



# THE CONTEMPORARIES



# THE CONTEMPORARIES

PRESENTING WORKS BY

Anthea EPELLE | Chika IDU | Duke ASIDERE

Gerald CHUKWUMA | Nnenna OKORE

Adeyinka AKINGBADE | Onyema OFFOEDU-OKEKE

Raoul Olawale DA SILVA | Taiye IDAHOR

Tony NSOFOR | Uchay Joel CHIMA

OCTOBER 12TH TO NOVEMBER 13TH, 2015

AT THE WHEATBAKER, LAGOS





# THE CONTEMPORARIES

Nigeria's artistic energy is exploding on a totally new level. The international art market is widening its focus from the globally celebrated contemporary artists with Nigerian roots, such as Yinka Shonibare, Chris Ofili, and El Anatsui (who though originally Ghanaian, has spent most of his professional life in Nigeria), to seek out and recognize a growing circle of new talent. The growth of contemporary art that creatively addresses the tension, ebb and flow of a region struggling to tell a more balanced, and diverse narrative is vital, especially against a backdrop of rising socio-political challenges.

In a quest to nurture artistic discourse and cultural exchanges, the Wheatbaker is proud to host *The Contemporaries*, a unique exhibition showcasing leading and emerging artists including Nnenna Okore, Duke Asidere, Uchay Joel Chima, Gerald Chukwuma, Raoul Olawale da Silva, Anthea Epelle, Taiye Idahor, Chika Idu, Adeyinka Akingbade, Tony Nsofor, and Onyeama Offoedu-Okeke.

We present a kaleidoscope of works offering fresh perspectives on feminism, unity, identity, environment, history & tradition, and technology & freedom of expression, drawing on the artists' unique heritage and perspectives. The exhibition is a robust exchange of ideas presented through paintings, multi-media installations, drawings, sculpture, challenging us not to merely “*think outside the box*”, but to literally “stand on the box” and use it as platform to behold new vistas.

Internationally celebrated artist Nnenna Okore's deconstructive and reconstructive techniques using materials such as discarded newspapers, jute, burlap, and clay, address our unique history and social context by reversing the typical functions of her materials which highlight the visual richness and raw energies associated with common cultural objects. In a complimentary vein, emerging artist, Anthea Epelle's highly patterned canvas explores continuity and structural rigidity inspired by fabric, while using pattern as a point of departure to challenge uniformity.

Onyeama Offoedu Okeke, an inspiring artist, art historian and architect, presents a haunting monochrome composition showing a child's innocence peering through a geometric cultural tapestry, emphasizing the need to embrace a rich ancestry alongside a new modernist philosophy. This is complemented by the monochrome spoken word series of Adeyinka Akingbade, in which we feel “east meeting west” as deft, white and red lines swooshed across a black background, reminds of ancient calligraphy and symbols

Sculptor and environmental activist, Uchay Joel Chima, whose powerful wall hangings using found objects address rampant environmental degradation and security challenges, also shows an undaunted spirit rising out of the ashes of burnt towns and villages rendered through an ingenious use of charcoal. This strong message is juxtaposed by the heavily textured painting of children floating under-water, created by Chika Idu, gifted artist and teacher, who tried to escape the nightmare of traffic gridlocked streets by relying on water transportation, only to be confronted with the daily struggles of coastal communities affected by dredging, pollution, flooding and all forms of urban pressure.

Budding talent Taiye Idahor's intricate mixed media collage comments on women's history and identity woven through hair, capturing time and memory in her “going back to my roots” work. Leading contemporary artist Duke Asidere touches on the growing power of new technology and

social media in his piece *Freedom & Liberty*, which is inspired by the need to protect people's fundamental right to think and explore.

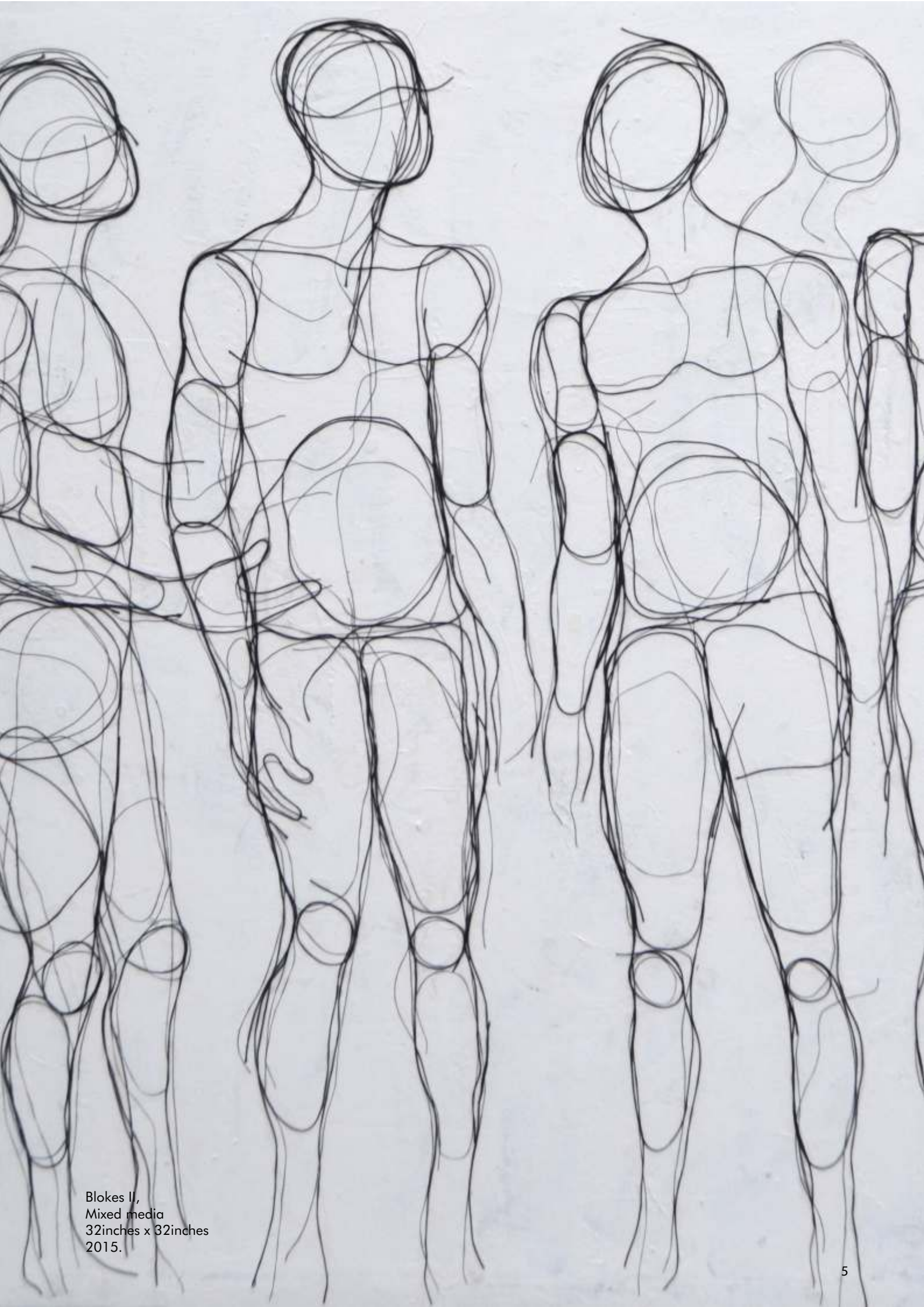
Notable designer and sculptor Gerald Chukwuma's ironic multi-media work, created out of an intricate pattern of plastic spoons on wooden slats, create the word "CHOP", which literally means "eat" in local slang, making a strong comment on the social cancer of corruption and the growing gap between Africa's well heeled elite and the increasingly disadvantaged poor; in the artist's own words, there is "plenty food, plenty spoons and empty plates".

The colorful, intense abstract forms in writer, photographer & painter Tony Nsofor's work *Two Apart (Dark Day)* pull the viewer into typical tensions in inter-personal relationships vis-à-vis Raoul Olawale da Silva's expertly crafted, elongated shapes which are a masterly rendition of the importance of expressing personal spontaneity and creative impulses while grappling external pressures.

All these powerful works create a stirring mosaic of avant garde contemporary African expression, which take the viewer on a fascinating journey in to the heart of a pulsating creative world view, with all its contradictions and stirring energy.

We hope you draw strength from this inspiring and visually rich presentation, just as the Wheatbaker continues its commitment to nurture home-grown talent and provide an important platform for showcasing the very best of local and international creativity.

Sandra Mbanefo-Obiagio  
Curator  
Lagos, October 2015



Blokes II,  
Mixed media  
32inches x 32inches  
2015.

*Stand or Fall II*  
Oil on Paper & Canvas  
44 x 60 inches  
2014



*andrea...*



# ANTHEA EPELLE



Anthea Epelle (born 1972) is a self taught artist who took up painting professionally in 2007. She prefers abstract techniques in oil on canvas and draws inspiration from lines, shapes, patterns and textiles, texture, contrast, arrangement and ethnicity. Anthea studied Fashion Design and Technology at the London College of Fashion. Her design influence is immediately evident in the way some of her ideas are expressed on canvas. Her work was featured in *Nigeria, Our Nigeria*, the 2011 Presidential Inauguration exhibition and several of her works have been sold at auction.

*My work is about my love for creating order in my own perspective. It is also about challenging colour contrasts and about combining fluidity with rigidity. I start to build a piece with the way my mind processes my vision in that very moment. I translate mostly with lines or small shapes that I like to call elements. I try to arrange these elements into something that the eye can track. The end results are never predetermined; I stop building when I see everything is where it should be. I feel like I throw these elements up in the air and orchestrate where they land to produce an overall image with variation, that may or may not be something definitive but, always orderly.*

## **Stand or Fall Series**

*Stand or Fall II is the expression I have chosen to articulate the combination of continuity and structural rigidity. It is part of a series inspired by plain George fabric, which is very popular in Southern Nigeria. While basing my structure on the distinct patterns, I wanted to disrupt the flow and create my own pattern that would show similarity but still challenge uniformity.*

# CHIKA IDU



Chika Idu (born 1974) comes from Delta State but grew up in Lagos. He graduated from the Auchi Polytechnic in Edo State Nigeria. He was instrumental in the creation of *Defactori Studios* which today has become an art movement amongst Nigeria's new generation artists; he also created Nigeria's first *Water Colour Society of Artists (SABLES)*. Idu has been a part of numerous group exhibitions and has had five solo exhibitions. Idu's works are characterised by a heavy texture and hazy rendition technique, which he calls '*light against visual distortion*'. He is inspired by observing the behaviour of light striking against visual imperatives like dust and misty fog.

*It might sound funny but I do more work when I am outside the studio than when am in it. A lot of times, people want to know how long I spend in production and I have always found this question challenging. How do I explain that the production of a finished piece actually started 30 years ago before it was made physical on canvas or paper? A lot of my work relives old experiences like from my happy childhood. I was the fifth of my parents' seven sons, there was always drama. We kids were very creative and because we couldn't afford toys, we created our own. I try to capture some of these experiences in my work. I am currently working on series about children living in wood structures along river banks. Their families are too poor to afford land and all these kids know is the polluted water surrounding them. "They simply don't know any other life.*

*The Life We Know*  
Oil on Canvas  
105cm x 75 cm  
2015



Crossing Over, 2011  
Burlap and handmade paper, dye and acrylic  
205 x 182cm

photographed by Nnenna Okore



# NNENNA OKORE



Born in Australia in 1975 and raised in Nigeria, Nnenna Okore has received international acclaim for her installations, in which she reclaims and reconfigures organic or discarded materials into abstract, richly textured forms of extraordinary range and nuance. Okore is keenly sensitive to the rhythms and contours of everyday life. The repetitive acts of stitching, twisting, rolling, or weaving; the familiar sounds of sweeping, chopping, talking, and washing, all deeply inform her aesthetic, as they signal both the transience of human labor and its inevitable mark on the material world. Nnenna Okore is a Professor of Art at Chicago's North Park University, where she teaches Sculpture. She earned her B.A degree in Painting from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (First Class Honors) in 1999, and went on to receive her MA and MFA at the University of Iowa, in 2004 and 2005. Added to numerous national and international awards, she was a 2012 recipient of the prestigious Fulbright Scholar Award. Her participation in over eighty solo and group exhibitions combined, in the last decade has earned her much international recognition and accolade. Okore is currently showing at the Museu Afro Brasil in São Paulo, Brasil. Her upcoming solo shows are at the Krannert Art Museum in Champaign, Illinois, and at the Mattatuck Art Musuem in Waterbury, Connecticut.

*Broadly focusing on the concepts of recycling, transformation and regeneration Crossing Over is based on unique attributes of the ecological environment. I am astounded by the natural deterioration of surfaces, which are triggered by aging and decay; and subtly captured in the fluid and delicate aspects of life. Through manually repetitive techniques, my processes of fraying, tearing, teasing, weaving, dyeing, waxing, accumulating and sewing allow me to interweave and synthesize the distinct properties of materials. I systematically deconstruct and reconstruct my media to yield subtle transformations of visual complexities. And much like impermanent earthly attributes, my organic and twisted structures mimic the dazzling intricacies of fabric, trees, barks and topography.*

# DUKE ASIDERE



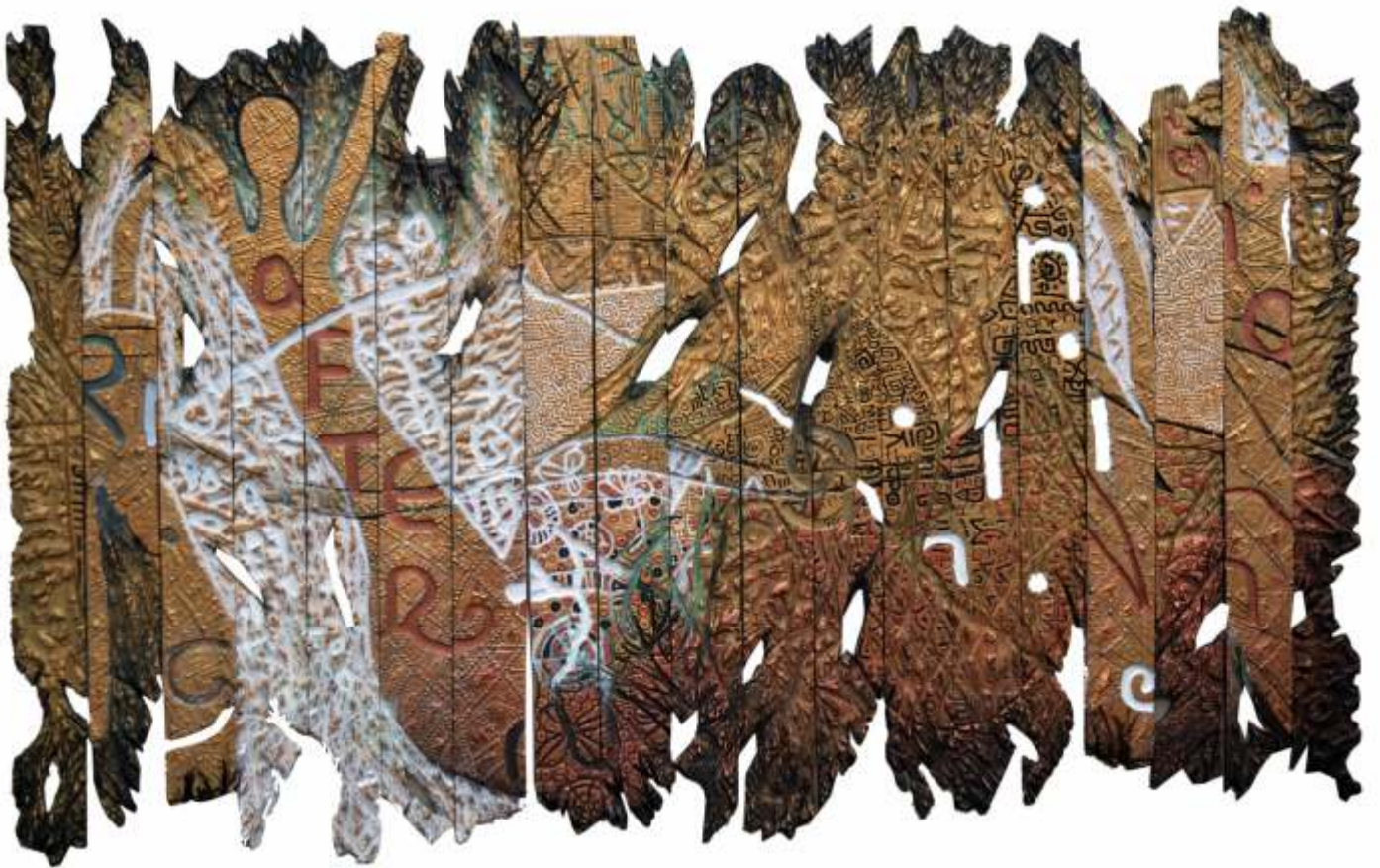
Photo by Chibuiké Uzoma

Duke Asidere is one of Nigeria's most celebrated contemporary artists with a keen following internationally and in his native Nigeria. He was born in 1961 and obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree with first class honours in Fine Arts (painting) from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 1988 and a Masters of Fine Arts in painting in 1996 from the same university. He taught painting, drawing and art history at the Federal Auchi Polytechnic for five years before starting full time studio work Lagos. He was mentored by Prof. Bruce Onabrakpeya and taught by Gani Odutokun who had a profound impact on his life and artistic expression. Asidere expresses himself boldly through a wide variety of genre including pencil work, engravings, oil and acrylic, pastels and even transparencies. He was raised in a household of women, which is reflected in his recurring theme of the female form in his portrait and face series. His architecture series are a fresh perspective of African land- and cityscapes, and his number and spray series have underlying political statements. Asidere has participated in and facilitated numerous international and local workshops on painting, photography, and drawing, including Colour Masters (Auchi Polytechnic, March 2011) and in a number of the annual Harmattan Workshop Series.

*In a fast changing world, where information hits you with the speed of light, we are compelled to stretch our power of imagination.*

*Man in Love*  
Paper Collage, Acrylic, Pastel,  
Graphite and Felt pens  
138 x 123 cm  
2015





*CHOP*  
Mixed Media  
5ft x 7ft  
2015



# GERALD CHUKWUMA



Gerald Chukwuma (b 1973) is a celebrated visual artist and furniture designer with an enthusiastic local and international following. He graduated from the prestigious Nsukka Art School, University of Nigeria, with a first class degree specializing in painting. Chukwuma's bold works using a multitude of found objects have an unforgettable visual language, in which he uses African symbols and patterns in refreshing new ways; he uses a combination of textures, lines, symbols and colours laid out on painstakingly etched wooden panels.

He began his career as a painter before expanding his work into mixed media relief sculptures and designing afro-contemporary furniture. In 2008 and 2012, he emerged as one of top three winners of the prestigious national arts competition. He was featured on the Cable News Network CNN's *Inside Africa* program in 2011 showcasing his unique artworks. In 2014, the University of Nigeria Nsukka commissioned him to produce two monumental pieces for the university library and the Vice Chancellor's complex.

Chukwuma has taken part in 20 exhibitions in the last decade in Nigeria, Cameroon, France, Denmark, Holland, and the United States and his works have become auction favourites. His thematic focus is on the complications of life and its impact on everyday people. He is blessed with a wonderful wife and two children.

*On Chop:  
plenty food....  
plenty spoons.....  
empty plates.....*

# ONYEMA OFFOEDU-OKEKE

Onyema Offoedu-Okeke was born in Aba, Nigeria in 1967 at the onset of the Nigerian civil war. He graduated from the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, in 1992 with B.Sc in Architecture. Since 1996, Onyema has made an impact in the development of art in Nigeria with innovative painting styles and themes which postulate as well as demonstrate dynamic modernity, often facilitated with scholarly explorations of cultural histories. His unique art styles such as Tapeptroid, Drizzles, Rectilinear Panellation, Cranioglyph and Head-load critical formula were revolutionary concepts and soon established Onyema as a visionary modernist.

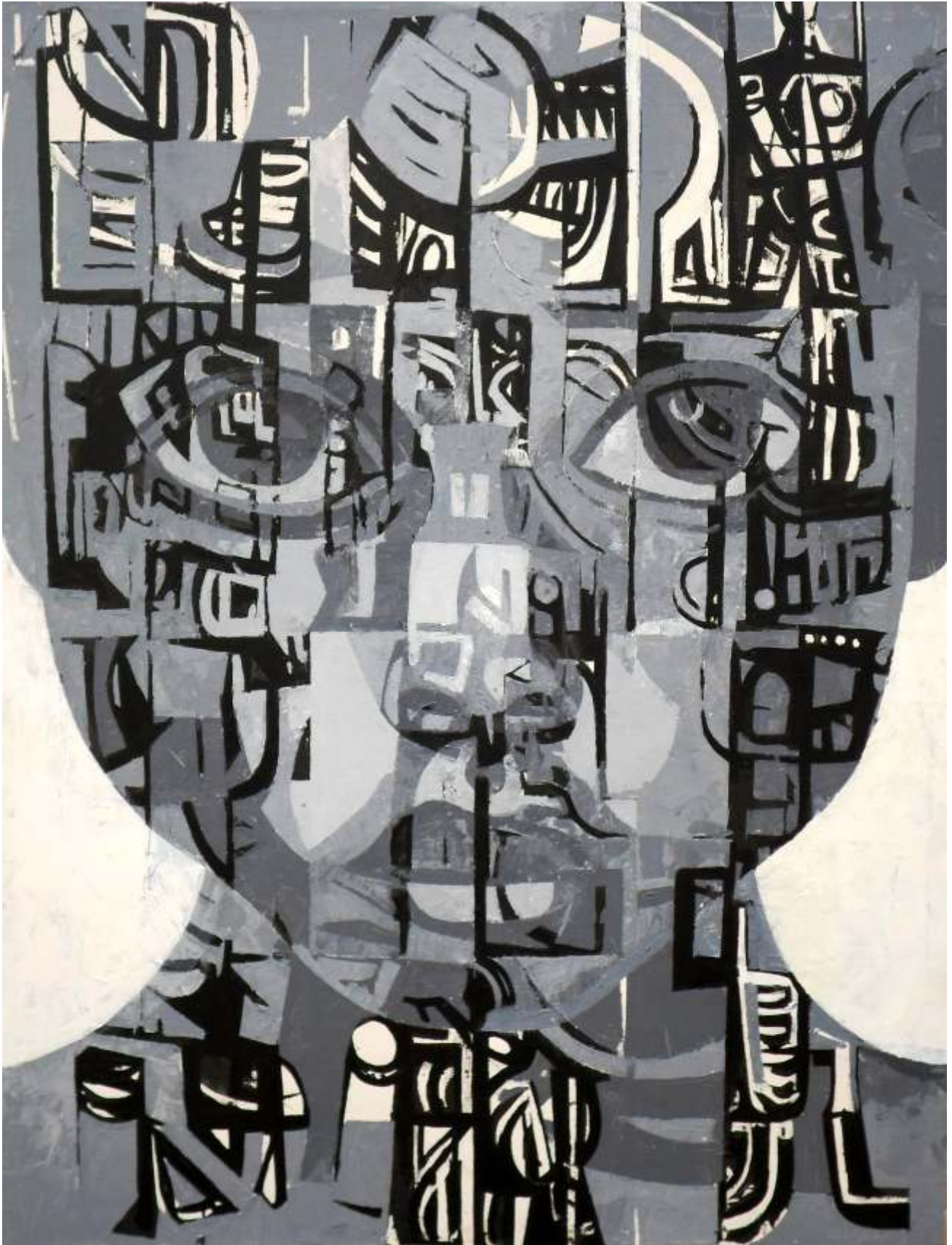
Onyema's architectural training and autodidact art processes combine to distill art styles and themes which are innovative and iconoclastic technical solutions. His styles and themes became much admired and copied by contemporary artists in Nigeria and abroad. Over a post-college period of 22 years, Onyema has exhibited in seven solo and more than twenty significant group shows. In 2000, Onyema represented Nigeria in the Windsor and Newton sponsored global tour of 'Our world in the Year 2000' exhibition. In 2004, he represented Nigeria at the 'Artiade-Olympics of Art' in the Athens Olympiad. Between 2005-7, he wrote a column titled 'Artlife' in Thisday on Saturday Newspaper. In 2012, Onyema published a ground-breaking book titled 'Artists of Nigeria' (5 Continents Editions) after 12 years of research and documentation. The book was sponsored by the Ford Foundation.

## *On the Epiphany Series*

*Steeped in intricate polemics of subversion, the term 'black' in anthropological reference to Africans prompted energetic terminological reappraisal in new revisions of African chronicles. After more than five centuries Africans started viewing the black color differently. 'Black' as derogative became a favorite trope of reference not because they were fashionable but of a humanistic reason- the ability to take a pun and create a lovely jewelry from it. In the Epiphany in Black series, we see black strands coalescing in a grid-bed which I termed Tapeptroid. Tapeptroid, idealized from the geometry of tapestry, weaves magnetic fluxes in act of giving shape to emerging bold faces. Graphically, within this hallmark of redefinition, a mastery of self-narrative occurs as Africans start to tell their own stories. In showing faces gazing from behind forest walls, grass fences or simply cultural installations, an act of emergence is here created as shrouds of anonymity thrust upon Africa are torn down.*



Photo by Amaize Ojeikere



*Epiphany in black* - Umuazi  
Acrylic on Canvas  
36 x 48 inches  
2015



# RAOUL OLAWALE DA SILVA



Raoul Olawale da Silva (born 1969) is one of Nigeria's most exciting contemporary abstract artists. Raoul is a professionally trained, contemporary artist whose works have a truly universal appeal. Through his paintings, sculpture and music, Raoul's artistry reflects broad ethnic diversity. Growing up on Lagos Island, his talent was fanned into flame at National Museum summer art classes, which he attended with talented local youths like the celebrated painter, Alex Nwoko. Raoul's art studies continued with a four year intensive apprenticeship in carpentry and cabinet making in Switzerland, which was followed by four years studying art at the distinguished University of Applied Arts in Lucerne, Switzerland. Raoul has worked as a studio artist since graduating from art school and has taken part in numerous international exhibitions, including a solo exhibition at the National Museum Onikan in 2006, and a Deutsche Bank sponsored exhibition in 2013.

*When I start a piece of work, I mark the canvas in a somewhat unpremeditated way. Sometimes I use natural markings that are already present. These marks are orientation points from which I start my quest of creating the right tension, balance, imbalance, and rhythm. This changes constantly while I work, as I incorporate seemingly random movements, which are however very controlled. I adapt to the creation emerging on the canvas by carefully adding layers of colors which I work on over and over again, from different angles and sides. This process enables me to react to situations during production, and to use varied materials that sets me free to express multifaceted ideas and stories. These stories are affected, dominated, connected and guided by my state of mind made up of memories, reflections, observation, smell, taste and many other influences.*

Untitled  
131.3 cm x 131.3 cm  
Oil on Canvas  
2015



Abstract  
Michael

# ADEYINKA AKINGBADE



Adeyinka Akingbade (b.1981) is an award-winning painter, photographer, and graphic designer who graduated in Fine Arts from the Yaba College of Technology in 2008, specializing in painting. The same year Akingbade's eclectic and versatile style drew the attention of the African Artists' Foundation's *Unbreakable Nigerian Spirit* art competition in which he emerged as one of the finalists. In 2010 he was selected to take part in the month long CCA Lagos artist residency program, *Independence and the Ambivalence of Promise*, and the following year he won first prize at the Lagos Black Heritage Festival's *Walls of Prison into Fields of Freedom* art competition. Akingbade's experimental photography and mixed media works were featured in the German magazine *BORRIOLAH-GHA'* and in 2014 he exhibited at the *25th Annual Festival of the Arts* in Chicago, USA. While working as a studio artist on weekends, Akingbade runs a graphic design consultancy, GNO Studios, and his clients include DDB, Proactive Media, Wimbiz, TruContact, W-Tech, and African Art Spectrum.

*My art should inject life back into society.*

*Sometimes, I feel I am alone.*

*Sometimes, I feel a need for change.*

*Sometimes, I feel the end has come.*

*Sometimes, I feel like the happiest person on earth.*

*In all of these feelings, within my own space, I have created. I let the truth seep silently into my heart. I create on paper, board and canvas using objects and waste within my reach to express my thoughts, emotions and feelings. Do they say anything to you?*

*My work is a true reflection of my life and the people around me. My work tells stories inspired from my experiences since childhood. I believe everyone has a responsibility to keep developing. I believe life is tough. My art helps me find a soft and perfect landing.*

*Art is the air I breathe. Art is what I have been given to live and grow with. I always try to channel my energy towards creativity by using my life experiences to draw from and create. I hope I inspire someone along the way.*

*On the Spoken Word Series:*

Why is it that sometimes, we have something to say,  
but we remain still? Silent? Words are left unspoken.

Why is the obvious often left unsaid?

Maybe we are afraid that it brings joy or sadness?

Is it really about what we say

or about the reaction we get from the listener after we have spoken?

*Spoken Word I & II*  
Mixed Media On Canvas  
4ft x 5ft  
2015

# TONY NSOFOR



Tony Nsofor (born 1973) studied Fine and Applied Arts at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka majoring in painting. During his third year, he worked as studio assistant for Professor Obiora Udechukwu, whose mentorship had a profound impact on the young artist. In 1999 he opened his own studio in Owerri, Imo State, later moving to Lagos in 2001. Besides full time studio work, Nsofor consults as a free lance art writer and photographer. Nsofor has taken part in numerous group exhibitions including *A Strangled Song* at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (1996), *6 New Painters from Nsukka*, curated by Obiora Udechukwu and Chika Okeke, at the British Council, Enugu (1997), *Homage to Asele* (2003) at the National Museum, Lagos, *The Rediscovery of Tradition: Uli and the Politics of Culture*, Pendulum Gallery, Lagos; *Beyond Figuration* at Omenka Gallery, Ben Enwonwu Foundation, Lagos (2009); *With a Human Face* at the Pan African University, Lagos (2006); and *A Glimpse into Nigerian Art* at the Cheikh Anta Diop Univ., Senegal (2006), *Anya Fulu Ugo*, at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, an exhibition in honor of El Anatsui and Obiora Udechukwu.

Nsofor's solo exhibitions include *Orthopedic Series*, at the National Orthopedic Hospital, Igbobi, Lagos (2004) *Autobiography and Beatitudes* (2012) at the Pan Atlantic University, Lagos comprising 83 works including paintings, photographs, and experimental sound. Besides newspaper articles for This Day and Comet Newspapers, Nsofor writes essays for art catalogues and books including *A Fragrant Kaleidoscope*, a catalogue on artworks by Nkechi Abi, Didi Museum, Lagos (2015), *Contemporary Nigerian Art in Lagos Private Collections: New Trees in an Old Forest*, a book by Jess Castellote, *Root: Contemporary Artists from Nigeria*, a book edited by Benetton, Luciano (et al) (2015), *Postcolonial Modernism in Nigeria*, a book by Chika Okeke, and the SOGAL Auction catalogue (2015). In 2008, Nsofor began blogging as a means for discussing art, photography and lifestyle issues.

*The painting Two Apart (Dark Day) is part of a series of paintings on relationships and love. Dark day represents one of those days that surely happens even in the best of human relations, when there is a misunderstanding. The painting was created over a year of personal difficulties in a relationship. It became autobiographical, and I reworked the painting and built layers of colour. It was like staring intently at dark clouds till the sunlight burst through. The work was resolved when I added the hot red lines. A little fire was needed.*





*Two Apart (Dark Day)*  
Acrylic & tempera on Canvas  
38 inches x 48 inches  
2015

# UCHAY JOEL CHIMA

Uchay Joel Chima (born 1971) graduated in 1997 from the Art Department of the Institute of Management and Technology in Enugu, Nigeria, and has exhibited his work in prominent galleries and museums in Nigeria, South Africa, Canada, Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. Uchay is known for his eclectic use of alluring materials and unique artistic process, often questioning global environmental and social issues. Uchay's works have continued to evolve, remaining relevant to developments in contemporary art.

Weaving a tapestry of memory, imagination, societal happenings and emotion, Uchay combines various found objects, including string, sand, wax, charcoal, and old sacks, with paint and other media in an aesthetic that informs his oeuvre. He creates thought provoking presentations, which address the realities around us whilst employing a mixture of conventional and unconventional approaches in his unceasing explorations.

Uchay is one of the four artists chosen through a competitive international selection process to take part in 2015/2016 Platteforum's Artist Residency program in Denver, Colorado. He has been in residence at the Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, Vermont; Spark Box Studio in Ontario, Canada and also at the One Minute Foundation in Amsterdam, Netherlands. His works have been featured at international auctions including Bonhams, Arthouse Contemporary and Lagos Art Auction.

*My work revolves around social and environmental issues, and my methodology, being exploratory in nature, allows me to directly align concepts with media that I believe would reinforce the essence of my work and enhance the impact on the viewer. I work with variety of found objects and materials like string, paint, wax, paper, old sack, chunks of charcoal, etc. In all, the thematic mode of each body of work determines the materials and the forms of the work. For some time now I have been working with charcoal, which is symbolic to me. It represents all the colors of the universe - being totally black like in the simile, "as black as charcoal". I can document and tell stories using chunks of charcoal. It represents the ashes of burnt down towns and villages around the world due to wars, terrorism and other related globe crisis. Charcoal represents environmental degradation.*

*In the piece "Pages of New Lyrics", charcoal resonates the inevitable fracture that occurs in life and conveys the potential for revival. Here I acknowledge a history of degradation around us, but refuse to allow that history to define the current reality but rather I use it to echo a sense of beauty, hope and promise.*





*Pages of New Lyrics*  
Mixed Media  
36 inches x 100 inches  
(4 Panels of 36 x 25 inches each)  
2015



*Going Back To My Roots*  
Collage & pen drawing on canvas  
70cm x 52cm  
2015

# TAIYE IDAHOR



Photo courtesy Artist

**Taiye Idahor** (Born 1984) grew up in Lagos Nigeria, she studied Fine Art at the Yaba College of Technology in Lagos, Nigeria, where she graduated in 2007 with a Higher National Diploma (HND) after specialising in sculpture. In the last four years Taiye Idahor has worked significantly within the concept of identity and women using hair as a visual language. Tangled through the issues of trade, beauty, the environment and globalisation, she examines how these factors build the woman's identity in today's Africa but in particular Lagos Nigeria where she has lived all her life. Today she continues to explore and focus on women and identity through time and memory. She has participated in a number of exhibitions and workshops both home and abroad including *Ravy International Art Festival* March 2012- Yaoundé Cameroon, *An Anonymous Tale*, Yokohama Japan 2011; *Nigeria our Nigeria*, Presidential Inauguration Exhibition Abuja Nigeria 2011; the specially curated section the *Dubai Art Fair, Marker* 2013; her first solo exhibition *Hairvolution* in Lagos, Nigeria 2014 and *Timeline* a residency exhibition in Johannesburg South Africa 2015. [www.taiyeidahor.blogspot.com](http://www.taiyeidahor.blogspot.com)

*My first solo exhibition Hairvolution sparked a conscious journey of a search for my family history, moving through time mostly the past. Through the present and the future as they unfold, I am becoming more aware of the stories and events that happen around me through the language of hair.*

*“Going back to my roots” is one of the many works that have followed after that exhibition. I am shifting from telling not only my own stories but moving to imagine and observe other women through the lens of hair as they weave through life.*



Photo by Adolphos Opara

# SANDRA MBANEFO OBIAGO

Sandra Mbanefo Obiago 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. After traveling extensively across Sub-Saharan Africa as Communications Manager for environmental group, WWF International in Switzerland (from 1991 -1998) she founded and ran Communicating for Change (1998-2012), a media for development social enterprise in Nigeria. 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 & HIV & AIDS, environment, democracy and good governance.

Obiago is an experienced creative industry expert, liaising with key stakeholders in the private, public and civil society sectors. She organized conferences, workshops, and symposia for Nigeria's growing film industry and creative sector; she was the organizer & convener of The Future of Development Film in Africa Conference in Lagos, Nigeria in 2005 & 2008 in collaboration with the Ford Foundation, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Nigerian Copyright Commission, the Pan African University and the Television Trust for the Environment (TVE). She helped develop a course on Media Enterprise at the Pan African University (Lagos Business School) and was a freelance instructor from 2007-2009. From 2010-12, Obiago produced and co-directed a 5-part documentary film series, Red Hot: Nigeria's Creative Industries, featuring 17 artists from the film, music, performance and visual arts sectors. She developed an art program for the Wheatbaker, a leading boutique hotel in Lagos, where she has hosted quarterly art exhibitions since 2012.

Besides being involved in many community initiatives, she has served as Sunday school teacher since her teens. She served as a trustee of the Convention on Business Integrity (CBI), one of Nigeria's foremost business ethics organisations. She 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. Obiago is a Fellow of the Aspen Institute African Leadership Initiative for West Africa (ALIWA) and continues to mentor many young Nigeria artists. She attended executive education courses at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and 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.

## 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 Obiagio (2014), Eko Moves showcasing photography by Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko (2014) and AKALAKA showcasing paintings by Tayo Adenaike and sculptures by Obiora Anidi (2015)



Sponsor



# Veuve Clicquot

■ REIMS FRANCE ■

When he founded his wine-making business in 1772, Philippe Clicquot nurtured one ambition: to break new ground. He first conquered Europe, then Russia in 1804, but died suddenly the following year. His 27-year-old widow, Madame Clicquot, courageously took up the management of the family business and Veuve Clicquot has continued innovating for 200 years. Today, Veuve Clicquot is driven by the same quest for modernity and excellence. 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.



Credit  
Editorial & Art Direction: Sandra Mbanefo Obiago  
Design & Layout: Adeyinka Akingbade  
(c)2015

