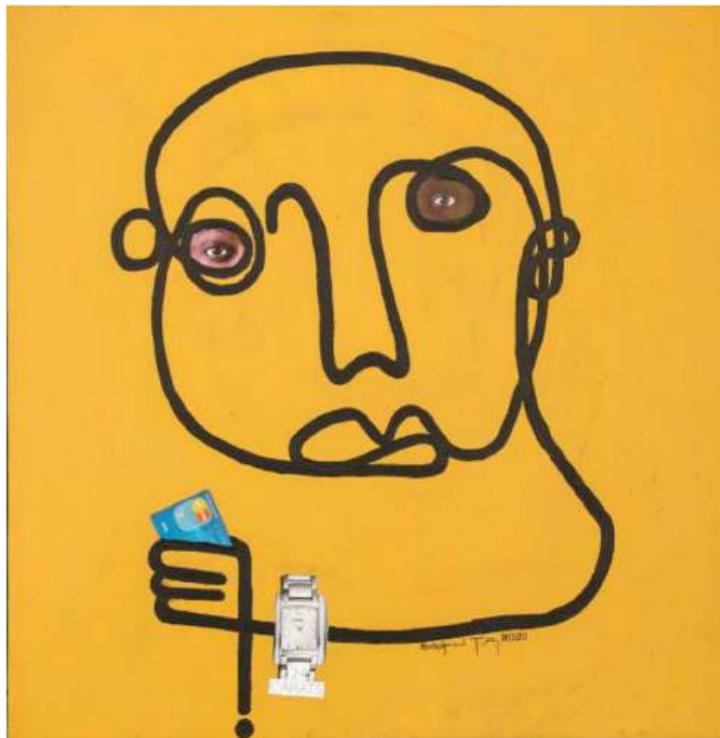
His approach to life is deeply philosophical and this is evident in his techniques, style and subject matter.

Last Minute, 2025
167 x 137cm
Mixed media



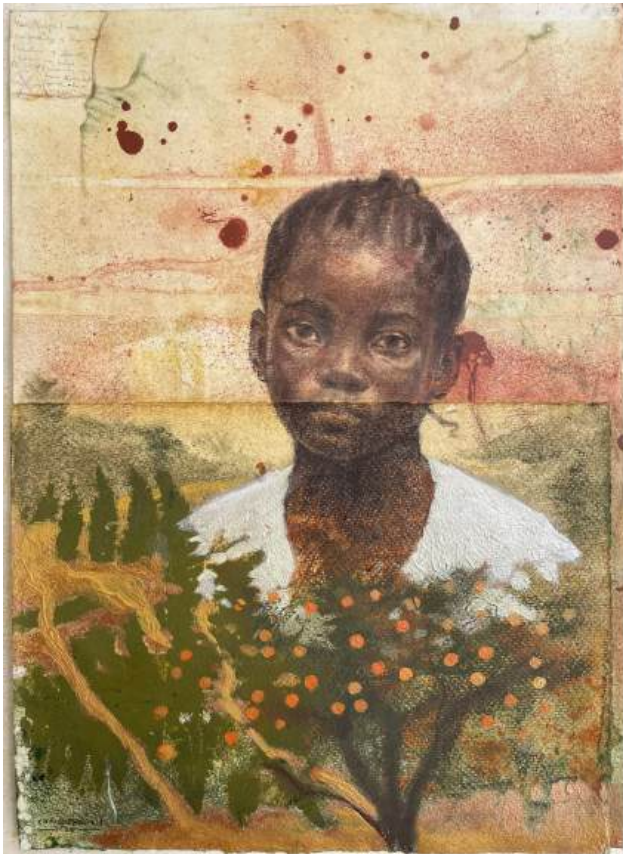
SMO

CONTEMPORARY ART



SMO Contemporary Art (SMO) is an international art platform, showcasing a unique portfolio of modern and contemporary art from Africa and the Diaspora to a global audience. Based in Lagos, Nigeria, SMO curates exhibitions, as well as public and private art events of leading and emerging talents for a diverse audience. SMO is dedicated to artists of all generations who have been instrumental in shaping West Africa's contemporary art canon and who became crucial in establishing a unique narrative of the continent. The SMO program sheds light on forgotten talents who have paved the way for new identities in contemporary art while encouraging a vibrant and continuous discourse around their oeuvres. Specialized in art advisory services SMO Contemporary curates and manages important private and corporate art collections with a great commitment to documentation, preservation and communication.

www.smocontemporaryart.com



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