

F R E E D O M





*My point of View*, conte on paper, 56 x 77 cm, 2014



GREEN SA O FFD  
2014



GREEN OTO  
2015



AN ART EXHIBITION TO CELEBRATE THE  
5TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WHEATBAKER



# F R E E D O M

BY

GBENGA OFFO

CURATED BY SANDRA MBANEFO OBIAGO



OCTOBER 15TH, 2016 - JANUARY 15 , 2017

LAGOS, NIGERIA







## ART & HOSPITALITY

The Wheatbaker opened its doors five years ago and welcomed Lagos to a unique expression of art in collaboration with hospitality.

In the intimacy of our space, we have donated our walls and hosted a wide range of artists from the young up and coming to the seasoned masters allowing access to works which may have possibly been unseen by the general public.

The Wheatbaker is proud to host this latest in the series of important exhibitions reflecting the very best of Nigerian art. This is especially true as we celebrate our 5th Anniversary and reaffirm our commitment to values of quality, service and attention to detail.

The new works by Gbenga Offo perfectly reflect the best of Nigeria and I invite you to experience the inspiration that his Art, and the hotel, strive to deliver.

With best wishes

Mosun Ogunbanjo  
Director  
The Wheatbaker



GENG A OFFO  
2014

# FREEDOM THROUGH ART

Freedom is a wonderfully liberating word to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Wheatbaker. Freedom is power; it speaks of taking flight; of letting go; of moving out of a safe zone and setting forth with confidence to embrace new adventure. Freedom also tells me that something came before. Paying one's dues; learning the rules before breaking them, learning the discipline of excellence, before innovating and exploring and embracing new horizons.

Gbenga Offo's *Freedom* series comes at a perfect moment in the history of the Wheatbaker art program, when we look back on five years of amazing artistic conversations, experiences and showcases. We have had 16 carefully curated exhibitions since we started an exciting journey of art in 2011, and given each artists between 8 to 12 weeks each to exhibit their works. It was a bold experiment to see if we could become an *art destination* and use our hospitality platform to nurture and showcase the best of creativity; And together with Gbenga Offo's amazing creations, we have kind of reached "cruising altitude" and are now truly stepping into our freedom phase.

Through our art & hospitality focus, we have inspired other hotels in Lagos to embrace art as a viable means of bringing local and international visitors closer to the best of Nigerian art and culture. Since 2011, the Wheatbaker has supported art, film, dance, poetry, fashion, music and yearly art auctions and so much more in an effort to build strong bridges between the creative industry and the local and international corporate and public sector. To celebrate the amazing partnership we have enjoyed with the visual arts, we are delighted to host Gbenga Offo's *Freedom* series for our 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.

Gbenga Offo is an acclaimed creative force who is probably one of the best collected contemporary artists of his generation. Educated at the Yaba College of Technology, Offo grew up in Lagos and imbues the multi-cultural spirit that Eko is rooted in – the meeting point of east and west, north and south.

Offo's works reflect the strength of our national character, its vitality, energetic resilience, its bold colors and its complex nature. Originally inspired by the iconic representation of human forms in Yoruba wooden sculptures, complete with bulging eyes, Offo's art is soaked in the cubist tradition, from which he now soars to new heights of abstraction!

This exhibition of 39 paintings and sculptures touches on the various aspects of Offo's artistic personality. His charcoal and pencil sketches on paper show his finely honed skilled in creating powerful pieces in the realism style showing perfectly nuanced personality, movement and character. Offo's sketches are juxta-posed with his signature large colorful paintings that display his much admired cubist style, which in turn are perfectly complemented by his abstract expressionist splash painting style with his deft and masterful use of color.

And at close to 60 years of age, Offo's most exciting artistic leap into experimentation are the seminal metal works in which he explores wrought iron and stainless steel alongside bronze in teasing out new expressions in color and medium.

"We don't have enough time to experiment," Offo explains. "People often say Gbenga Offo is a cubist or an abstract expressionist but I have always wanted to be free. I am a liberal and listen deeply and sometimes even consider things too deeply. But now I have come to accept my art and embrace it in totality."

The Freedom series traces Offo's artistic journey, from his early ambitions to study music, which were never realized, to his fascination with musical symbolism that runs through many of his works. In the artist's own words he explains, "music liberates and calms me. I started listening to jazz at the early age of 14-15 years, and I made up my mind that this was my type of music; you hear it, you feel it, and you simply love it. I can't play music so I draw it."

Offo also uses his art as a quiet form of protest. Through works such as *People Power* in which he reflects on the power of people to speak with one voice, demand change and overcome. His most powerful political work is *Still Missing*, a mixed media work that is a large canvas half dipped in red which is seeping into white space symbolizing peace in society. *Still Missing* shows how terrorism encroaches on society's mental and physical tranquility. His haunting use of burnt books, remnants of rubber slippers lost in flight and a red soaked school uniform are a deeply painful reminder of the missing Chibok school girls and the blood-soaked devastation caused by Boko Haram in northern Nigeria.

The artist's recurring theme of flight and migration is also expressed through numerous works that depict refugees in flight, Offo's response to the effects of war on innocent populations across the globe, from Syria to Central Africa, from northern Nigeria to southern Africa.

And so, I pray that Freedom gives us the energy to soar and experiment and the strength to face the inequities all around us and continue our fight for social justice and liberty.

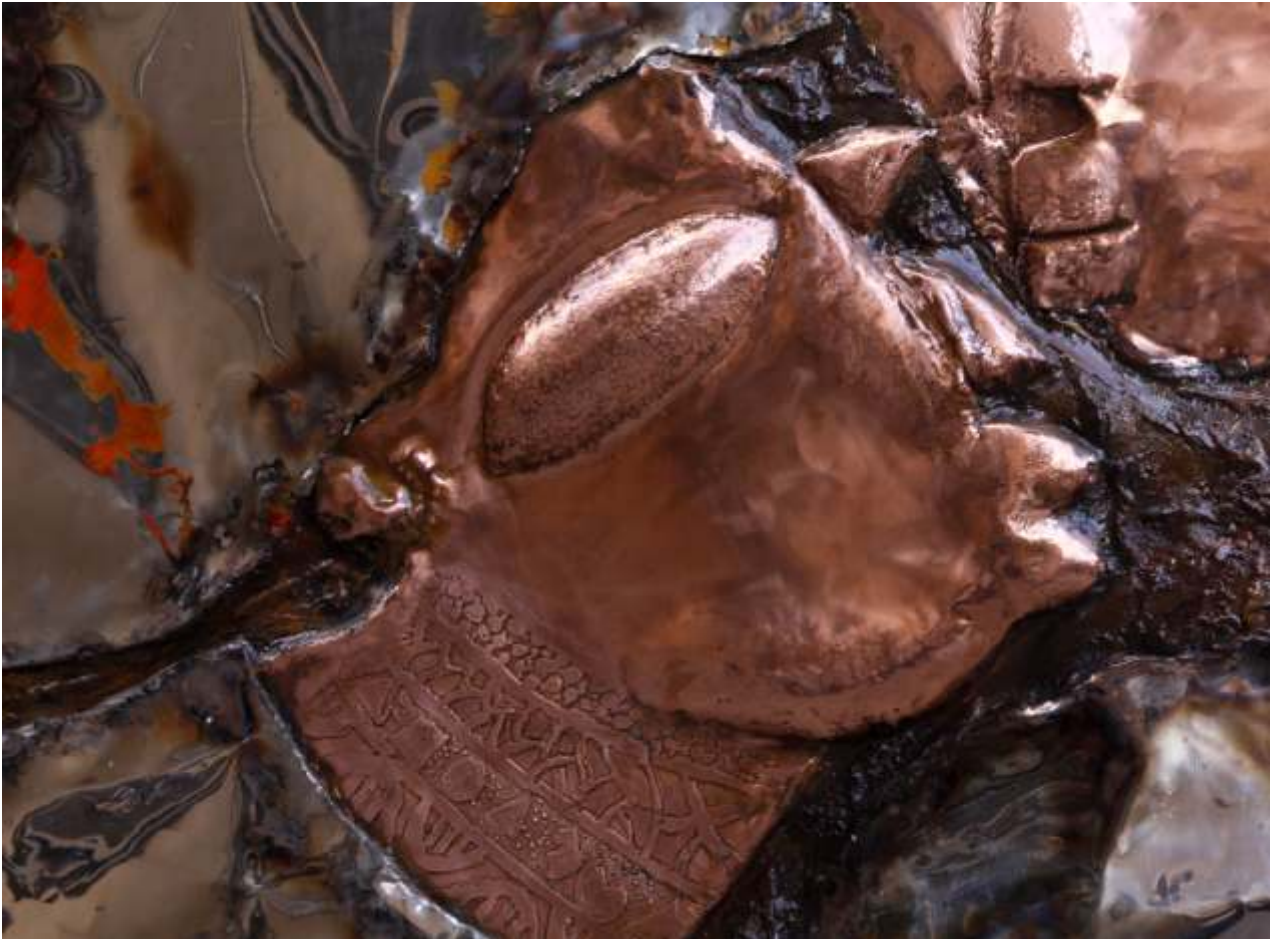
We look forward to the next 5 years of growth and learning, and will continue to give local and international artists an important platform of showcasing the best of Nigerian, African and global creativity.

To the many artists who have exhibited with us, we say a big thank you. To our sponsors who have supported our art exhibitions, especially long standing partner Veuve Clicquot, we express our deep appreciation. And to our guests who continue to give us excellent feedback on our art exhibitions we say a big Thank You.

We hope you enjoy Gbenga Offo's *Freedom* as much as I enjoyed curating it.

Thank you

Sandra Mbanefo Obiogo  
Curator



Detail of *Sweet Conversation*, wrought iron and stainless steel, 120.5 X 148.5 cm, 2016

GBENGA  
OFFO



**Gbenga Offo** (born 1957) is one of Nigeria's leading contemporary artists. He graduated as the best Art and Graphics Student from the Yaba College of Technology in Lagos in 1984. He worked for a decade as an illustrator for leading advertising agencies Lintas and Insight Communications, before becoming a full time studio artist in 1996. Offo has taken part in numerous solo and group exhibitions in the United Kingdom, United States, and in his native Nigeria, and his works are in many leading corporate and public collections.

The Freedom Series is a rare exhibition of 39 paintings and sculptures by Gbenga Offo. The highlight of Freedom is the presentation of his first collection of metal sculptures in bronze, wrought iron and stainless steel. These phenomenal works are complemented by iconic paintings in his signature cubist style, as well as "splash paintings" in which the artist shows a creative release into abstract expressionism. Freedom also includes finely rendered pencil sketches - showcasing an artist whose diverse oeuvre shows a mastery of color and form as well as exciting new experimentation.

Freedom allows a person to be true to himself. It allows the Artist to be true to his Art. It is Freedom that drives the urge to experiment. This has led me to the creation of a body of work using the *Splash Paint* technique.

The fluidity of the splashed paint and lines create an illusion that appears uncontrolled. The seemingly uncontrolled lines and colours create a piece that allows the viewer the rare opportunity to be 'co-creator' of the Artwork.

Gbenga Offo



*The Letter*, acrylic on canvas, 143 x 112 cm, 2016





# SCULPTURES

"I have always been free. I am a liberal but I listen. I consider things. Sometimes I am too reflective. But I have now come to a point that I tell myself I am good enough to express myself anyway I feel. I have come to accept my art and embrace it in totality."



*Flip*, bronze, 93 cm, 2016



*Hope II*, bronze, 91.44cm, 2016



*Hope I*, bronze, 91.44cm, 2016





*Mutual Respect*, Bronze, 76.2 cm, 2016





*Sweet Conversation*, wrought iron and stainless steel, 120.5 x 148 cm, 2016



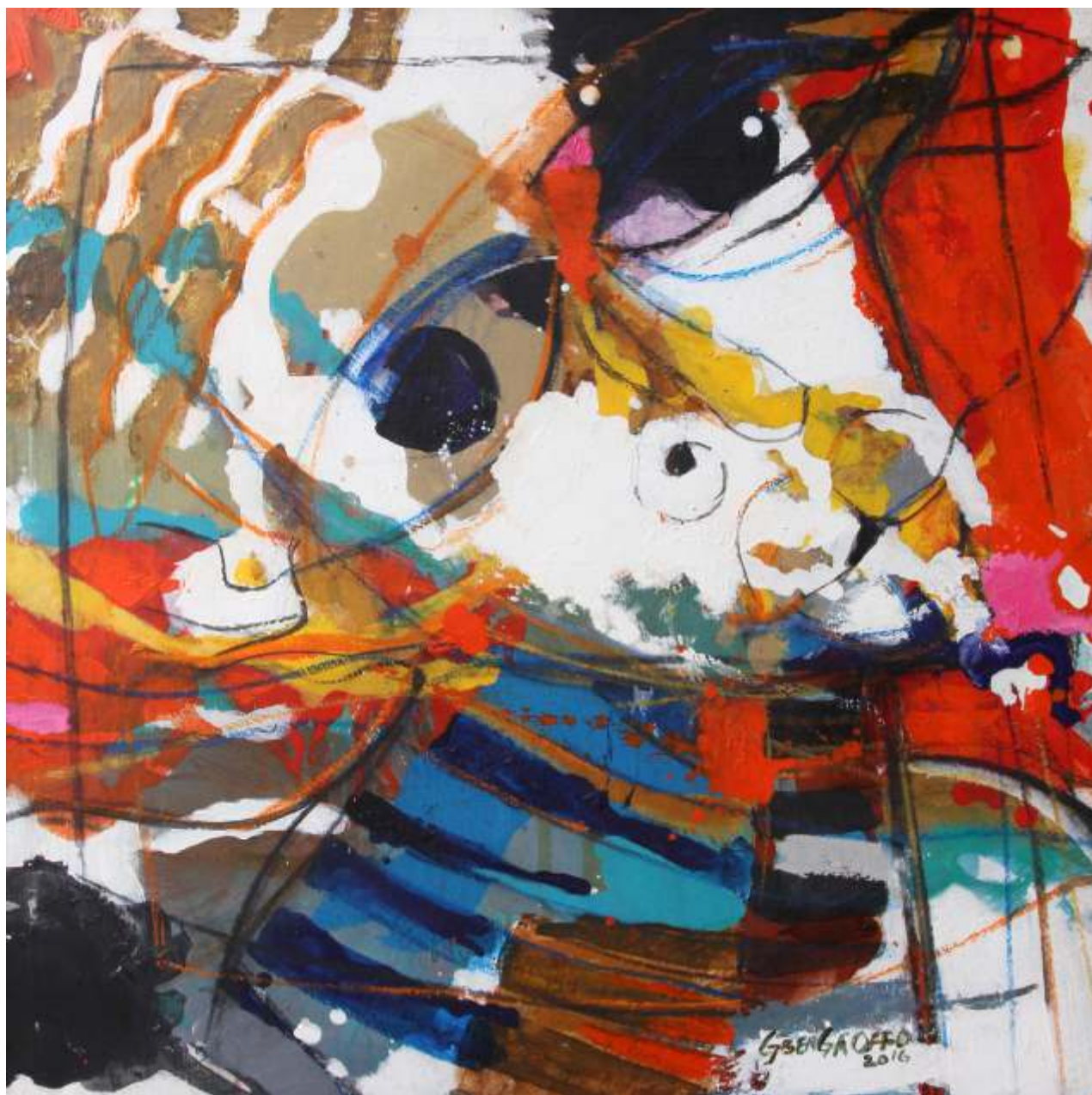


*Happy People*, wrought Iron and stainless steel, 121.5 X 90 cm, 2016



SPLASH

"I feel so free doing *Splash Paintings* which is Abstract Expressionism. I start with the splashes of paint and then I sketch around the splashes – colors speak to me and often change the topic."



*Face Study*, acrylic on canvas, 76 x 76 cm, 2016

*"People Power* is about protest. It's an interpretation of 'We shall overcome'. I believe you have the power to change things. We can't afford to be docile. Your collective power to vote and protest and to disagree is very important. You can change things if you come together and speak with one voice."



*People Power*, acrylic on canvas, 153 x 156 cm, 2016



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*Still Missing* shows the division and encroachment of chaos on the peaceful nature of society. The red may represent blood, but what I actually intended was to show encroachment. I stuck books on the work, things that boko haram don't approve of. The slippers represent the things that are left behind when you run for your lives...and we still have not found the Chibok girls...



*Still Missing*, mixed media on canvas, 153 x 156 cm, 2016





*Face*, acrylic on canvas, 76 x 76 cm, 2016





*How much?* acrylic on canvas, 109 x 153 cm, 2016





*Two Lovers*, acrylic on canvas, 123 x 143 cm, 2016





*Sunday Best I*, acrylic on canvas, 76 x 76 cm, 2016

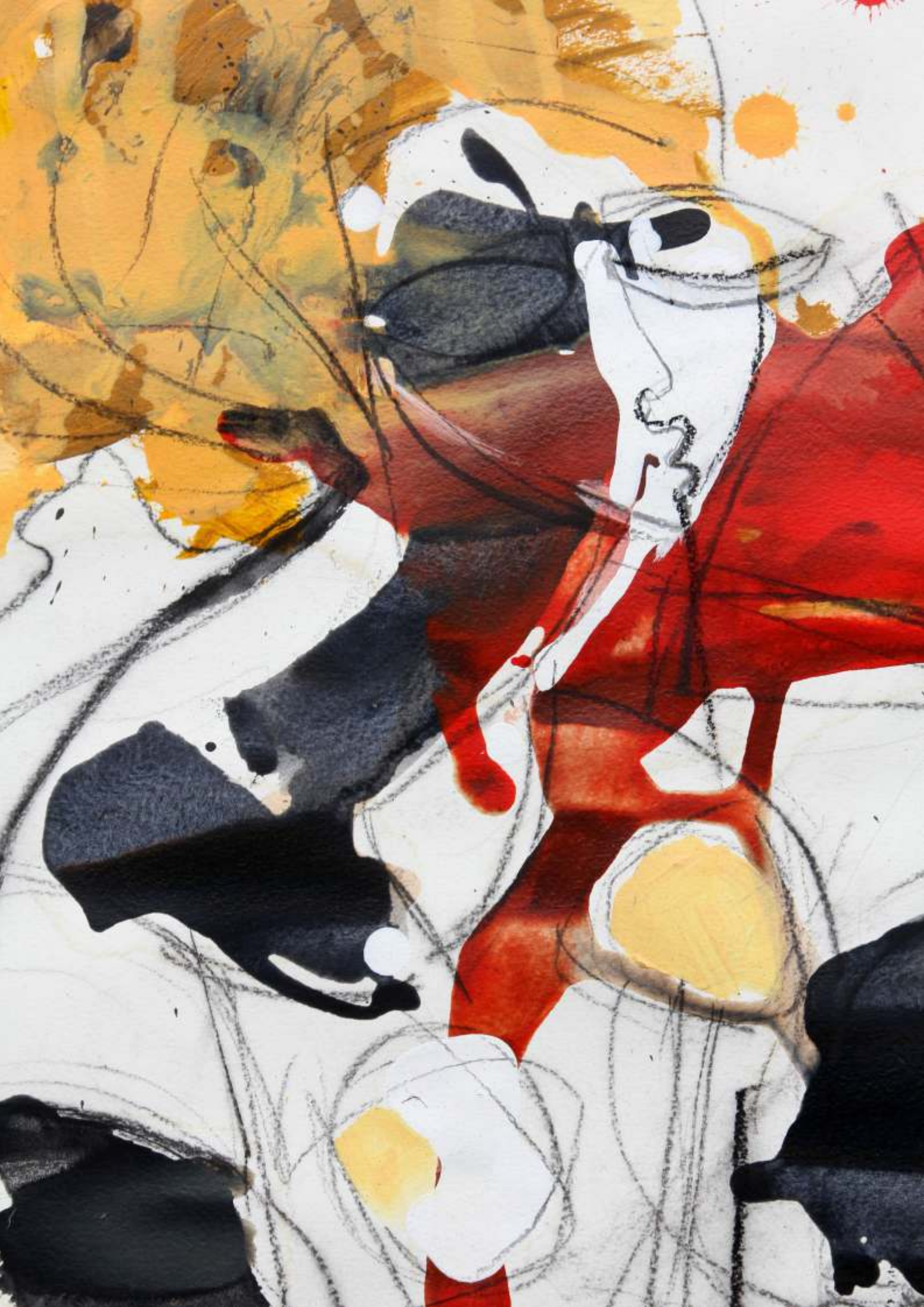




*Kiss*, acrylic on canvas, 152 x 142 cm, 2016



*Lady with fan*, mixed media on paper, 40 x 51cm, 2016





*Inspiration*, mixed media on paper, 40 x 51 cm, 2014





The left side of the page features several pencil sketches. At the top left, there is a small, dark, textured area that could represent a building or a dense thicket of trees. Below this, there are several thin, vertical lines that appear to be part of a larger sketch. The most prominent sketch is a large, dark, textured area in the lower left, which looks like a dense thicket of trees or a large rock formation. To the right of this, there are several thin, curved lines that suggest a path or a river. The word "SKETCHES" is written in a simple, sans-serif font in the center-right of the page.

SKETCHES

## IN CONVERSATION: GBENGA OFFO AND MONI OLOKE

**Moni Oloke:** What led you into the world of art?

**Gbenga Offo:** It's always been there. It's not as if someone told me this is what I was going to do. Very early in life I already knew I was going to be an artist. It was originally supposed to be music but everything revolves around art including music. So when music didn't really work out, I opted for visual art; but visual art has always been there. I always said to myself that whatever I end up doing, I have to be extremely thorough. I didn't know how lucrative it was going to be but I felt very comfortable in the art room. It was one of the things I did with ease, it was one of the things I didn't really need to study for; it just came very naturally. I always knew I would be some form of artist. I never thought of going into something like engineering for example. So what led me to it? I think it's just in me.

**MO:** Tell me about your formative years and how that shaped, if at all, your art

**GO:** Growing up as a kid in Yaba, I was always attracted to the stains that are made on the ceiling. You know the brownish water stains that come from rain leaking in the ceiling? I think that was my first experience with art. I was about 4 or 5 years old and that was my first appreciation for anything visual. When I got into secondary school, my interest got stronger and that's when I made up my mind to become an artist. Nothing really spectacular happened to me in my formative years.

**MO:** Who/what are your influences?

**GO:** Anything influences me. For instance, when I'm walking on the street, I see things that speak to me. I don't have very good eyesight, and sometimes I deliberately walk around without my glasses because I see images that are not represented as they really are. Looking at things with my bad eyesight, I record what I see as a work of art. People who have influenced me are Bruce Onobrakpeya, Picasso, Rembrandt, Van Gogh, Grillo, and El Anatsui; these are people whose works really touch you. They enter into your subconscious and influence you without you knowing. Looking at influence from another angle, when you look at their works, it fires you up to run to the studio to create.

When I was in school at Yaba Tech, I was trying to do my live drawings in geometrical shapes without knowing that it was cubism. Picasso and Braque were there in my mind, without me knowing I was influenced by them. Later on, it occurred to me that, that was what I was doing. When I was growing up, we used to walk through Yaba Tech and when I saw the things done by student artists, I used to marvel. It seemed like magic to me, like they did the impossible. Ogunde theatre was also not too far from us. So there were so many things in Yaba to stimulate my senses.

**MO:** What major challenges or successes have you had so far?

**GO:** The major challenge for me and many other artists is having to work constantly. Working on its own isn't a challenge and is expected, but when you have to work to make ends meet or to pay bills, that is another story entirely. The challenge here is that the art scene is not fully developed. We don't have many young people who want or can afford to collect art so they collect prints and little art pieces. So you have to do originals to sell to the few collectors available and that is a challenge because everyone is selling the same market. But then again, art is difficult all over the world; you have to pay your dues. But here, there are no grants and you have to work three or four times more than you should. But that is not the total picture; after a while you have more clients to sell to, you get more exposure and your finances get better. Major successes would be selling a few of my works and taking part in auctions outside Nigeria. Although it might not be the financial success the way some people want to think about it. But the good thing about it is that I have a new environment to sell my work and a new market to conquer.

**MO:** You mentioned a problem about young people having access to art. What is the solution?

**GO:** The thing to do is to reduce the price but not of the originals; but to make prints of the originals and make it affordable. Merchandise the art, make prints, and let's have it on teacups so that people can have it on their tables. Let it be on everything so that if I can't buy a Picasso I can console myself with a mug or a print with a Picasso on it. If someone loves art but can't afford originals, they should be able to buy a small print for like 5,000 naira or a larger print for



Moyo, conte on paper, 56 x 77 cm, 2015

10,000 naira and then when they have the money you buy the original and everybody wins. But in a situation where everyone has to buy the original, it is not the best for the artist because you have to keep selling originals all the time. That is for art acquisition, but for getting young people into art, we need to get them to appreciate art at an early age. Not every school offers art which is horrible, so it should be taught in all schools. You don't really appreciate something unless you've had a go at it and see how difficult it is for you to do. Then you will really appreciate those who are doing it.

**MO:** Tell me about your activities so far

**GO:** Let me start with my typical day. Everything I do is geared towards my work. I love to enjoy myself and party but I don't do it in a way that disturbs what I do. What I call parties are cocktails at exhibitions because I enjoy meeting people. A rundown of my time involves me spending a lot of time in the studio until I get tired. But I spend most of my time working. For relaxation, I go to the jazz club and unwind or go to exhibitions if there are some holding. Presently I'm part of a show in London at the Saatchi Gallery being run by one of the brothers of Saatchi and Saatchi, one of the major global advertising agencies in the world. I've been working seriously and on a daily basis on this show that I'm about to have, so I'm preoccupied with that and have been for the better part of the year.

**MO:** What is your creative process like? Sketch on sketch pad

**GO:** The first thing I do when creating is to make a lot of sketches. I sketch continuously when I have a particular thing in mind. If something catches my interest from one of the sketches then I develop it and as that goes on, I decide on the medium to use; most times its canvas. My sketches are not very detailed and they are just to remind me of an idea. So when I start to work on it is when the real journey starts. The work itself determines where it ends up and it takes on a life of its own. Sometimes as I work, the idea changes and sometimes as an artist that can be challenging because you end up with something totally different from what you had in mind. When the work says 'put down your brush', I put it down; it's what determines when I stop.

**MO:** What defines you as an artist?

**GO:** That is a bit difficult to answer because it's like asking me who I think I am. I think other people are in a better position to tell me. What defines me is the desire to do the things I do in the proper way. In other words, I must be satisfied and I must know that I've done the right thing. Once I have doubt, I keep working at it; it doesn't matter how far I've gone, I will start all over if I have to. Someone asked me if I was a perfectionist and I said if starting something all over again after I've almost finished it makes me a perfectionist, then I'm a perfectionist. I don't start every work saying it has to be perfect though, I just need to be satisfied with what I have done.

**MO:** Is there any specific style that defines you?

**GO:** Initially it was the traditional African sculpture pieces and works of art that influenced my style especially the large eyes and not following laid down rules of perspective which is the hallmark of cubism. My work has an influence of cubism but as we speak I think I am moving into other areas that are more abstract. I made up my mind to do things the way I felt like doing it at that point in time and not letting the style that I'm known for define me. The stains on the ceiling I saw as a child are close to the kinds of work I'm doing now. I needed to represent it the way I remembered and not emphasizing that my style of cubism or African art shows through. Growing up, I loved so many different art styles until someone came along and said I must lock myself down in cubism. I don't want to be locked anywhere anymore. But the beauty is that even when trying all these other things, the original you still rears its head.

**MO:** You have been described as a figural expressionist, is it a description you agree with?

**GO:** My works have been figurative until now. It is true what they say and they are quite correct. I don't have any qualms with that if that is what people feel. It doesn't really worry me. Some people can do without figures and being in that genre but for me that's where I find myself. I feel more comfortable when people use their own definitions for my work, so I don't bother myself about what style I'm doing. But I know there is a lot of cubism in my work.



*Bspectacled*, conte on paper, 40 x 51 cm, 2015

**MO:** Why do you place emphasis on faces, especially around the eyes?

**GO:** When I developed the style that I do, it was to connect with African traditional sculpture. A lot of traditional African sculptures have bulging eyes, which I opened up. You don't see the eyeballs in a lot of traditional African sculptural pieces so I decided to open mine and that's what a lot of my work has been noted for.

**MO:** You have recently started doing sculpture, what led to the change?

**GO:** My works have always lent themselves to sculptures so I just made up my mind some time ago to go into that area. Sometimes as an artist, you say 'one day, I'm going to do sculpture' or a hip hop artist will say 'one day, I'm going to do a jazz piece'. A lot of musicians have done it, Luther Vandross did it, Frank Sinatra did it and I think the term for it is "American Notebook" meaning they cover all the great ballads at some point. So that 'one day' has come for me. I want to do a lot of experimentation. My sculptures are mostly made from metal and bronze because they have always been easy for me to do. When it stops speaking to me, I will move on to something else, but I hope I don't stray too far away but right now I just want to be me.

**MO:** What do you think of the current Nigerian art scene?

**GO:** The Nigerian art scene is growing despite the recession we are currently going through. We've been through one or two recessions before this one and we've been able to weather it. One good thing that is currently happening with the art scene is the secondary market i.e. having another market to sell into. The secondary market developing is a very big deal for us artists and I pray nobody fails because it is good for everyone. The artist gets to sell his work and the buyers also have an opportunity to invest in what they've bought; so art moves from decorative pieces to investment. The more auction houses we have, the better.

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

**GO:** The major advice I have for emerging artists is that it looks glamorous but it is hard work. A lot of people don't understand the hard work is more than the glamour. It is 180% hard work and 20% enjoyment. In other words your life must revolve around your art. I'm not trying to scare anyone but that is the nature of art.



*Seated Lady*, conte on paper, 56 x 77 cm, 2015





*Seated figure II*, conte on paper, 56 x 77 cm, 2015





*Seated figure, conte on paper, 56 x 77 cm, 2015*



# CUBIST IMPRESSIONS





*Chorus*, acrylic on canvas, 75.5 x 75.5 cm, 2016

"Music liberates me and calms me. I started listening to jazz at the age of 14-15 years and made up my mind that this was my type of music; you hear it, you feel it in your body, and you love it. I can't play music so I draw it"



*The Orchestra*, acrylic on canvas, 124 x 135 cm, 2016





*Lara's Face*, acrylic on canvas, 84 x 92 cm, 2016

"Civilians depicted in white are not at war. They are on the side of peace. A small minority are creating a very terrible environment for many people who are in flight. People are more on the side of peace even though there is so much turmoil. Those who suffer are the civilians. We have to talk about this. This is my contribution to these global issues."



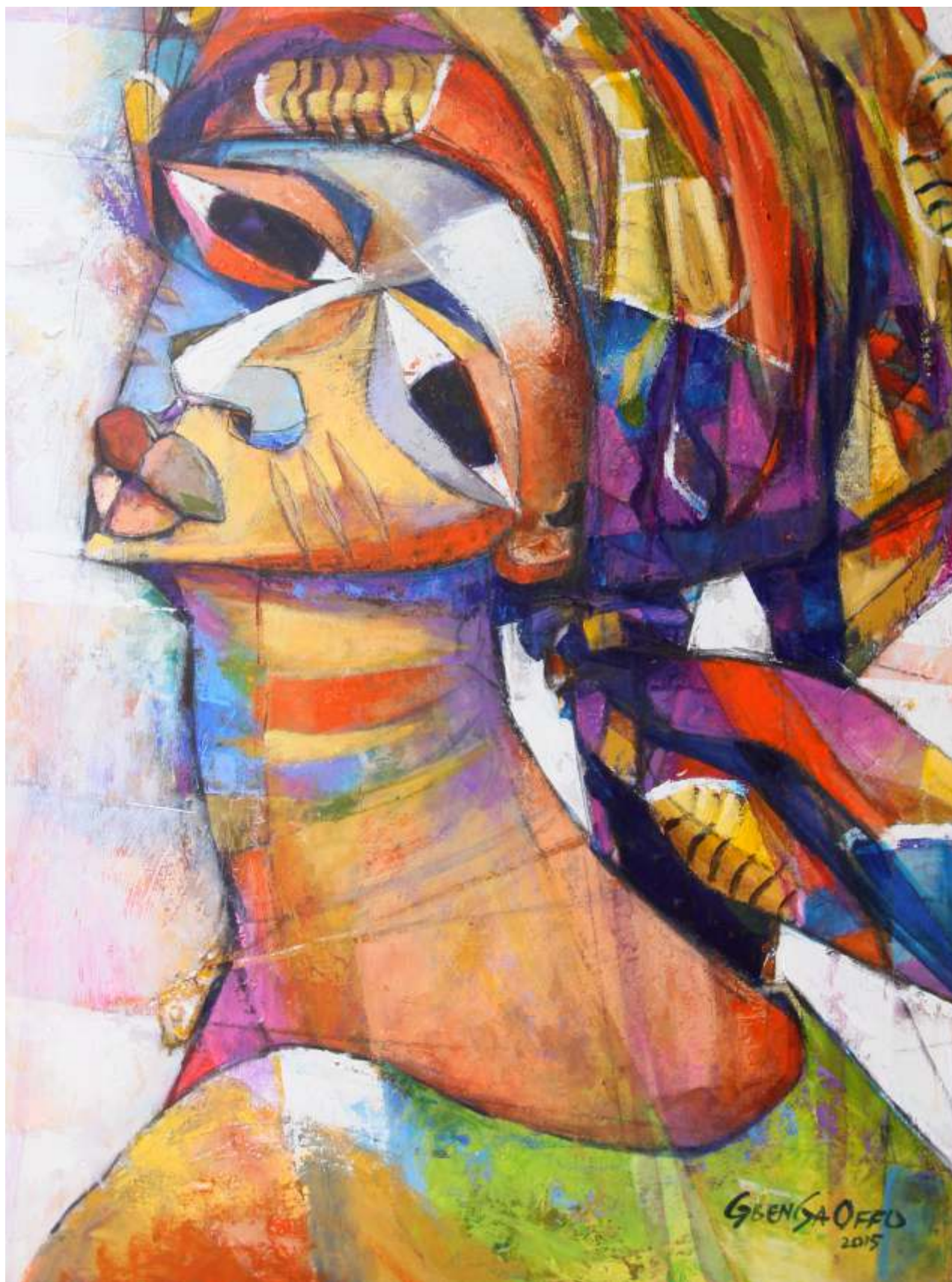
*On the move*, acrylic on canvas, 125 x 166.5 cm, 2016





*Run for Shelter*, acrylic on canvas, 161 x 120 cm, 2016





*Woman with Scarf*, acrylic on canvas, 88 x 118 cm, 2016





*Once Upon a Time*, acrylic on canvas, 111 x 144 cm, 2016





*Reclining Woman with Newspaper*, acrylic on canvas, 124 x 151 cm, 2016





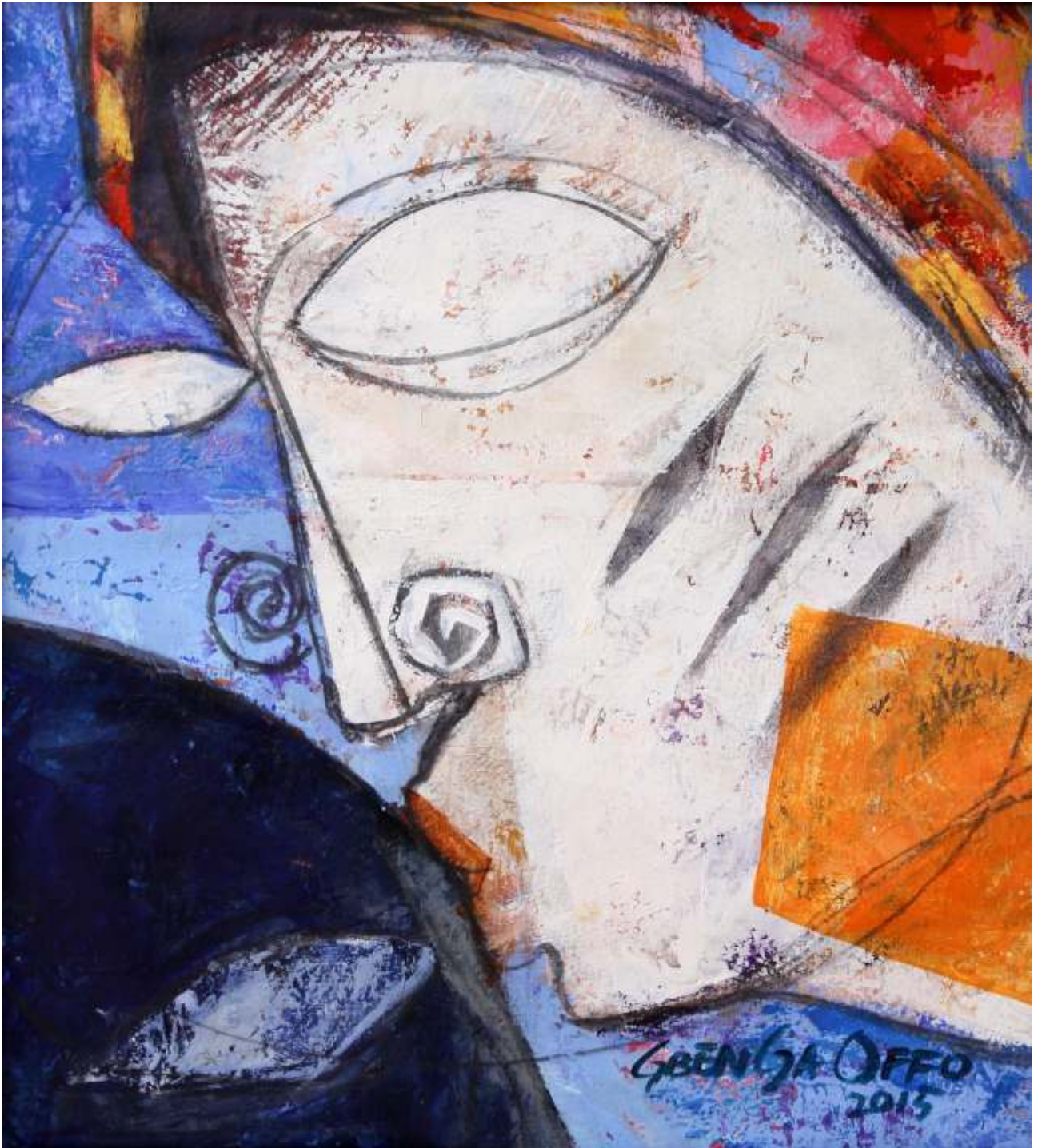
*Story Teller*, acrylic on canvas, 123 x 143 cm, 2016





*Woman with Earring*, acrylic on canvas, 104 x 112 cm, 2016





*Tender Kiss*, acrylic on canvas, 57 x 61 cm, 2016



# CV

GBENGA OFFO

Date of Birth: October 1957

## Education

1980-84 Maryland Comprehensive Secondary School  
Yaba College Of Technology, Lagos 1980 – 1984

## Awards

1983-84 Best Overall Art Student, Yaba College of Technology  
1983-84 Best Graphic Art Student, Yaba College of Technology

## Work Experience:

1986- 1993 Lintas Ltd. Lagos  
1993-1996 Insight Communications  
1996 till date Full-time Studio Practice

## Solo Exhibitions:

1999 Signature Gallery, Lagos  
2002 *The Story Continues* at Didi Museum, Lagos  
2014 *Gbenga Offo* CONSTANT CAPITAL, Lagos  
2015 FAIE African Art, Chicago, USA  
2015 Online Exhibition, AABRU, London

## Group Exhibitions

2000 *Take One Woman*, London  
2008 *Threshold*, Terra Kultur, Lagos  
2008 *Nigerian Art Expo*, National Museum Onikan, Lagos  
2011 *Unspoken Words*, Terra Kultur, Lagos  
2012 *Imbued Essence*, part of We Face Forward events, presented by Bank Of Industry  
Exhibition Showcasing Nigeria at the 2012 Olympics, London  
2013 *Transcending Boundaries*, Aabru Art, The Gallery in Cork Street, London  
2016 Saatchi Art Fair, London

## Auctions

Bonhams, London  
Arthouse Contemporary, Lagos  
Nike Gallery, Lagos  
Terra Kultur, Lagos & Abuja

## Collections

First Consultant Hospital, Lagos  
Sheraton Hotel and Towers,  
Presidential Lounge, Murtala Muhammed International Airport  
Afrinvest, Lagos.  
Cashcraft, Lagos,  
Sadiq Oil, Lagos  
GT assurance  
Cactus, Lagos

## Professional Memberships

Guild Of Professional Fine Artists (GFA)  
Society Of Nigerian Artists (SNA)

## Publications

101 Nigerian Artists, Bosah Chukwuemeka & Edozien George, 2010  
Contemporary Nigerian Art in Lagos Private Collections by Jess Castellote, 2012

## SPONSOR



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 Obiago (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, 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 ; *Equal Rights* showcasing Mike Omoighe, *Evolving Currents* featuring Raqib Bashorun and Chika Idu , and *Mental Space* showcasing painting by Duke Asidere in 2016.

## SPONSOR



# 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 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.



## CURATOR

Adolphos Opara



Sandra Mbanefo Obiagio 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.

Obiagio 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*. Obiagio 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.

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