

OUR STORY





Curated by Sandra Mbanefo Obiako



Artists

Adolphus Opara • Amara Obiako • Bernard Kalu
Billy Omabegho • Bruce Onobrakpeya • Chika Idu
Christopher Samuel Idowu • David Ibukun Oniyide
Data Oruwari • Duke Asidere • Gbenga Offo
George Edozie • Gerald Chukwuma • Gillian Hopwood
Ibe Ananaba • Isaac Emokpae • Kainebi Osahenye
Kelani Abass • Kelechi Amadi Obi • Kevwe Eru
Lakin Ogunbanwo • Mike Omoighe • Nathalie Djakou Kassi
• Nnena Okore • Obiora Anidi • Obi Okigbo
Olawunmi Banjo • Olu Amoda • Oyebola Famuyiwa
Patrick Akpojotor • Peju Alatise • Pius Emokpohor
Polly Alakija • Raoul Olawale Da Silva • Raqib Bashorun
Rom Isichei • Sandra Mbanefo Obiako • Somi Nwandu
Suzanne Wenger • Tayo Adenaike • Tayo Olayode
Tony Nsofor • Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko





Foreword

The book in your hands is the culmination of a creative journey which started as a celebration of the width and breadth of artistic excellence in Nigeria. The Wheatbaker Art Collection showcases exemplary collaboration between the corporate and the creative worlds; where artists infuse their vision into spaces waiting to be populated; with colour, character, and light. Our contemporary interiors and unique ambience together offer the perfect platform to showcase the very best of art for the discerning art lover, always eager to discover new pieces by our leading and emerging talents. We trust that the art and accompanying narratives presented in this book, will inspire more cross-cultural and cross-sector collaboration, and ensure that our talented artists continue to enjoy new always evolving spaces to present their work and stimulate enriching conversations that further enhance their creativity.

Bernard Longe

Former Chairman, The Wheatbaker



Preface

There is a fundamental connection between art and humanity as art is often seen as the vehicle for social change."

The decision for art to be prominent at the Wheatbaker was made long before we opened our doors. Art is therefore purposefully linked to our essence, our image and our brand.

Our natural predilection for art and innovation are derived from a number of sources but I will mention two. Historically, our inspiration comes from the adventurer known as Amos Stanley Wynter Shackelford, who came from Jamaica in 1913 to work on the railroad. Shackelford's restless spirit identified a vacuum in the market which led him to innovate and industrialize the bread production process, whilst his creativity envisaged this graceful structure (now The Wheatbaker) as his home . Another, more personal inspiration, comes from my desire to become a fine artist. When I was alerted to the perilous uncertainty of such a career, I chose instead to take the road more traveled towards architecture . Happily, providence has fused all these identities together at the core of the Wheatbaker.

Art at the Wheatbaker is where a silent conversation begins to come to life, where the guest is vividly and imaginatively connected to the soul of the city and to the pulse of the nation.

The Wheatbaker art collection creates an energy and a pervading lyrical essay that engages subliminally with any and every person. A rotating cast of ever changing stories speak



from the canvas or sculpture, keeping vigil, warmly watchful, countering aloneness.

The spirit of the pieces gently fill gaps and give richness and luster to each room and each space. Lines blur and blend seamlessly between the built environment, the service, the art and the guest, at once invoking and reflecting what we know to be the soul and pulse of The Wheatbaker.

Mosun Ogunbanjo
Founder, The Wheatbaker



Passages: On Building A Thriving Art Collection

The development and growth of the Wheatbaker Collection has been a labour of love. From the very first conversation with the owners of the hotel while construction works were going on, I was asked to use my experience as an art collector to acquire works which would stand the test of time. We started with a small budget and I focused on acquiring works which had a unique and fresh African aesthetic, had local and international appeal, were made out of diverse media, would increase in value over time, as well as look good in a hotel setting. We knew we could not afford to acquire some of our modern and contemporary masters, so we focused on the new generation of leading Nigerian contemporary talent.

Our first acquisitions were works by Rom Isichei (reception), Peju Alatise (Grill Dining Room), Gerald Chukwuma (foyer) and external sculptures by Olu Amoda, which we initially leased and acquired over time.

By the time we opened the doors of the hotel, the artworks were in place, and had become part of the brand of the hotel. Olu Amoda's lifelike horse Boxer made entirely out of recycled mechanical spare parts greeted guests on arrival at the hotel entrance and quickly became a favourite backdrop for photographs. Rom's 4 panel metallic Passages depicting human forms in dialogue became the familiar "home away from home" welcome to our esteemed clients every time they checked into the hotel. Peju Alatise's powerful Marks painting became the Grill signifier while Gerald Chukwuma's unusual tactile wooden

slats became a magnet in the foyer.

We had started with a striking art collection but the challenge was how to keep our client's interest over time. I came up with the concept of using the hotel as a revolving art platform and bringing in diverse talent to showcase the breadth of local and international creativity; the art & hospitality concept was approved by the hotel's owners and senior management.

Before long we had developed an institutional rhythm for hosting quarterly art exhibitions which continue to attract an exciting cross section of art lovers. We started off inviting seasoned art collectors to host our exhibitions and soon we sought collaborations with sponsors from the local and international business community.

It has been very exciting watching our space transform with each exhibition, and seeing unusual installations in the hotel entrance stairwell welcome guests as they walk through our doors. We have hosted well known artists based in the Diaspora like Nnenna Okore and Chidi Kwubiri, as well as hosted a collection of rare traditional artworks from the Femi Akinsanya collection (FAAC) as well as works by master artists like Prof Bruce Onobrakpeya. We have hosted many charity art events and exhibitions including a showcase of art from Oshogbo to raise funds for the restoration of monumental sculptures by Susanne Wenger in the sacred groves.

We are proud to present, Our Story, a collection of artworks

donated by artists who have had exhibitions at the Wheatbaker over the years.

These seasoned artists have enriched the permanent collection of the hotel with valuable, unique, and diverse media including sculptures, paintings, photographs, and mixed media works. Our artworks are a reflection of our times, and speak about the socioeconomic trends of our nation, as well as reflect the beautiful artistic spirit of global black culture.

After thirteen years curating the Wheatbaker collection, I am again reminded of the power of art to create bridges, inspire new conversations, and fan the flame of our creative heartbeat while increasing our understanding and appreciation of our rich culture. The art we have presented and collected has not only strengthened our identity as proud Africans, it has also given our local and international guests an oasis of creativity, within which to have their meetings and functions, or simply spend some solitary time within our walls, surrounded by our creative ambiance.

It is my belief that creative collaborations between institutions and artists, especially on hospitality platforms, are win-wins for all parties; institutions like the Wheatbaker, receive awesome content, and artists receive fantastic exposure, within spaces that are not purely commercial, like galleries, but allow an ever-changing audience of art enthusiasts, collectors or simply passers-by with no interest in art, to be surrounded and subtly

inspired by beauty and history. It is this subtle “living with the art”, that makes the Wheatbaker collection grow on its audience, with many guests feeling a sense of “home coming”, when they arrive and have a coffee next to one of their favourite art works.

My sincere thanks and appreciation goes to Mosun Ogunbanjo, the founder of the Wheatbaker, who first invited me to curate art for the hotel thirteen years ago, and to the Board of Directors, Management and Staff of the hotel, who have shown their consistent enthusiasm and commitment to the Wheatbaker’s art legacy and patronage by investing time, resources, effort and showing great loyalty to the local and international artistic community. The Wheatbaker has not just presented the art of famous masters over the years, it has also been a platform to welcome talent from the Diaspora, while nurturing young artists who are just beginning their artistic journey.

The Wheatbaker has not only pioneered the concept of being the first Art Hotel, it has also “walked the talk” for years, inspiring other hotels in Lagos and Nigeria to strategically partner with galleries and artists, to provide cutting-edge artistic content for their guests.

My sincere thanks goes to every artist who has shared their talent with the Wheatbaker, and who also contributed precious artworks to the hotel’s permanent collection.

A sincere thank you to our faithful media partners who over the

years wrote and analyzed all our exhibitions, and spread the word by celebrating the best of modern and contemporary art within our walls.

My sincere thanks goes to my team at SMO, who has shared my vision, and supported every single exhibition we have presented at the Wheatbaker, from our full time staff, to many behind-the-scenes freelancers, like our installers, designers, researchers, writers, photographers, and framers, who have regularly worked to tight deadlines to ensure that our exhibitions were expertly hung and presented, on time. Special thanks to my assistant curators, Nneoma Ilogu and Majid Biggar, who worked crazy hours with me over the years, and also introduced a lot of emerging artists in our group shows.

I thank my children, Amara, Dante, and Manuela, who were always willing to help out at the Wheatbaker as assistants and ushers during their school holidays, and who continue to hold the Wheatbaker dear to their hearts.

My sincere appreciation and thanks goes to my husband, Joe Obiogo, who encouraged me on this curatorial journey from the very beginning, giving expert advice over the years as a longstanding collector and art patron, sometimes also sponsoring shows, and always being there as a committed member of the Wheatbaker family.

Most importantly, I give all thanks to God for being the source

of all creativity, and for giving us the inspiration, vision, energy and faith to keep going, even when the going got tough.

I hope you enjoy this exhibition of treasures from the Wheatbaker permanent collection, and thank our amazing artists, partners and sponsors for all they have done to help us present the very best of our African creativity to the world.

Sandra Mbanefo Obiako
Pioneer Art Curator
The Wheatbaker





A Fruitful Partnership: The Wheatbaker And The Lagos Art World

There are cities where, excluding one or two large public museums, some of the best art collections open to the public are held in corporate environments. Hospitality and financial institutions generally lead the way in this common practice and they do it for many different reasons. Answers to the question on why corporations and business concerns invest resources into art are as varied as these enterprises, but they can be classified into two major groups: corporate art collections that aim at improving the physical environment and customer experience and corporate collections that are created and maintained with a social projection in mind.

Art can also be a very useful tool in projecting a corporate image of creativity and innovation. In their book, "A Celebration of Corporate Art Collections Worldwide", the authors, Peter Harris and Shirley R. Howarth explain how corporate collections benefit businesses by promoting the core values of the enterprise and by the positive impact on their staff and the wider community. For them, "corporate art is a 'win-win-win' activity" i.e. the company, community and artists all win. There is no doubt that art in the work environment contributes to the wellbeing of staff. But there is more to it, especially in the hospitality industry.

Nowadays, top international hotels try to offer their guests and visitors much more than accommodation. But there are still many hotels that only display pieces that are trite, banal and merely decorative mass-produced works. Because quality art is one of the possible attractions and differentiating factors in the highly

competitive hospitality environment, the experienced traveler is increasingly familiar with the presence of great art in the hotels they visit. In some celebrated cases, the hotel art collection can be extravagant. The Ritz- Carlton in Singapore owns over 4,000 artworks; the Dolder Grand in Zurich has also an extraordinary collection; the Wynn Palace in Las Vegas has, among other artworks, a huge sculpture by Jeff Koons bought at auction by the hotel owner, Steve Wynn, for over 33 million US dollars. This piece is one of a series of five. Not surprisingly, two others are in first class museums: the Broad Museum in Los Angeles and the Guggenheim, Bilbao.

The discerning, cosmopolitan and culture-minded clientele at a boutique hotel will want serious art on its walls. Paintings industrially produced or prints and cheap reproductions of great artworks will not do. They want to be surrounded by art, not just decoration. For these reasons, quite a few hotels worldwide collect and display museum-quality artworks in their vestibules, halls, restaurants and lobbies. The presence of temporary exhibitions along with the permanent displays of work in their collections is increasingly common in top hotels. From this perspective, it is not surprising that The Wheatbaker, as a luxury boutique hotel in Lagos, has put together -in just a few years- an impressive collection of contemporary Nigerian art selected by the in-house curator, Sandra Obiako.

Visitors to the hotel are greeted by a magnificent metal horse by Olu Amoda by the entrance door, a large mixed media

work by Rom Isichei is placed behind the reception counter and an excellent work by Gerald Chukwuma is on display in the foyer leading to the guest rooms. The main restaurant has an early piece by Peju Alatise, while photographs by Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko and Kelechi Amadi Obi are on display in other common areas. Paintings and sculptures by other well-known Nigerian artists are on display on the walls of the hotel.

Though the collection started as a means to decorate the bare walls of halls, vestibules and common areas, it has acquired in these short ten years an identity of its own. Undoubtedly, the reason for that achievement is in the fact that the hotel's management decided to entrust the art related activities at the hotel to a professional curator, Sandra Obiako, engaged by the hotel in a stable way and responsible for the programming and implementation of the art programme. She, and her team, supported by the hotel director, Mosun Ogunbanjo and the hotel top management started with the idea of hosting quarterly art exhibitions, and they have been true to their ambitious plans. In these ten years, 30 exhibitions have been organized at the Wheatbaker. Works by many of the artists participating in these exhibitions are now part of the permanent collection at the hotel.

Like in most the serious art collections at hotels all over the world the one at the Wheatbaker is dominated by contemporary art. This is not a surprising fact. Contemporary art reinforces the identity of the hotel. Displaying high quality artworks on walls and public areas portrays the hotel as a contemporary



and dynamic space. The collection includes sculptors: Olu Amoda, Obiora Anidi, Gerald Chukwuma, Raqib Bashorun, Billy Omabegho, Djakou Kassi Nathalie,; painters and mixed media artists: Susanne Wegner, Bruce Onobrakpeya, Tayo Adenaike, Gbenga Offo, Rom Isichei, Raoul da Silva, Mike Omoighe, Duke Asidere, Pius Emorhokpor, Obi Okigbo, Tony Nsofor, Chika Idu, Nnenna Okore, Peju Alatise, Polly Alakija, Tayo Olayode, Isaac Emokpae, Data Oruwari; Kelani Abass, Ibe Ananaba, Pius Emorhokpor, Patrick Akpojotor, Kainebe Osahenye, Olawunmi Banjo and Somi Nwandu; photographers: Kelechi Amadi Obi, Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko, Sandra Mbanefo Obiagio, Amara Obiagio, Adolphus Opara, Oyebola Famuyiwa, Bernard Kalu and Lakin Ogunbanwo.

Putting together such a collection is no small achievement, by any account. In a city in great need of spaces and platforms for the support and display of art, all contributions are positive, even if they come from unexpected sources. By exposing local artists to ever changing cosmopolitan audiences, by providing regular exhibition space and by hosting and sponsoring numerous art-related events, the Wheatbaker has done that. In the process, it has established a name for itself. Both the hotel and the Lagos art world are winning with this partnership. Hopefully, it will become even more fruitful in years to come.

Jess Castellote
Director & Chief Curator
Yemisi Shyllon Museum



A New Model

Art and hospitality has always been intertwined in most hotels in Nigeria and even across Africa because in many cases they were the only spaces available for artists to show their work to a wide international audience. However the way this has happened in most hotels involved the artists hiring out the space either at the going market rate or if in partnership with the hotel at a small or minimal fee. These exhibitions in most cases lasted for two or three days and at most a week. This kind of arrangement has been the status quo for more than three decades and is ongoing.

However where Wheatbaker differs is in presenting a new model that takes the possibilities further by working with a designated consultant and curator. The idea was to move away from a culture of rapid turnover of artists and exhibitions in which little or no selection or criteria was applied towards a programme that was more selective and thoughtful. Enter Sandra Obiagio and her company Sandra Obiagio Contemporary (SMO).

At the opening of the Wheatbaker, Obiagio's art consulting company was also in its founding stages and ready to explore different models and curatorial formats. From the beginning it was understood by both The Wheatbaker and SMO that this would be an ongoing partnership underpinned by building a collection on one hand and by presenting through incisive exhibitions an insight into the dynamic and vibrant contemporary art scene of Nigeria. This would be achieved through monographic, thematic and group exhibitions which presented a diversity of media across painting, photography, drawing, sculpture and mixed media.



Over the past 6 years they have presented a local and international audience with the works of established as well as emerging Nigerian artists based within the country but also living in the Diaspora. One of the early collaborations with CCA, Lagos included the Collectors' Series with renowned artist Duke Asidere. And since then, I have attended some groundbreaking exhibitions including the one by sculptor Olu Amoda or the crowd pulling exhibition such as Polly Alakija or Gillian Hopwood's Photographers' Odyssey showing images of Lagos dating back over 50 years.

The Wheatbaker and SMO have and continue to build a successful art partnership that remains unique in the country in the way it presents art in a space used by different publics but also in supporting and developing the local art ecosystem. I look forward to what the next five years will bring as the innovation continues.

Bisi Silva, 2017



"The Wheatbaker Collection is unique and no other hotel offers this kind of experience in Nigeria today. The importance and value of an art collection cannot be based on its physical size alone but also on the quantum of education, culture, pleasure and joy it offers collectors and audiences and this is what the Wheatbaker art collection is all about. The permanent collection may still be growing in size but what it lacks in quantity, it compensates for through the richness and diversity of its collection of works from different generations of Nigerian modern and contemporary artists."

Sehinde Odimayo
Curator & Art Critic



PAINTINGS

Susanne Wenger (1915 - 2009) was already a celebrated Austrian artist when she moved to Nigeria in 1950, but it was Yoruba mythology that inspired her to express her true spiritual and artistic depth. She attended the School of Applied Arts in Graz, Austria and the Higher Graphical Federal Education and Research Institute and then studied at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna alongside, among others, Herbert Boeckl. From 1946, Wenger was an employee of the communist children's magazine " Our Newspaper ", of which the cover of the first edition she designed. In 1947 she co-founded the Vienna Art- Club . After living in Italy and Switzerland in 1949 she went to Paris, where she met her future husband, the linguist Ulli Beier. That same year, after Beier was offered a position as a phoneticist in Ibadan, Nigeria, the couple married in London and emigrated to Nigeria. However, the couple moved from Ibadan to the village of Ede the following year. Susanne was profoundly moved by the sanctity of the OsunmOsogbo Grove and became the leading advocate to protect it. For over 40 years, she, along with a group of local artists built phenomenal sculptures and dotted the forest of the Grove with monumental works of art. For Susanne, "Art was an expression of the sacred" rather than a commercial undertaking. This extraordinary family of artists became known as the New Sacred Art Movement, creating one of the most important sculptural landscapes in the world. Financial support for the building of the sculptures came mostly from the sale of her artwork. From the mid 1980's to 2004, Susanne had many important international exhibitions. Many of her drawings, paintings, silk screen prints and batiks that she created over her 59 years in Nigeria and her early days in Austria are conserved in a purpose built gallery in Krems, Austria. But she left her most important work to Nigeria in the Groves of Osogbo. In 2005 the Osun Osogbo Groves were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in honour of the art it contains and the cultural legacy it embodies. The Adunni Olorisha Trust is dedicated to preserving this remarkable art legacy



Obaluaye Riding a Horse Through the Town, Limited Edition 2015 (E 1/75),
Reproduction Print on Paper, 51 x 61 cm

"What I can offer is to provide a brief glimpse of this immense world for others: like a vast landscape at night, lit for a fraction of a second by lightning. Art can succeed--even if only for brief moments-- in making people intensely themselves."

Susanne Wenger

Bruce Onobrakpeya is one of Nigeria's most prestigious Partistic pioneers, and presents 36 rare prints spanning his prolific career. He grew up in Delta State, Nigeria, and obtained a Diploma in Fine Arts and a Teacher's Certificate from the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology (now called Ahmadu Bello University) in Zaria in 1962. Onobrakpeya was a pioneer member of the Zaria Art Society, a student group which sought to develop a new aesthetic language deeply rooted in African tradition and philosophy. The group included Uche Okeke, Yusuf Grillo, Demas Nwoko, Oseloka Osadebe and other students who drew strength from the post-colonial independence movement. These aspiring young artists were later called the "Zaria Rebels" and quickly made their mark internationally. "We were not rebelling against anything as such but thought that the idea of just using the western art technique without relating it to our culture wasn't right" commented Onobrakpeya, who began to experiment with diverse media that showcased Nigeria's rich history, culture & philosophy, environment, as well as chronicling the nation's socio-political development through paintings, sculpture, prints, and installations. Onobrakpeya has received many awards and his works have been exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 1990, the Tate Modern in London, the National Museum of African Art of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., The Malmö Konsthall in Malmö, Sweden and The National Gallery of Modern Art, Lagos to name a few. He received the UNESCO Living Human Treasures Award in 2006. Onobrakpeya lives in Lagos and spends most days working in his studio, if not teaching art at his Harmattan Workshop retreat in his home town of Agbarha-Ottor.

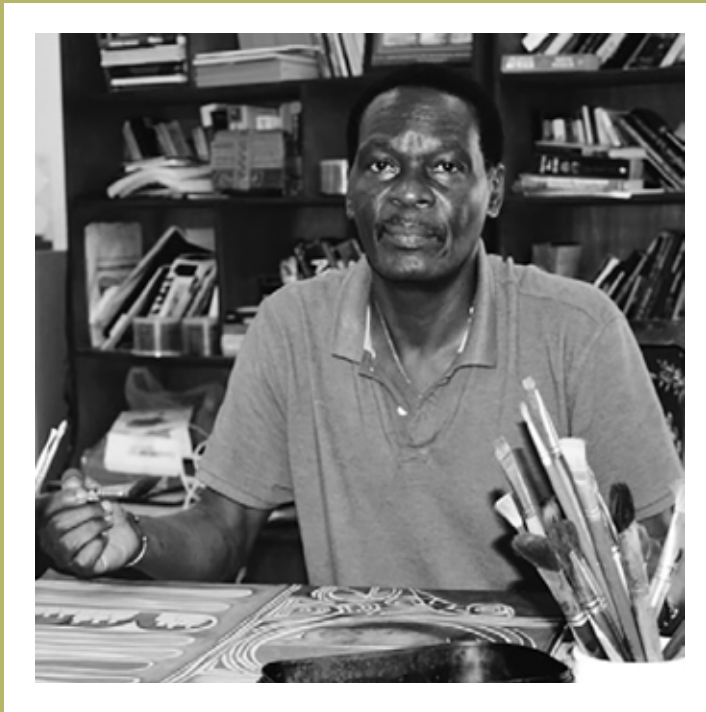


Ekpu Idolo (Money Bag), Plastograph, 106.5 x 79 cm, 2015

"I use my art to comment, question and advise. The prints help me to reflect on aspects of life such as our philosophies, history, environment and conceptualizing the future. The prints help you to dream and dream very well."

Bruce Onobrakpeya

Tayo Adenaike



Tayo Adenaike (born 1954) received a BA in Fine Art from the University of Nigeria Nsukka in 1979 and Masters of Fine Art with an emphasis on painting from the same institution. He is one of the master artists of Eastern Nigeria and his work draws strong inspiration from Igbo visual narratives such as the Uli tradition of linear design and the Nsibidi tradition. Part of the fascination with Adenaike is that he is of Yoruba heritage, his passion for Igbo symbols and culture was fostered at Federal Government College, Warri, where he studied and was first exposed to Fine Art. After completing his studies at Nsukka he remained in the East of Nigeria and began to work at two Enugu based companies as a Director, a Cofounder and Creative Director. Today his advertising business is still thriving and his cultural fascination with Igbo symbolism allows him to create pieces that flourish at exhibitions both locally and internationally. He produces beautifully crafted and intricate paintings that are rooted in the Uli tradition but are implemented through his own watercolour technique. The images he creates are ethereal and philosophically complex. He has innate ability to convey emotion and challenge reality with his strokes whilst simultaneously maintaining a deep connection to aesthetic beauty. His style is often analogous to the complex realities and mastery of Salvador Dali.



Burrow of Rest, 2004, Watercolour on paper, 45 x 61 cm

"I paint for the joy of painting, just like a dancer would dance for the joy of dancing. If in the process of painting I have enough work to display for public viewing and I get applauded or chastised, neither response would make me stop painting. Painting to me is like writing, you keep writing because of the joy you derive from writing. External factors or people far removed from your thoughts or the creative process should not really matter much."

Tayo Adenaike

Multidisciplinary artist Gbenga Offo, was born in 1957. He graduated from the Yaba College of Technology in 1984, where he received two awards for being the Best Overall Art Student and Best Graphic Art Student. After a decade of working in advertising, he dedicated himself to full-time studio practice in 1996. As a painter and sculptor, Offo has cultivated a unique style, working with wood and metal. But he is best known for his expressive figurative paintings and drawings that explore human movement, emotions, and associations through cubist, angular, and multidimensional movements. Using deep-hued acrylics and oil paints, Offo's works reveal a myriad of stories inspired by social interactions and sensitivities, touching on themes such as politics, culture, migration, music, human rights, love, disparities, and unity. Offo's works have been showcased in exhibitions in Nigeria, the United Kingdom, and the United States including "Hidden Gem", GFA - Sach Gallery, November (2022), "Freedom", SMO Contemporary (2016), "Faie African Art", Chicago, Gbenga Offo (2015), "Constant Capital", Gbenga Offo (2014), "The Story Continues", Didi Museum (2002), and Signature Gallery (1999). His artworks have been featured in private and public auctions in Lagos, Abuja, and the UK, He is a member of the Guild of Professional Fine Artists and the Society of Nigerian Artists.



Kiss, 2016, Acrylic on Canvas, 152 x 142 cm

"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 – colours speak to me and often change the topic."

Gbenga Offo

Mike Omoighe (1958 - 2021) graduated with a degree in art from the Yaba College of Technology (1978), he received an HND from Auchi University in 1980 and Certificate in Polytechnic Management from the University of Lagos. In 1994, he got his Masters in Communication Arts from the University of Ibadan & Masters Fine Art (MFA) from the University of Benin, 2014. He received enviable mentorship by two of Nigeria's most celebrated artists, Yusuf Grillo and Bruce Onobrakpeya. The influence of these masters is still evident in his dedication to experimentation and Nigerian political expression and sometimes through his use of colour. His pieces are often large and colourful and convey complex layered histories, meanings and explorations through abstract forms and vibrant strokes. However, some of his most interesting recent exhibitions have included stylized charcoal sketches in black and white and smaller canvas pieces.



"People often only see masquerades as fetish and having purely performative functions. But I have used the concept of the traditional masquerade as a visual motif to remind us of how problems within our ancient traditional culture were settled amicably."

Mike Omoighe

Ilo Masquerade I, 2014, Black Conte Drawing on Paper, 56 x 46 cm

Duke Asidere was born in Lagos and is one of Nigeria's leading contemporary artists. He studied fine art at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and graduated with a first class in painting (1988). He also earned a Masters in fine art from the same institution (1990). From 1990 to 1995, Asidere lectured in painting, drawing and art history at the Federal Polytechnic, Auchi. In 2004, he took to photography under Don Barber's tutelage. Since then, he has engaged with cameras to search for inspiration, themes and accidents to imbibe in his creative pursuits. Asidere's work engages contemporary African politics. Through visual metaphors, the artist comments on the everyday human drama that surrounds him; political, social, psychological or cultural. Furthermore, he adds an element of surprise to these sketches of human drama by infusing them with irony and humour. Asidere's broad oeuvre ranges from headless or limbless figures and faces of strangely hybrid beings to densely populated urban landscapes, accentuated with thick strokes of vivid colour. He has also turned to car enamel paint, which he applies with a spray gun to produce emotionally charged works that retain figurative subject matter, and at the same time emphasise abstract qualities. Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of Asidere's style is his simplicity of form and expressive line, which he achieves with an economy of means. Asidere has also participated in several solo and group exhibitions, both locally and internationally.



The Brain Analysis, 2015 - 16, Oil on Canvas, 184 x 122 cm

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

Duke Asidere

Pius Emorhokpor was born in Delta state in 1962 and graduated in Fine Arts from the Yaba College of Technology in 1988. Besides working briefly as a designer/illustrator with This Week and The African Guardian magazines Pius has worked closely with Prof. Bruce Onobrakpeya for many years, learning from the great master artist and developing his own distinctive style of plastography. His etching and polymerized technique on plate is re-enforced with resin, onto which the artist builds and creates low relief surfaces. Pius' inspiration comes from traditional culture and typical scenes and Nigerian socio-cultural landscapes.



Edeki, Giclee print, 2014, 45 x 33 cm

"This picture focuses on the corporate players – their intrigues, power play, analysis, forecast and speculations. The men in suits are smart, intelligent and upwardly mobile people whose wealth of knowledge, expertise and consultancy shape the corporate world. The umbrellas in Men in Suits II represent refuge and respite from policy fluctuation and inconsistency of government, harsh policies and circumstances. The expertise and consultancy of the men in suits help surmount all these adversities and create shades for businesses to thrive year in, year out to sustain corporate activities.."

Pius Emorhokpor

Obiageli Annabel Zeinab Okigbo grew up in Nigeria until the age of 16. She continued her studies in Kent, then graduated from Oxford Brooks University with a BA in Architecture and pursued her post-graduate studies at the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London. She practiced architecture in London, Rome and Paris until 1995 when she moved to Brussels where she currently lives with her two children. Her training as an architect left a strong imprint on her work, expanding her reach through new media and support, ranging from “Indian ink on linen” to oil paint on canvas and collage. She has exhibited in Nigeria, United Kingdom, Dubai and Belgium including two major solo exhibitions in Lagos, 2003 and London, 2007. She established the Christopher Okigbo Foundation in 2005, which is tasked with researching and preserving the legacy of her late father, the poet Christopher Okigbo (1932-1967).



The Pioneer - Kwame Nkrumah, 2019, Ink Wash Print on Silk Satin, 70 x 70 cm

"I am continually inspired by; Italian Renaissance art, early Flemish masters (14th century), Mbari art and ideology (Igbo, Nigeria), ink paintings by "Ohwon" Jang Seung-Ub (1843-97) & Shintao, the poetry of Christopher Okigbo (1932_67) & Hafez (13th century), the writings of Joseph Campbell, Afro-beat, Funk and Hip-Hop."

Obi Okigbo

Kainebe Osahenye was born in Abgor Delta State in 1964, and studied at the Auchi Polytechnic as well as the Yaba College of Technology, graduating with a major in painting in 1989. In 2012, Osahenye received a Masters of Fine Arts (MFA) from Goldsmith College in the UK. Osahenye is one of Nigeria's foremost contemporary artists. His works have developed from large-scale neo-expressionistic paintings into a process of experimental appropriation using found objects to tackle the issues about life, spirituality, consumerism, identity, and the environment. He has used burnt, and crushed beverage cans, water bottles, newspapers, chicken wire, fabric, juice packs and many other found objects to create huge installations and sculptures, as well as paintings. Osahenye's trademark of layering, stacking, and sequencing objects, sometimes in their thousands, creating repetitive, multi-media works, has gained him critical acclaim, as he transforms simple objects into intricate, sometimes monumental art works. Osahenye has taken part in numerous international residencies including at the Vermont Studio Center, and the School of Visual Arts in New York, as well as at the Harmattan Workshop led by Prof. Bruce Onobrakpeya. Osahenye has showcased his work at many international fairs and exhibitions including at the Johannesburg Artfair, Art 14, the Center for Contemporary Art Lagos, the Nigerian National Museum, E-week in Freiburg, Germany, as well as the Skoto Gallery in New York; his works are regularly featured at international auction houses including Philips de Pury, Bonhams, and Arthouse Contemporary.



I Will Sit and Wait I, 2017, Spray Paint on canvas, 61 x 66 cm

"To examine the alarming trend of consumerism, I not only use discarded materials as collages or assemblage, I also explore paintings in its conventional mode by using art materials acquired from art stores. For instance, I am motivated by the use of spray paints, occasionally combining the medium with other traditional mediums like oil, pastel and acrylic. With spray paint, I experience dynamic fluency and fluidity. The chance occurrences that this medium presents allow for fresh unanticipated dialogues to happen. And with openness and close markings, I sometimes get surprised with a certain vibrancy and newness which I juxtapose with used/discarded materials."

Kainebe Osahenye

Polly Alakija



Polly Alakija was born in the United Kingdom in 1966 and moved to Nigeria in 1989. Between 2005 and 2011 she was based in South Africa. She now works from her studio in Lagos. Her work is included in numerous private collections in the USA, UK, France, Nigeria and South Africa and in several corporate collections. Recently she painted the pillars of the fly-over bridge at Falomo round-about in Ikoyi, Lagos, which was a highlight of the Lagos at 50 art installations created across the city. Polly's work has progressed over the years from being almost completely abstract towards works that are increasingly figurative. Her monumental and accessible images lend themselves to public spaces. She is increasingly engaged in community and educational programs in an effort to promote a broad art platform reaching a diverse audience.



Shelter II, 2013, Limited Edition Inkjet Print, 39 x 52 cm

"I do love street art, murals, some graffiti art that I see happening. I enjoy the fact that it is ephemeral up to a point, that it can't be owned, framed, hung up on a wall. I am turning my objects and mural work into limited edition prints, but the original will never be "owned". The original will have its own life: it will go back on the road, the building will get re-developed."

Polly Alakija

Raoul Da Silva



Raoul Da Silva (born 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 works range from colourful and large canvas pieces to highly political outdoor installations. In 2013 he produced an outdoor beach sculpture using materials found on the beach, the installation was a statement against the environmental degradation of the Lagos coastline and was created with the help of youth living around the Taqua bay area in Lagos.



Untitled, 2002, Oil on Cardboard, 80 x 110 cm

"Most of my works don't have titles. They are abstract and not realistic. I want to create a space where a kind of communication takes place between the viewer and my work. I believe that everyone has a different background and also a new view point. I want people to see my works and bring their own idea to it."

Raoul Da Silva

Tony Nsofor



Tony Nsofor (born 1973) studied Fine Applied Arts at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka and majored in painting in 1997. He has participated in exhibitions for the Nigeria British Council, the Lagos National Museum and Omenka Gallery, to name a few. As a student in Nsukka, he worked as a studio assistant for Professor Obiora Udechukwu and the experience has had a discernable impact on his artistic journey. He has said that the emphasis on the study of iconographical Uli symbolism, which Nsukka University is known for, still determines his artistic process today. However, he does not use Uli symbols to convey their conventional meaning but rather “scribbles and scratches” them onto the canvas as part of his own contemporary expression. His work is firmly driven by the subconscious and often the story of the work becomes clear to him when he steps back to observe where his process has led him.

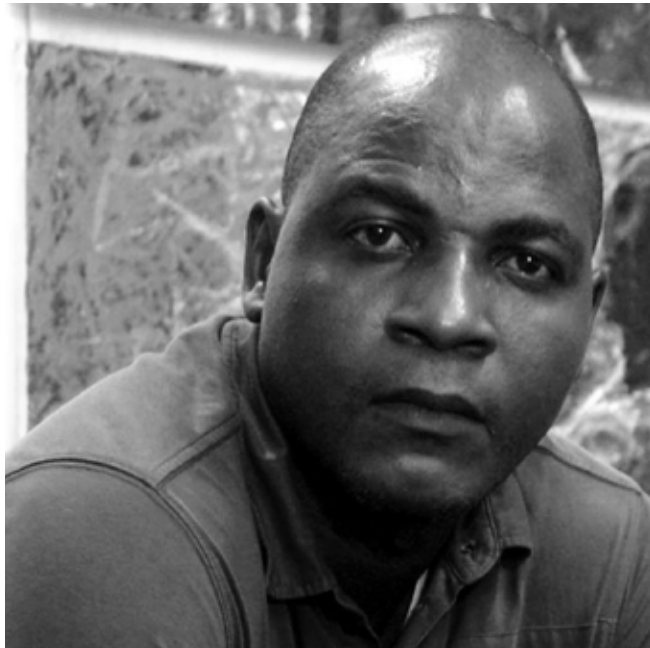


Cattle Stand II, Print, 2016 - 2017, 32 x 20 cm

"My paintings are strongly affected by the training at Nsukka, which is popular for the iconographical symbols of Uli. In a loose way (I prefer to call it a Natural Synthesis), I work my canvas with a personal 'iconography'. I may add in symbols from Uli or Nsibidi, but more often do not include them for their traditionally accepted meanings. I scribble and scratch and draw with random lines. My figures are also drawn with the same freedom."

Tony Nsofor

Chika Idu



Chika Idu (born 1974) is an exciting artist 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.



The Other Life, 2015, Acrylic on Canvas, 121 x 91 cm

"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 collect 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."

Chika Idu

Nnenna Okore



Born in Australia (1975) and raised in Nigeria, Nnenna Okore received her first degree in painting from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in 1999 and went on to receive an MA and MFA at the University of Iowa. She received the Fulbright Scholar Award in 2012 and is currently a Professor of Art at Chicago's North Park University. Her works -which have been exhibited in museums and galleries in Chicago, New York, London, Paris Cancun, Sao Paulo and Copenhagen – are mostly abstract and inspired by textures, colours and landscapes. She is fascinated by discarded materials and often uses diverse colours, textures, fabrics and materials to create sculptures and installations that are rich and layered in meaning. Her processes are inspired by her observation of ordinary Nigerian performing daily tasks and crafts.



Old Birth, 2016, Oil pastel on handmade paper, 60 x 74 cm

*"My tree my foundation,
one of my roots goes under your skin.
Even the touch of your burning love
makes me dance in the rain,
you are in my blood.
You design my entire universe
with your artistic patterns
of new dawn!!!"*

Nnenna Okore

Peju Alatise



Peju Alatise (born 1975) is a Nigerian mixed media artist, writer and poet, with an educational background in architecture. She has always been drawn to art and has been a practicing studio artist for over sixteen years. Peju has held several solo exhibitions, and her works reside in many local and international collections around the world. In 2016, she was selected to become a fellow at the Smithsonian Institute of African Art and her work was recently exhibited at Venice Biennale's 57th edition.



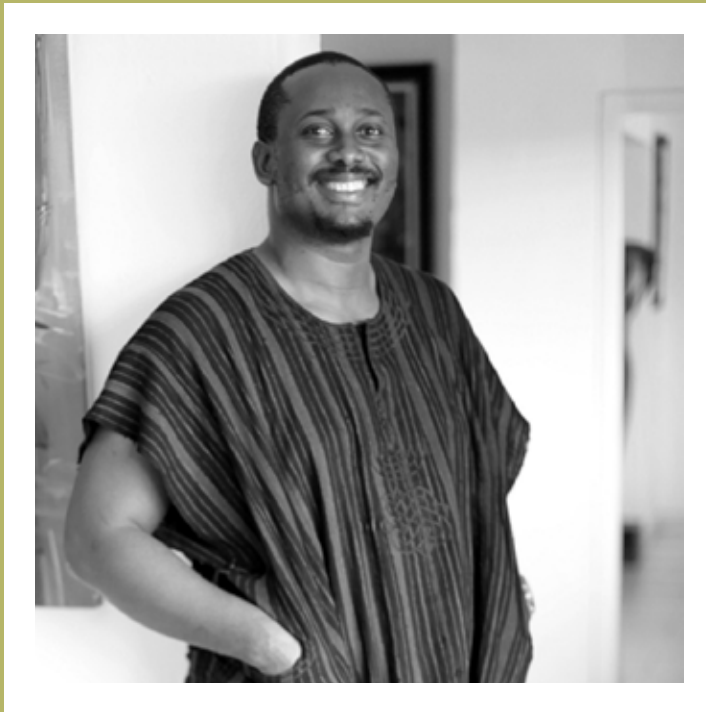
Old Birth, 2016, Oil pastel on handmade paper, 60 x 74 cm



"This is my experimentation with face painting. Before the western influence of beauty products and cosmetic, the African woman had her own style and products for beauty and adornment rituals. The face painting is one of them. I really wish that those days could come back and I could paint my face in the stripes of a zebra without looking like a freak!!! Face painting was a very unique individualistic expression of one's self; more than clothing, face painting can dictate how a person is perceived. Every dot, every stroke and each pattern on the face gives the wearer an accent to their personality. The freedom to be!!"

Peju Alatise

Isaac Emokpae



Isaac Emokpae (born 1976) is a Nigerian visual artist who studied art at the University of Lagos under Professor Abayomi Barber. He focused on painting at University but has worked in fashion photography and journalistic photography for most of his working life. He is the son of well known Nigerian modern artist, Erhabor Emokpae and while he has inherited much of his father's flare he also carved out a strong name for himself in a short time. Isaac has won awards such as the UNESCO "Save of Treasures" art competition in Troyes, France (1996) and the Hasselblad Masters (Semi Finalist Award) for Photography (2007). He is increasingly known for his paintings on board and canvas which touch on complex philosophical themes such as duality.

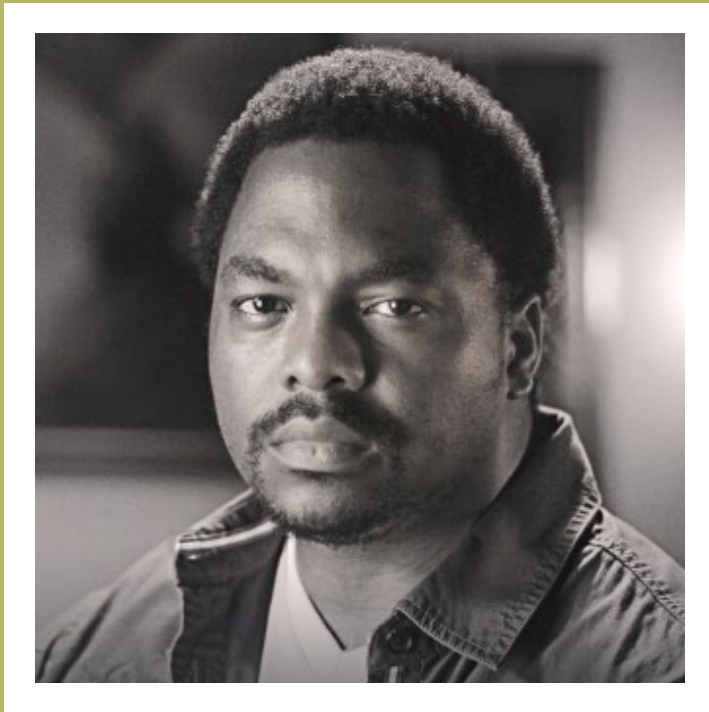


Layer Cake, 2013, Oil on Paperboard, 75 x 62 cm

"My forms represent the semi tangible container that we call the soul, and the colours are expressive of various emotions that we all encounter in our everyday relationships."

Isaac Emokpae

Ibe Ananaba



Ibe Ananaba (born 1976 in Belgium), grew up in Aba, Nigeria, and was inspired to draw at an early age by his older brother who is also an artist. He eventually studied Fine and Applied Arts at the Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu, Nigeria and graduated with Distinction in Painting in 1999. Ananaba worked as an Art Director in the advertising industry for fifteen years before going into full-time studio practice. Always willing to push creative boundaries, he experiments using an interdisciplinary approach to his art, working as a painter, fashion illustrator, art director, calligraphist, designer, and muralist. He has taken part in many group shows and solo exhibitions in Nigeria, South Africa, the United States, the UK, Israel, and Canada. He won First Prize in the Art Masters Contest, at Art Vancouver in 2019. His work is in important collections including the National Assembly Abuja, and he has regularly taught workshops and seminars on diverse topics including 'Harnessing your artistic potential', amongst many others. Ananaba also volunteers as the Chief Art Consultant and Coordinator of studio programs for the Girl Child Art Foundation, a non-governmental organization committed to using art as an advocacy tool for adolescent girls. Ananaba's work has been featured in numerous international publications including *Fashion: A Second Language* (Shoko Press, London, 2020), *Watercolor Artists Magazine* (2019), *Masters of Watercolors* (Planeta Muzyki Publishers, Finland, 2018), *The Villager* (Tracey McDonald Publishers, South Africa, 2018), *Fashion Illustration Africa*, (Shoko Press, London, 2016) and *Artists of Nigeria* (5 Continents Edition, Italy, 2012), and is listed in the Smithsonian Institution Libraries Collection. Ananaba lives in Lagos where he maintains his studio.



Daily Bread I, 2019, Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 inches

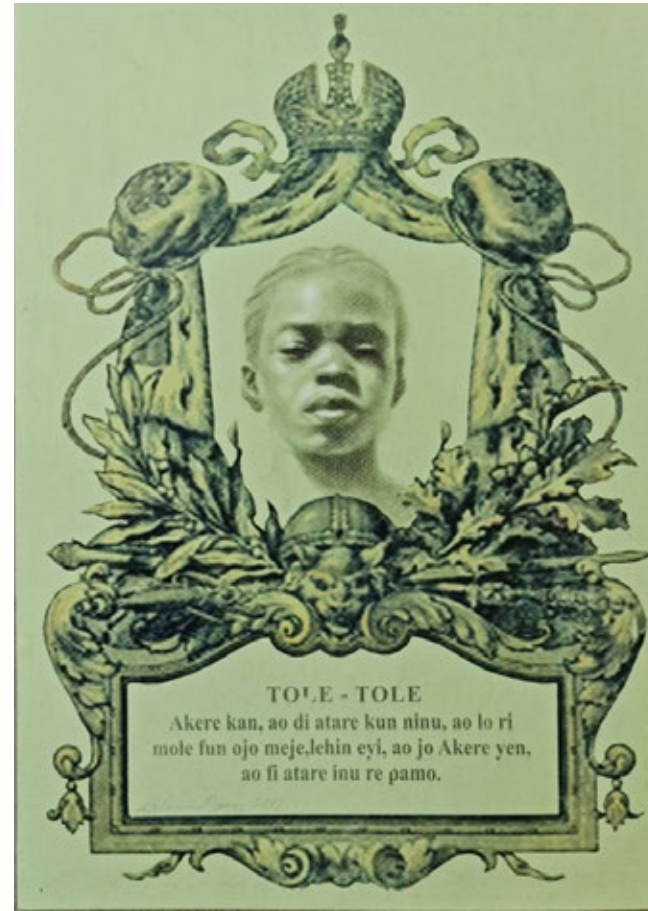
"Issues that influence contemporary living within my environment largely inspire my art. Monitoring the organic progression of my sketches basically informs my creative direction. I enjoy employing multidisciplinary approaches to my creations, in my quest for new experiences and to deepen the audience's interactivity with my art. I also value the therapeutic angle of the creative process as it engages my senses and opens new discoveries. Having to pause for deeper self-reflection on how to keep my head above the waters, alongside grappling with understanding the 'new normal' led to creating these works. It is a personal search for the glimpse of an anticipated sunny side of life and holding on to faith, with hope that all will be well regardless of the heavy tides we collectively swim against. My goal is to present visual songs of hope, and to look beyond the surface with the right focus, for the bigger opportunities that will ultimately make humanity smile, once again!"

Ibe Ananaba

Kelani Abass



Kelani Abass (b 1979) is a multi-disciplinary artist from Nigeria, who studied at the Yaba College of Art and Technology in Lagos state, graduating in painting with distinction. Since then he has had four solo exhibitions, has taken part in several group exhibitions in Nigeria and South Africa. Kelani's works probe difficult relations of belonging and identity. In addition to acrylic, oil, pastel and charcoal, he also explores the possibilities inherent in painting, photography, and printing to engage time and memory. He has won several awards and prizes including 1st prize in painting of the Caterina de Medici/3rd Black Heritage Prize (2010), and the Yusuf Grillo Award for best painting student at Yaba Tech (2007). He has taken part in several residencies, most recent being at the Headlands Center for the Arts in San-Francisco in October-November 2018, and is a member of the Society of Nigerian Artists.



"I am intrigued by how the past and present coalesce. I attempt to make a statement on the future that concedes the interdependence of different moments in time. I explore these themes through painting, photography and printing, using archival materials to highlight personal stories against the background of social and political events frozen in time and memory."

I engage the use of technology with the printing press, which I use as a metaphor for obsolete materials, transporting them into modern relevance, usurping outmoded machinery and tools such as printing cases, letterpress types, metal plates, rubber blocks and the stamping tool to generate new contemporary narratives."

Kelani Abass

Almanac Series(Ifo and Tole-tole), Charcoal, digital print and letterpress
30 x 42cm each , 2017

Patrick Akpojotor



Patrick Akpojotor (born 1982) is a multidisciplinary artist working across painting, drawing, printmaking, installation art, and sculpture. Akpojotor comes from Agbarha-Otor, Delta state, and lives and works in Lagos. He studied Fine Art at the School of Art, Federal Polytechnic, Auchi and Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu, where he majored in Graphic Design. He also trained as a studio assistant with Prof. Bruce Onobrakpeya, one of Nigeria's foremost experimental artists. Akpojotor has won several awards including the ArtXLagos Prize (2016), and the Olusegun Obasanjo Prize for the "Off The Bin Project" (2013). He has participated in several group exhibitions including "IN-TER-ACTIONS" at Rele Art Gallery. In 2019 he had his first solo exhibition curated by SMO Contemporary Art at the Wheatbaker. His work merges visual elements of the built environment, geometry, human forms and imagined spaces to create abstract compositions that interrogate our sense of perception challenging us to see differently.



Untold Space II, 2019, Charcoal on paper, 15 x 11 in

"My work is influenced by my fascination with African masks, the built space and architecture and its ability to shape ones identity. I am interested in the differences in human attitude, relating to the culture of a built environment that they inhabit. I have also observed how structures like architecture, roads and public spaces are named after people, which create an awareness of the person's deeds and archive their existence."."

Patrick Akpojotor

Olawunmi Banjo



Olawunmi Banjo (b. 1985) is a self-taught Nigerian visual artist who studied Entrepreneurship at the Pan-Atlantic University in Lagos. Banjo began her artistic journey in hyper-realism with her characteristic attention to detail, and has evolved her painting style to explore more surrealistic landscapes in an attempt to re-orient typical mind-sets. In her recent body of work, Banjo paints expressive wire figures, which explore deep ideologies by portraying everyday social and individual realities which confront us. By keenly observing nature, works of art, and life situations fueled by personal experiences and experiences of others, Banjo's art is a response to hidden realities which confront us individually and collectively across the globe. She has taken part in solo and group shows in her native Nigeria, and has showcased her work in numerous international exhibitions and art fairs including; The Invisible Hands at Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art (YSMA), Pan-Atlantic University, Lagos, Nigeria 2021 - 2022, Stasis by SMO Contemporary at Temple Muse, Lagos, Nigeria 2019, Re-Art Meets Africa, Ihlienworth, Germany 2018, Same Experience, Different Local at The Koppel Project Hive in London, UK 2018, 23rd & 24th Pan African Film & Art Festival (PAFF) in Los Angeles, USA 2015 & 2016, Press for Progress - Art Connects Women, International Women Arts Exhibition in Dubai, UAE 2018, Mind Revolution II at Praxis am Traveplat, Friedrichshain, Berlin, Germany 2015 – 2016, The 10th Afrika Tage at the Heinrich Heine University in Dusseldorf, Germany 2015, Mind Revolution at Nike Art Gallery, Lagos, Nigeria 2014 and Colours & Creativity by WIVA, National Museum, Lagos, Nigeria 2012. She was a nominee and finalist at the Global Art Awards (Painting category), Armani Hotel Burj Khalifa, Dubai, UAE 2017.



Inner Experience II, Oil on Canvas, 28 x 22 in, 2021

"Art resonates with humanity by making us slow down, pay attention and in the process bring the sometimes overlooked reality closer to us. It gives us a transcending understanding about life. In other words, Art magnifies reality and gives clarity to what we see and how we see life. Art enables us to see the world differently by speaking to the ultimate depth, allowing us to grasp the complexity in human experiences and reflect the ever changing human perspective. Art gives voice to the voiceless, inspires, energizes and shapes minds and societies. Art is the medium through which I create, add value and convey messages to people. I have found surrealism and realism useful in depicting my ideas, enabling people who view my works to grasp the message embedded in each piece. My most recent body of work are paintings of expressive wire figures, which is my way of describing a being and the countless energy that flows within each one of us. The various expressions of Art are a unifying force in bringing together people from diverse backgrounds to share a rare but meaningful experience in life. ."

Olawunmi Banjo

George Edozie



Multidisciplinary artist George Edozie was born in 1972 in Enugu state, Nigeria. His artistic talents emerged during his early childhood in Nsukka where he would create paintings, sketches and other crafts. He enrolled at the University of Benin where he graduated with a Bachelors Honors degree in Fine and Applied Arts in 1996. After his graduation, Edozie ventured into full time art. Edozie's impressionist paintings feature angular characters and a rich array of textures, which are integral to his works. His art delves into themes that address social-cultural, political, and economic biases in society, evoking strong emotions such as love, belonging, strife, and joy. Edozie is an internationally recognized artist, who has exhibited extensively in both solo and group exhibitions in Nigeria, the United States, and France. Some of which include; 'New Nigerian Conjunctions: The Art of George Edozie', National Museum Lagos, Nigeria, (2018); 'Back to Black Art Africa', Art Basel Miami (2017); 'Afro Love', Alexis Gallery, Lagos (2015); African Way of Art, La Galerie Vendome. His works have found homes in both public and private collections and spaces like the. Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, the Indianapolis Museum, and the Studio Museum Harlem in New York, The Pan Atlantic University Museum, Lagos and the Chimedie Museum, each piece, serving as a unique educational resource for visitors. A writer, Edozie co-authored the book ;101 Contemporary Artists, A Celebration of Modern Nigerian Art and Nigerian Contemporary Art which was published in 2010.

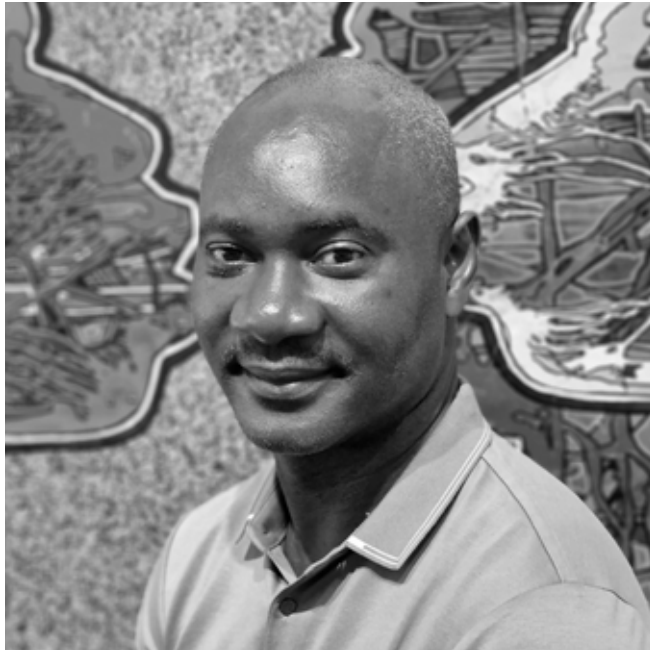


Praying Girl 3, Oil on canvas, 2020, 142.5 x 24 cm

"My latest body of work focuses on my life's journey and explores issues around marriage, parenting, and professional leadership challenges; the myriad of happenings between my creative spaces and the home front."

George Edozie

Tayo Olayode



Tayo Olayode is one of Nigeria's most exciting experimental artists who graduated from Ahmadu Bello University with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Art in 1998 with a specialization in painting. Olayode's oeuvre includes paintings, sculptures, tapestries and large scale sculptures in public spaces in Nigeria, utilizing diverse media including found objects such as rubber slippers, charcoal and metals. His fascination with unique textures and unusual applications led him to experiment and utilize complex techniques and styles. Olayode explores materials and methods, through an emphasis on line and color, with an aesthetic language that spans abstraction, realism and surrealism. Olayode has co-curated exhibitions in Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya. He was the winner of the Terra Kultur/Ford Foundation art award for the Best Young Artist in Nigeria (2006) after which he spent three months in Ghana under the tutelage of Professor Ablade Glover. He also won the Arthouse Foundation Scholarship to take part in a residency at the acclaimed Vermont Studio Cultural Exchange Program in 2014. He has received numerous awards including being the recipient of the Association of Fine Art Students (AFAS) Leadership Award as AFAS President in 1997 - 1998. Olayode lives and works in Lagos.



"My art comes to life through different media, grouped around specific themes and meanings. As I research and explore the medium and style, other deeper expressions are unveiled, which often gives birth to other forms of work. Sometimes, I utilize mundane domestic objects for colourful installations. I gain aesthetic joy from my works, and hope that my audience appreciates and receives value too."

Tayo Olayode

Royalty, 2016, Watercolour on paper, 91 x 66 cm



Inner Experience II, Oil on Canvas, 28 x 22 in, 2021

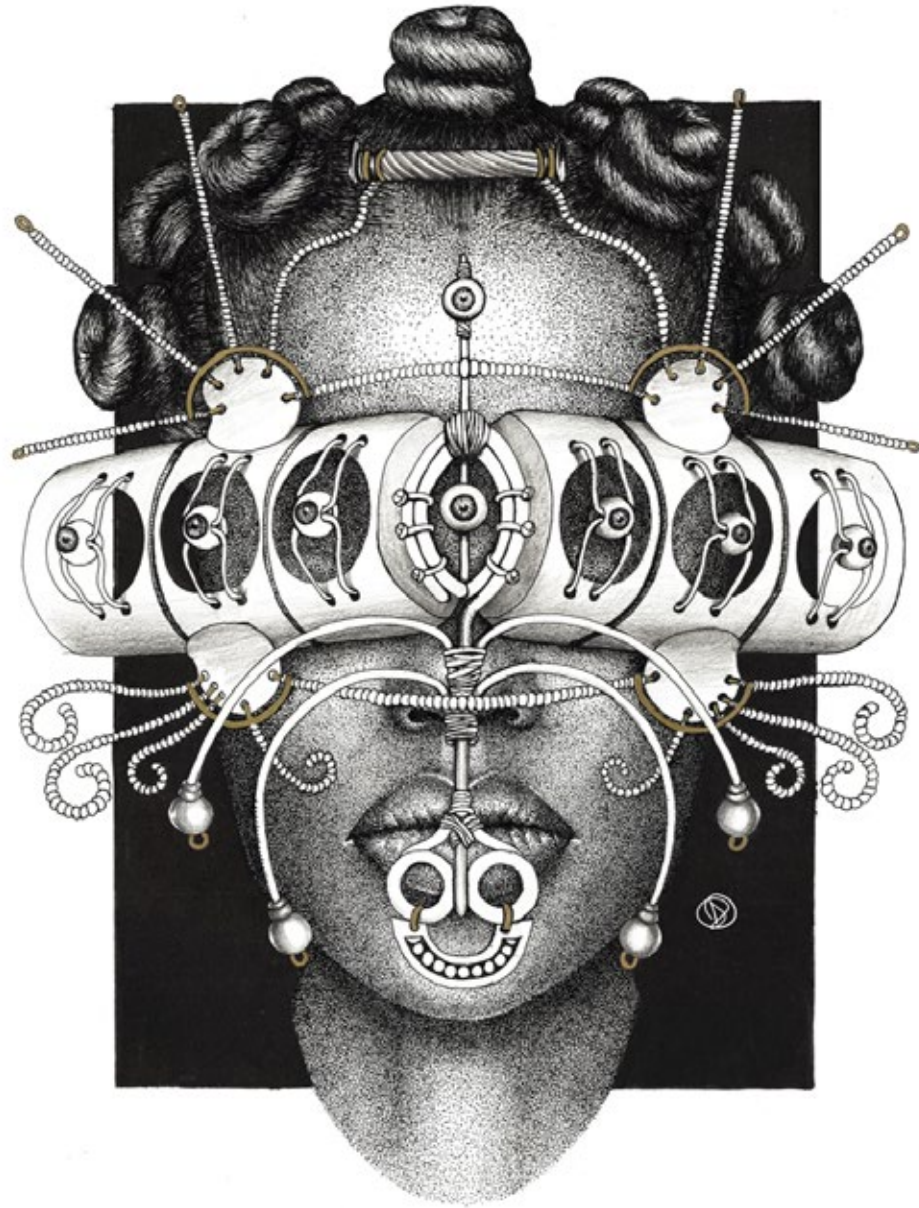
"In my AI Series, I am exploring the influence of AI technology on human creativity. The world has been overtaken by new tech trends, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between art created by humans and works made by AI. Through my paintings I am documenting current trends and exploring what the future could hold, with a fusion of human art with AI technology. I try to create 'digital colors', while layering human figures and forms meant to evoke characteristics of AI art."

Tayo Olayode

Data Oruwari



Data Oruwari (born 1987) is a self-taught Visual Artist and Creative Professional born and raised in Lagos, Nigeria. She is passionate about creativity and art is just one of the ways she expresses it. Though she holds no formal art training, her interest in art comes from her father who was an artist himself. Data's style is heavily influenced by the monochrome and intricate style of traditional Tattoo art. Using mostly a black Micropen, she draws detailed patterns, lines and dots that trap the soul of her subjects. Her work is storytelling void of words or colour, where the subject is transformed from something familiar to something peculiar. Her favourite subject of choice is "the Spirit" of the African Woman who she believes has been forgotten in modern times. Data has showcased her work at various art fairs and exhibitions including White Cloud Gallery in Washington, DC; 'Panorama' contemporary art fair in Lagos and Window Studio Community Art Centre in Brooklyn, New York.



Egungun - Oya, 2016, Pen & Ink, Graphite and Gold Ink on Archival Paper, 50 x 63.5 cm

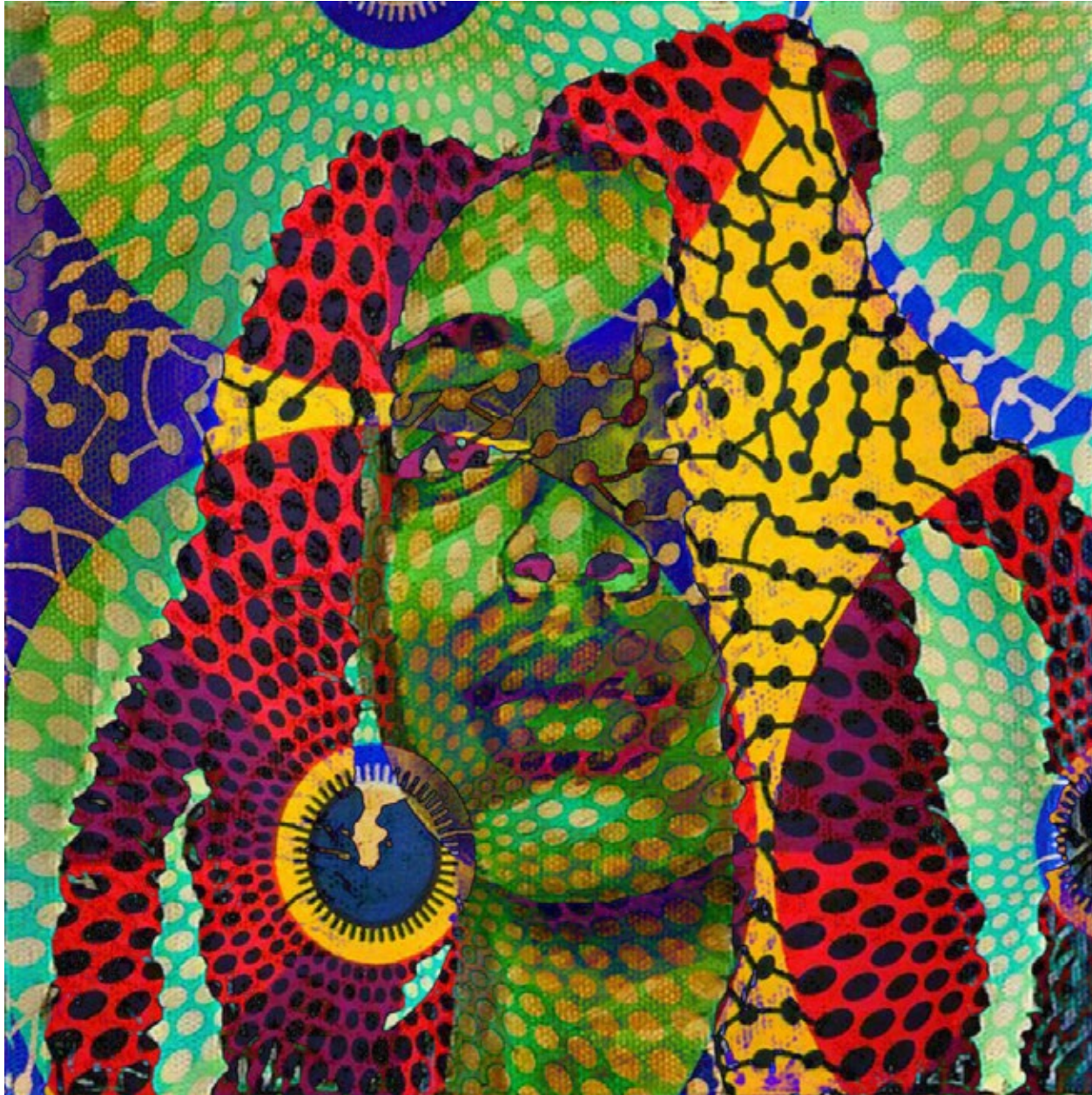
*" My work bridges the gap between spirituality and the modern day African woman in all the landscapes she finds herself in, exploring her identity and diversity. The vision capture "Spiritual Portraits" of African women, bringing the higher consciousness of the feminine energy to the surface. Her God-factor.
The Goddess"*

Data Oruwari

Somi Nwandu



Somi Nwandu (born 1993) was enamored with the arts from an early age. She was fascinated with photography and spent years exploring digital software alongside expressing her creativity through writing, painting, and fashion illustration. In 2013, she graduated from the Art Institute of New York with a degree in Fashion Design, and in 2016, further obtained 2 degrees in Fashion Business Management, and International Trade & Marketing for the Fashion Industries from the renowned Fashion Institute of Technology. She recently completed an MA in Global Creative and Cultural Industries (GCCII) from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) University of London while actively pursuing her art in photography, fashion and the digital world. Beyond academia, Somi draws inspiration from her experiences holding positions in branding, creative project management, marketing, and art direction. A burgeoning, award-winning photographer and visual artist, she believes in the power of art to uplift, unify, and inspire people. Working in various media, her hope is to emphasize the significance in building more crosscultural creative ties between Africa and the rest of the world. Somi's works have been exhibited in various group exhibitions, as well as at international fairs and photo festivals such as The Other Art Fair LA, New York Art Fair, the Lagos Biennial, LagosPhoto, and Xposure International Photography Festival Sharjah.



Self On Secrets, 2017, Digital print on canvas, 50 x 50 cm

"The future is digital. My artwork presents a story of the future and the past: my future and my past. I express the desire to hide and be seen, simultaneously, and the hesitations to treasure true beauty and strength while exploring the sui generis nature of individuality. I am my own muse. My thoughts and truths inspire me and express the universal struggle for identity – a merging of inner worlds with the textures of reality. My works show my facial features interwoven with patterns that reflect my powerful heritage and African culture."

Somi Nwandu

Christopher Samuel Idowu



Christopher Samuel Idowu (b.1995) is a visual artist from the coastal town of Badagry, Nigeria. He currently resides in Lagos State, where he works as a studio artist. He studied at the Yaba College of Technology where he majored in painting. He uses different media such as, conte crayon, charcoal, watercolor, acrylics, oils and even printmaking techniques. Being raised on a mission accounts for the inclusion of spiritual iconography and imagery in Idowu's paintings. The colors, residual architecture and selected sitters in his compositions reference the past and present landscapes of Badagry. His works explore time, history, personal experiences, memory, human connection and spirituality through portraiture, frequently paying respects to sites of places with cultural and historical significance. Idowu has his sights set in furthering his career as he pursues painting installations that are more meditative, theatrical, gradually working up to larger scale renditions.



Untitled III (Portrait from sugarcane plantation), Conte crayon, pastel, and acrylic on paper
2021, 37x 27 cm

"In my quest to find the interconnectedness and the shared sentiments that exist in everyone, the subjects in my oeuvre exhibit pensive moods and familiar spaces, with recognisable and relatable objects. Their gazes suggest uncertainty, inward reckoning and a fear of the unknown. My palette draws from the patina of deteriorating and fading photographs, revealing the importance that is attached to every moment. It is a recurring element in my work that I achieve through layering of bleach and color washes."

Christopher Samuel Idowu

David Ibukun Oniyide



David Ibukun Oniyide (b. 2002) is a visual artist born in Ila Orangun, Osun State and graduated from Camila High School in 2019. He relocated to Lagos State in 2020 to pursue a career as an artist. His works focus on societal and mental health issues plaguing underprivileged children. He started drawing cartoons as a kid and during high school, was taught drawing techniques by his brother, who was also an artist. He started pencil drawings and was inspired by hyperrealists artists like Ibim Cookey and Stanley Arinze. He switched from pencil to pen and ink to reduce his reliance on using erasers to correct mistakes in his drawings.



African Child, Ballpoint pen and oil on paper, 2021, 37x 27 cm

"Many people struggle with depression which is a serious mental health condition. It can affect anyone, regardless of their age, and can impact daily life, including the way they sleep, feel, and think. It can also affect their ability to work, and maintain relationships with friends and family."

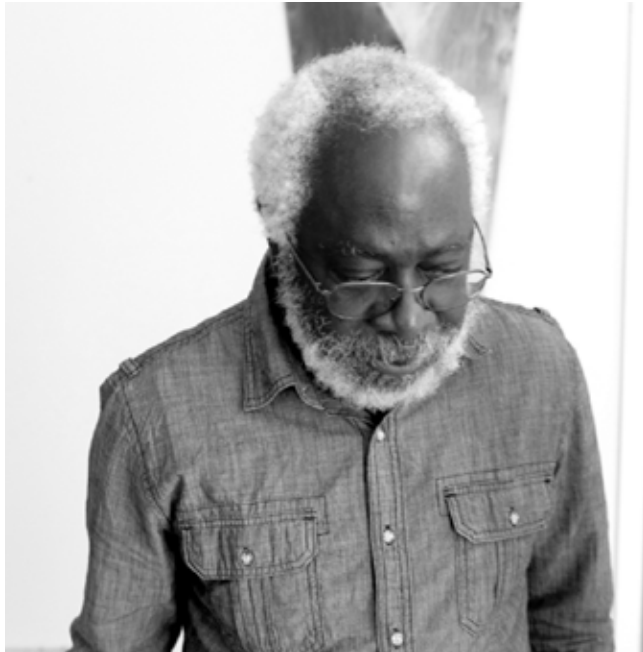
My message is that we need to speak openly about our mental health, because suffering in silence is not safe. If you think someone you love has depression, offer your support, listen to them and be patient."

David Ibukun Oniyide



SCULPTURES

Billy Omabegho



Billy Omabegho (born 1944) received formal art training in the United States at Cornell University and New York University. He has commissioned a number of major works including "Zuma", which is a symbol of the Nigerian Mission to the United Nations in New York City, the sculpture memorial to the former Nigerian Head of State, Murtala Ramat Muhammed in Benin City, and the Lagos International Fair Trade Symbol. He has also been commissioned to do large-scale environmental sculpture in the United States. Omabegho has been acknowledged as the first Nigerian sculptor to design and execute modern large-scale monumental works for strategic public places in Nigeria. He was also commissioned to do the only sculpture garden of State House, Marina, Lagos. From 2010 to 2011, two of his designs were featured in the Global Africa Project, a major exhibition at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York. His sculptures are rooted in African Symbols and a dedication to his own cultural and national heritage, which he has applied to his formal training and techniques

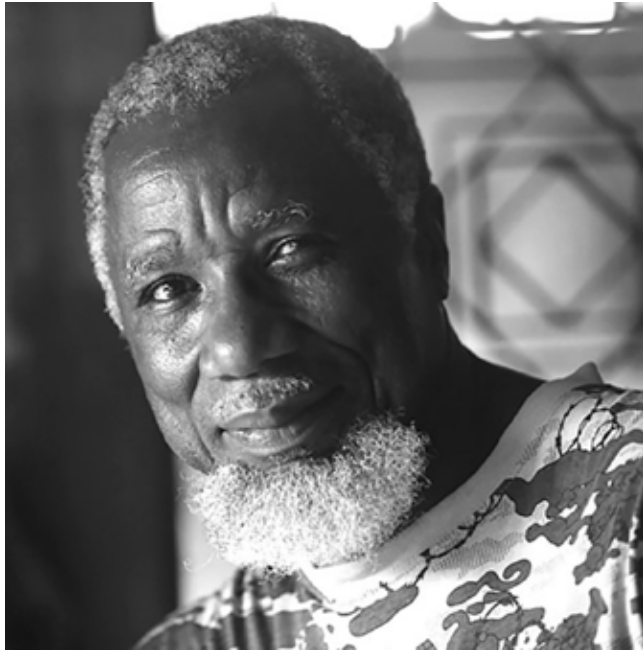


Synapse, 2012, Painted Wood 80 x 38 cm

"The form of this sculpture portrays the minute gaps or junctions across which impulses or information are transmitted from one to another at the point of contact. It thus symbolizes the synergy of communication, the interaction of two or more forces so that their combined effect is greater than the sum of their individual parts"

Billy Omabegho

Raqib Bashorun



Raqib Bashorun (born 1955) is one of Nigeria's most avant garde sculptors. His exemplary career as an artist and teacher is marked by major exhibitions held in the United States and Nigeria. Bashorun holds an MFA in Sculpture with a minor in Drawing (2002), and an M.Ed (Art Education, 1984) from the University of Missouri in Columbia, USA. A retired member of the teaching staff of the Yaba College of Technology, he at various times held several important positions including Principal Lecturer at the School of Art, Design and Printing, Chief Lecturer and Head of the Department of Graphics, (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.



Ebb And Flow, 2014, Aluminium and Wood, Varied Dimensions

"Ebb and Flow shows two things which don't go together. I believe in materials coexisting just like ideas coexisting. One is static and one is flowing. It reflects the good, the bad, and the ugly"

Raqib Bashorun

Obiora Anidi



Obiora Anidi (born 1957) is Chief Lecturer at the Fine and Applied Art Department, Enugu State College of Education. He graduated with a Higher National Diploma in Fine and Applied Arts & Sculpture from the Institute of Management & Technology (IMT) in 1982. He also holds Master's and Doctorate degrees in Educational Technology from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Enugu State University of Technology, respectively. A celebrated sculptor from the Uli tradition and one of the founding members of the famous AKA Circle of Exhibiting Artists, Anidi has taken part in many local and international art exhibitions in Nigeria, USA, Jamaica, Germany, and Italy. Anidi's powerful sculptures are recognized and prized in the Nigerian contemporary art tradition; "their lucid, figurative and abstract formal language tends to blend with their ambiguous titles to make the viewer understand the physical experiences that he has translated into sculptural expressions" according to Dr. Eva Obodo of the University of Nigeria Nsukka's Fine & Applied Arts Department



Robosity Of A Culture, 1991, Marble, Concrete and Metal, 30 cm

"Rich cultural values are the banner of any system. They are indeed the fortress that can renew society in the face of challenge and failure."

Obiora Anidi

Olu Amoda



Olu Amoda (born 1959) has worked consistently over the past three decades to create a sculptural language that has unique character and beauty. Working as a sculptor, muralist, furniture designer, and multimedia artist, Amoda is best known for using repurposed materials found from the detritus of consumer culture. His works often incorporate rusty nails, metal plates, bolts, pipes, and rods, that are welded together to create figures, animals, flora and ambiguous forms. Amoda uses these materials to explore sociopolitical issues relating to Nigerian culture today, from sex, politics, race and conflict to consumerism and economic distribution. More recently, Amoda has experimented with new materials and processes as he examines issues of privacy, surveillance, and voyeurism in the Nigerian urban environment. Amoda graduated in sculpture from Auchi Polytechnic, Nigeria, and received a Master's Degree in Fine Arts from Georgia Southern University, USA. Amoda has participated in exhibitions in the UK, USA, Switzerland, and his native Nigeria, among others. His works can found in many prestigious art collections including the Newark Museum and Fondation Blachère.



The Eye, 2011 Metal, 205 cm diameter

The “Eye 2011” is part of a capsule study series of sculptures that began in 2006, in Boone North Carolina, USA. In the capsule study series, my strategy is to invoke the aura, the fourth and fifth dimension of an object. The visible physical dimension in artworks also invokes curiosity as to what lies beneath the surface.

In the study of optics, the eye processes tons of images using large amounts of pixelated optical data carefully and overtly arranged, and transmitted to the brain to interpret. The brain, using the duct known as the optic nerve, thus guides us consciously away from danger, towards care and love.

The “eye 2011” is a sculpture with nails that travelled through different seaports of the world to arrive at the Lagos seaport. These nails are extracted at Amu Timber market where nails and pinewood cases part ways, only to meet again as a collectible in a collectors' home as furniture or sculptures. The small nails of the “eye 2011” symbolically represent pixelated optical data, the twisted rods or rib bars of the optic nerves, and the stainless steel ring is the brain that cyclically process information. Regardless of the location where it is mounted, the “eye 2011” will continue to play the dual roles of seeing the activity around it and being the object of the gaze. The “eye 2011” measures 81 inches in diameter and weighs 61 kg. It is left in its rusted state as a testimonial to latent energy but frozen in a capsule with a finish made out of a combination of sanding sealer and lacquer.





Guitar Boy, Metal Sculpture, 152 x 82 x 66 cm

Similar to Victor Uwaifo's encounter with mammy water, it took a visit of Richardson Ovbiebo, my student of sculpture who plays guitar, to my makeshift studio in quarter 56, Yaba Tech civil service subdivision, for this piece to come to fruition. The crescendo was this visit by Richardson's guitar while playing Victor Uwaifo's song 'Guitar Boy'; my dance was taking direct measurements and transferring it to the sculpture. Nails, plastic scissor cases and small rods were the objects I was engaged with at that time.

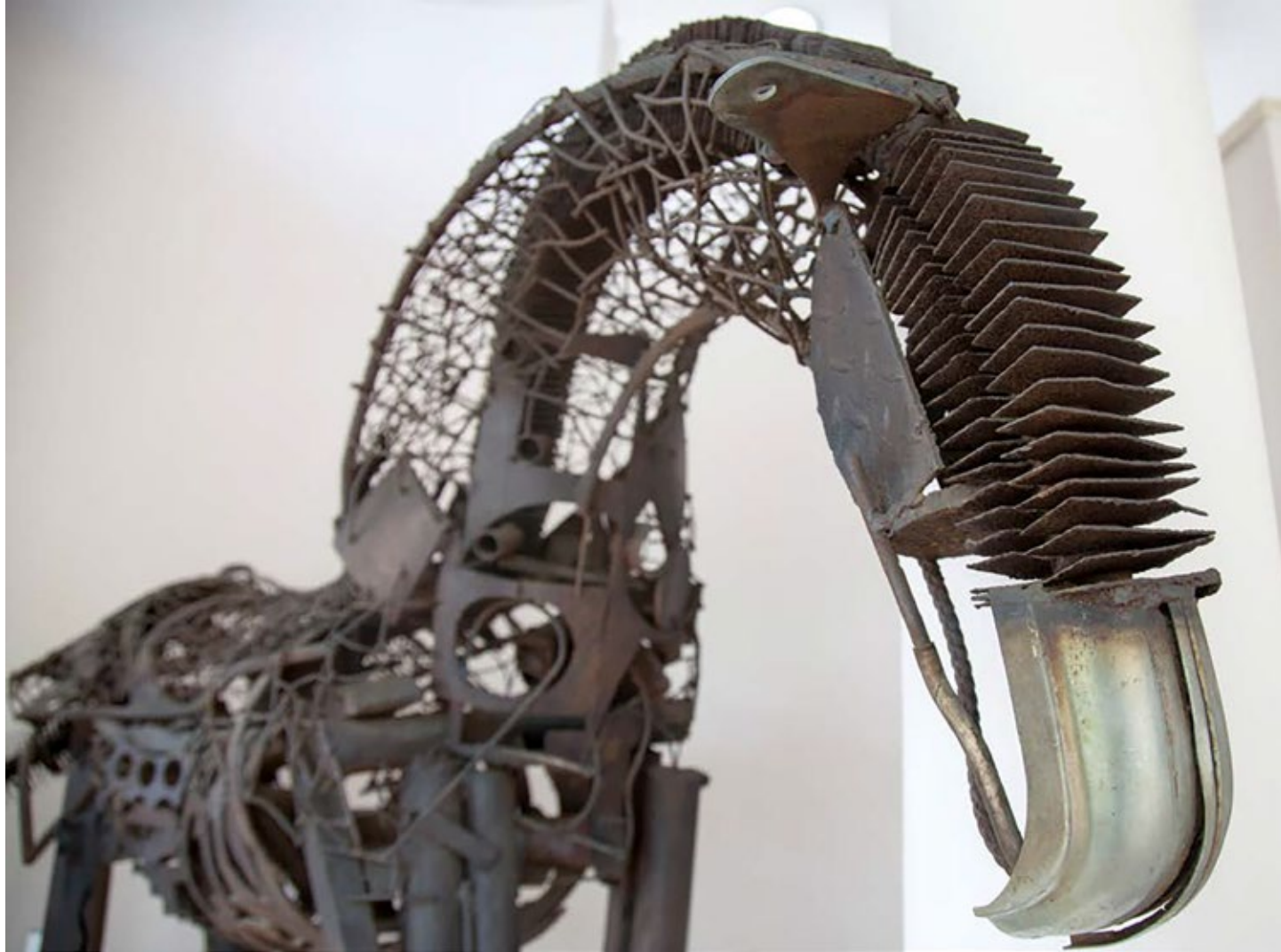
The Plastic cases were separated from the scissors but were determined to accompany the scissors on their journey as they were transformed into artworks. They suggested the fringes of the player's pants. These mobile fringes vibrate and oscillate when moved by passersby or wind. The sculptural aesthetics attempted in this piece are that of dancing and vibration.



Guitar Boy, Metal Sculpture, 152 x 82 x 66 cm

A fool at 40 is a fool forever, what a nation that drifts after forty years is!

Metaphorically the two horses Boxer and Glover in the 'Animal Farm', are the two horses in the coat of arms of Nigeria. By extension the issues and situation in 'Animal Farm' are similar to those in Nigeria. 'Animal Farm,' is a metaphor through which I am processing and reacting to issues in my art. Although Nigeria is not a communist or socialist state, it is governed by draconic laws as depicted in the 'Animal Farm'; with ceaseless arrests, censored newspapers and hordes of prowling armed police! The pride of the two horses holding up the shield, as in Nigeria's coat of arms, on which the eagle stands, is dilapidated by the burden we are currently carrying as citizens. The rivers Niger and Benue form the funnel that collects this nation's burden, emptying them into the Niger delta. Every Sunday Nigerian folk in their thousands go to churches in search of prosperity with no reference to the cause and effect of the burden. They seek prosperity very much unlike the discourse between Glover and Boxer. In the sculpture Glover and Boxer are depicted chatting and drinking from a trough shaped like a dead eagle enclosed in the molten black gold, the bane of our national crisis, with MEND - the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, OPC - Odua People's Congress, Egbesu and, recently Boko Haram.



"Though the animals win the battle, they do so at great cost, as many, including Boxer the workhorse, are wounded. Despite his injuries, Boxer continues working harder and harder, until he collapses while working on the windmill." – Animal Farm

Let's playfully recast this excerpt from the narrative of what happened in the 'Animal Farm'. Though Nigerians win the battle of change, they do so at great cost as many, including teachers and road sweepers, wounded Nigeria's workhouses. Despite their injuries, they continue working less, and protesting and agitating the windmill hoping the system will collapse. Change in changing self, is self-service, which is the recipe for the civic unrest experienced in today's Nigeria.

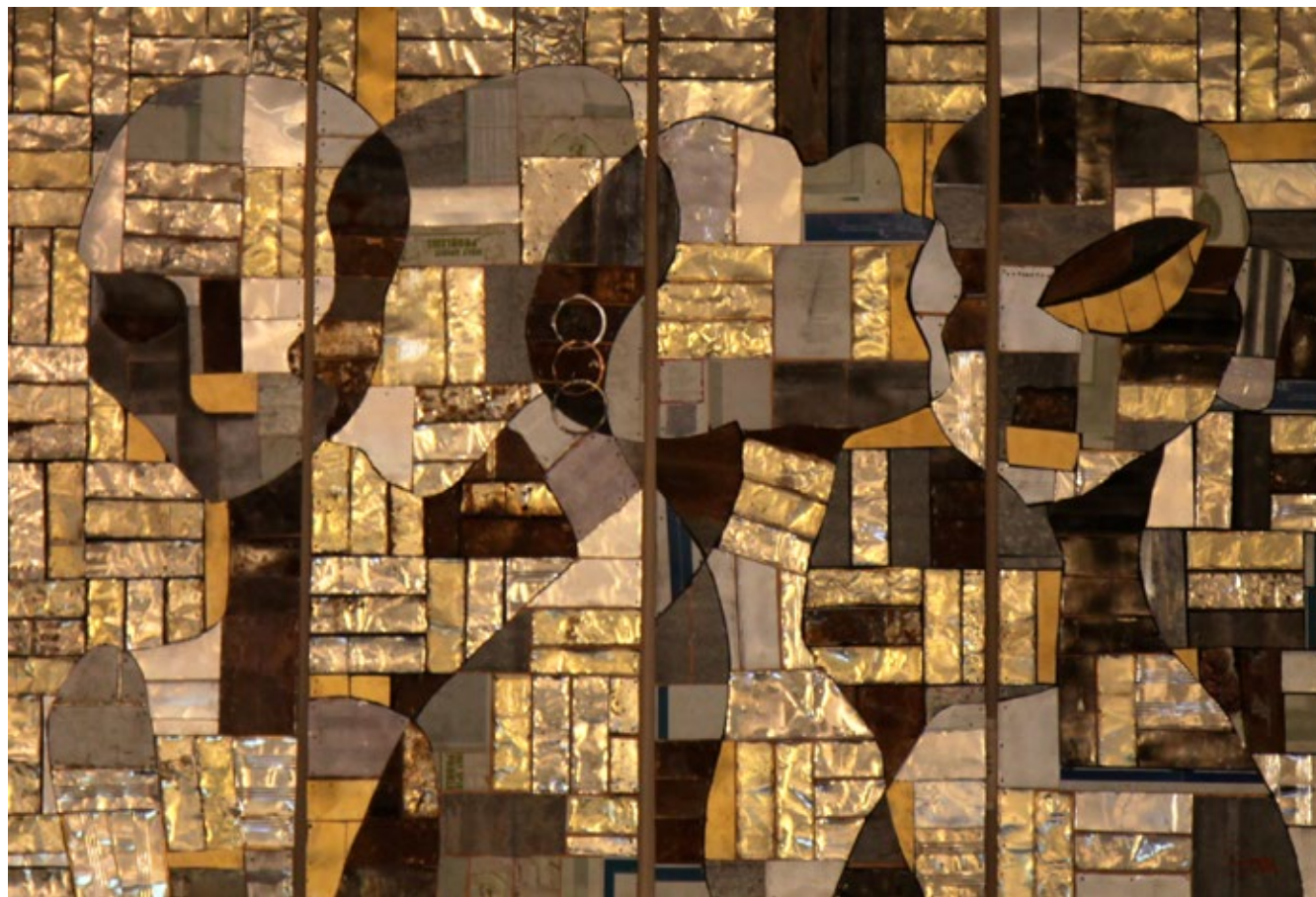
"Though the animals win the battle, they do so at great cost, as many, including Boxer the workhorse, are wounded. Despite his injuries, Boxer continues working harder and harder, until he collapses while working on the windmill." – Animal Farm

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Rom Isichei



Rom Isichei (born 1966) is a conceptual artist whose practice has persistently engaged object and material exploration. Utilizing the varied media of painting, sculpture, collage, and photography, Rom Isichei's compositions often evoke contemplation and engender dialogue about identity and culture, failures and insecurities, less and excess, loneliness, rapture and gaiety, and other emotional 'gestures' within our contemporary commune. He was born in Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria and currently lives and works in Lagos. He earned an HND in Fine Arts from Yaba College of Technology, Lagos, Nigeria and a Post-Graduate Diploma and Masters of Fine Arts MFA from Chelsea College of Art and Design, (UAL) London. He has exhibited widely locally and internationally and his works are featured in diverse publications and included in numerous public and private collections. Rom is listed in "Who's who" in Contemporary Nigerian Art, Smithsonian Museum of African Art Library, Washington DC.



Passages, mixed media with flattened tins, cans, corrugated iron, printer plates on board
2011, 152 x 224.5 cm

"My Wheatbaker experience is anchored on its architectural sense of duty, its awe inspiring art that provokes and engages your attention, and the regard, warmth and affectionate disposition of its staff and management."

Rom Isichei

Gerald Chukwuma



Gerald Chukwuma (born 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 specialising 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.



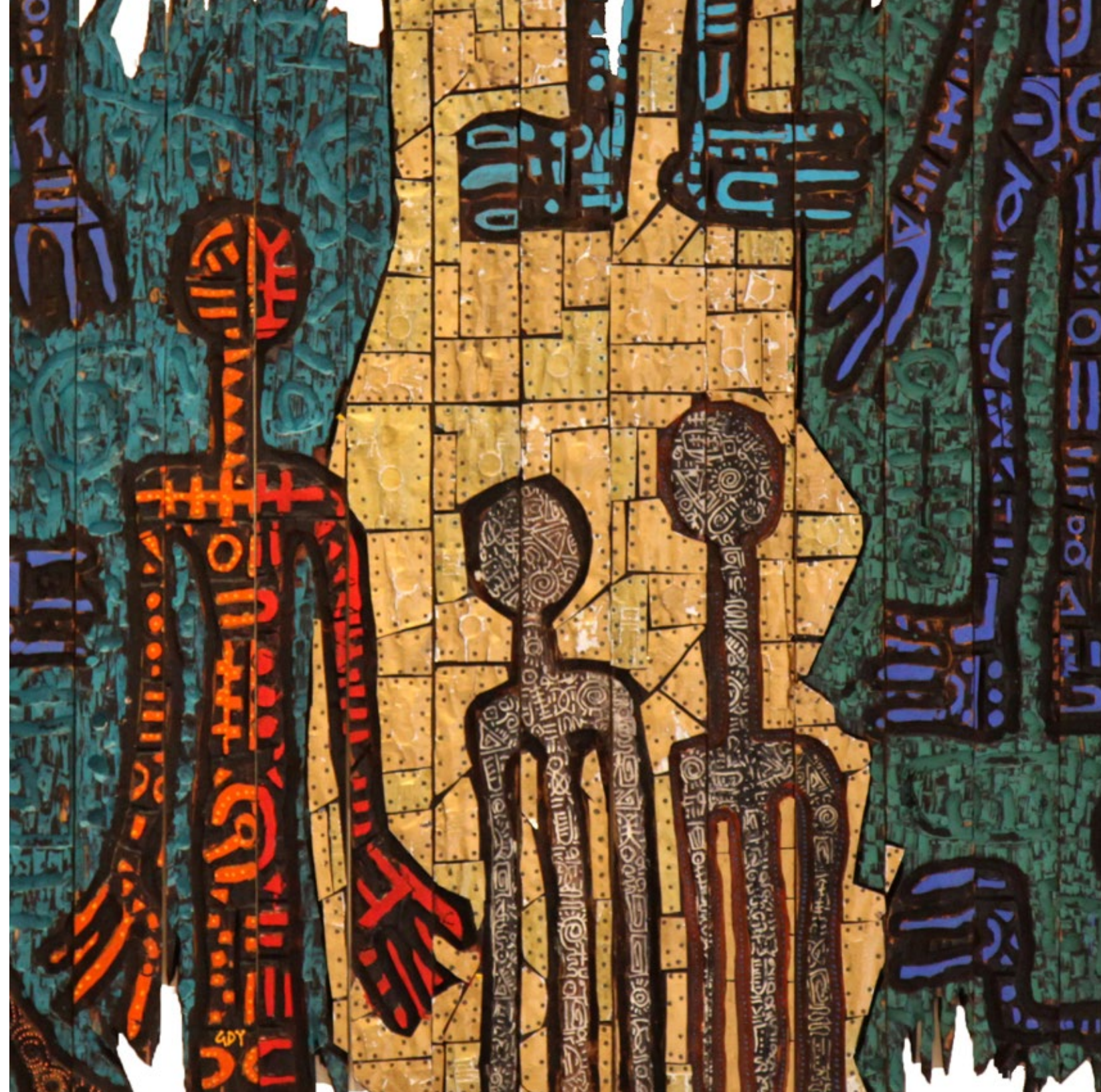
Untitled, 2011, Flattened Tin Cans & Corrugated Iron on Wood, 122 x 243 cm

"I try to solve some of our problems and address global issues with my works. Many of my works are about human beings' ability to decide to create paradise. What we do is what we get."

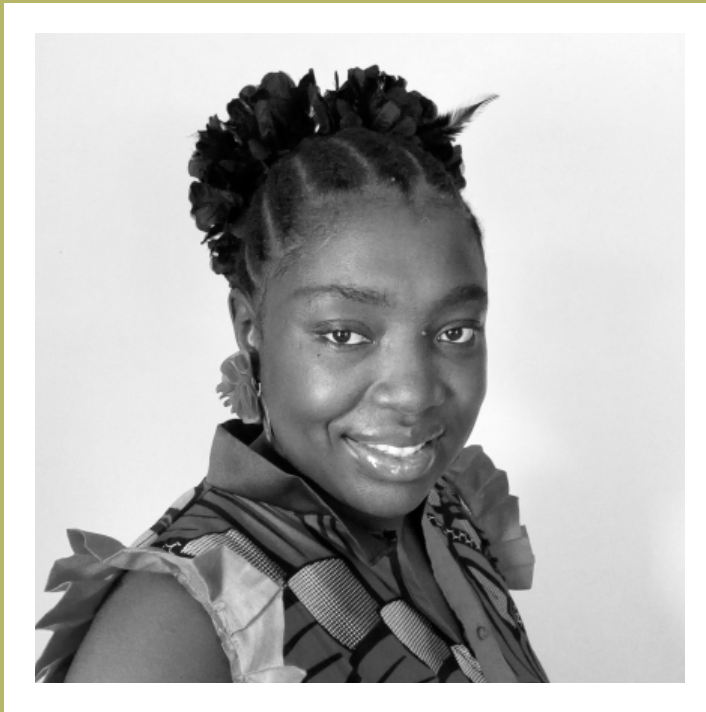
Gerald Chukwuma



Untitled, 2011, Flattened Tin Cans & Corrugated Iron on Wood, 135 x 218 cm



Djakou Kassi Nathalie



Djakou Kassi Nathalie was born in 1975 in Cameroon and studied ceramics for three years at the 'Institut Samba Supérieur' on a full scholarship. Her works have been featured in numerous exhibitions in Cameroon, Europe, and the United States. She won the first Africa Prize at the International Fair of Ouagadougou (SIAO) in 2012. She moved to Nigeria in 2015, and has been an active member of the Society of Nigerian Artists (SNA). She has taken part in numerous exhibitions in Nigeria with SMO Contemporary Art (2018), the Society of Nigerian Artists (2015, 2016, 2018), Moorehouse Hotel (2016) and with Quintessence (2018). She was one of the winners of the Union Bank Art Competition for their 100th Year Anniversary in 2017. Her works are inspired by nature and man's volatile interaction with her environment.



Untitled, 2011, Flattened Tin Cans & Corrugated Iron on Wood, 135 x 218 cm

"My art is inspired by my passion for the environment, which started during my childhood growing up in Cameroon. I loved to play and manipulate different natural materials and used to experiment with clay, wood, copper and plaster. But my favourite material was clay, which led me to pursue a career as a ceramic artist. I love clay, because it allows me to imagine and travel through a world of lines and volume. I like to take risks, and explore my dreams, vision and feelings through this amazing material."

Djakou Kassi Nathalie



PHOTOGRAPHY

Sandra Mbanefo Obiago



Sandra Mbanefo Obiago is an art curator, photographer and award winning filmmaker who is passionate about strengthening the creative industry to develop the African continent. She is Founder and Artistic Director of SMO Contemporary Art, curating art exhibitions in nontraditional gallery spaces to promote the best of African art. She started her career in 1988 as a technical director and video editor at the European Business Channel in Zurich, Switzerland. Two years later she joined environmental group, WWF International, and covered environment and development projects in Sub-Saharan Africa as a photojournalist for eight years. In 1998 she founded Communicating for Change (CFC), a media for development social enterprise based in Lagos, which became an important content provider for local and international television stations. Her award winning films and radio programs focused on human rights, women's empowerment, HIV & AIDS, environment, democracy and good governance, and art for development. Obiago is a Fellow of the Aspen Institute's African Leadership Initiative for West Africa (ALIWA). She has a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Manitoba in Canada, and a Masters of Arts in Telecommunications from Michigan State University, USA. Obiago focuses on using creativity as an avenue for wealth creation and inspiring a positive narrative about Africa for local and international audiences



Aspiration, 2009, Giclee Print on Matte Canvas, 99 x 66 cm



Growth, 2009, Giclee Print on Matte Canvas, 99 x 66 cm



Unfurling, 2009, Giclee Print on Matte Canvas, 96.5 x 147 cm

“When was the last time?

*When was the last time
you lay under a tree
actually placed yourself on mother earth
put your head, arms and body
on living grass
and looked up?*

*It's an amazing feeling.
how cool the shady shade
cool and porous
a breeze softly descending
leaves moving in unison
to a silent rhythm.*

*Slow down
and make space
in your clutter
to look, feel and really see
stop the blur
take a moment
to lie under a tree
and look up.”*

Sandra Mbanefo Obiako

Kelechi Amadi Obi



Kelechi Amadi-Obi (born 1969) is a celebrated African fashion photographer. He started his career as a lawyer, before venturing into full time art in 1993. His artistic journey began with painting, giving his photography its unique creative edge, with a mastery of aesthetics and creative lighting. In 2010 Amadi-Obi launched Mania, Nigeria's first international standard glossy fashion magazine. His work has been exhibited locally and internationally, including in Snap Judgment – A New Position in Contemporary African Photography, at the International Centre of Photography, New York, USA in 2006, in Depth of Field at the South London Gallery, UK, in 2004, in Lagos at the Ifa Gallery, in Stuttgart, Germany in 2005, in Transferts at Africalia, in Brussels, Belgium in 2003. In 2004, Amadi- Obi won the prestigious St.Moritz Style Award for Photography.



Mambilla Plateau II, Giclee print on dibond, 55.8 x 31.5 in, 2022



Red Gele in Bloom, Photograph, 2011, 41 x 58.5 cm



Green Gele in Bloom, Photograph, 2011, 41 x 58.5 cm



Yellow Gele in Bloom, Photograph, 2011, 41 x 58.5 cm

"The Gele is an explosion of colour. Interestingly, the visual impact of the Gele as a fashion accessory is unique to Nigeria. To me it always looks like an elaborate crown. And against black skin, it takes on an even stronger dimension. It reminds me that every individual has a colourful essence, which is what I see when I photograph."*

Kelechi Amadi Obi

*Gele is the Yoruba word for Head tie



Orange Gele in Bloom, Photograph, 2011, 41 x 58.5 cm



Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko



Yetunde Ayeni-Babaeko was born in Enugu, Eastern Nigeria to a Nigerian father and a German mother. She moved to Germany as a child and completed her high school diploma (Abitur) before embarking on a photography apprenticeship majoring in advertising photography at Studio Be in Greven, Germany. On completing her apprenticeship in 2003, she returned to Nigeria and joined Ess-Ay Studio for a 12 month photography program, facilitated by Invent, Germany. This experience spurred her to deepen her photographic skills by enrolling at Macromedia, a school for art and design in Osnabrueck, Germany. Ayeni-Babaeko returned to Nigeria in 2005 and worked as free-lance photographer, before opening her own studio in 2007 (www.camarastudios.com). She has been active as a photographer with social conscience chronicling the life of modern Nigeria. Besides her fashion and documentary photography, Ayeni-Babaeko has facilitated numerous photography workshops in partnership with the Goethe Institute, mentoring young female photographers



"My images are about the beauty and art of dance in a Nigerian environment. And there is almost no way you can take pictures in Nigeria without having a political angle in them"

Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko

Balogun Market, 2014, Photograph, 60 x 91 cm



Reconstruction, 2017, Photographic Print, 60 x 91 cm

"Reconstruction represents the idea of falling apart but then embarking on the journey of putting oneself together again the way one always wanted to be."

Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko

Aldophus Opara



Adolphus Opara's (born 1981) work is induced by encounters with people and their daily effort to exist amidst obstacles that define and situate their individual locality. He uses visual story telling with the aid of pictures and audio recordings to better understand as well as to show his connection to the issues that confront him daily. Opara's works have been exhibited both locally and Internationally, notably amongst which are; AAF/Nigerian Breweries exhibition in Lagos, Abuja and Amsterdam. First Photo Africa exhibition, Spain. TIMELESS BENIN, Lagos. THIS IS LAGOS at Coningsby Gallery, London. LAGOSPHOTO, Lagos. African Lace at the Museum fur Völkerkunde, Vienna, Austria. National Museum, Lagos. Bonhams, London. Tate Modern, London. Bamako Encounters, Bamako, Mali. Tiwani Contemporary, London. The Guardian gallery, London. Brundyn and Gonsalves, Cape town, South Africa. Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos. PHOTO QUAI Biennale, Paris, France. Vorarlberg Museum, Bregenz, Austria. Obscura Festival, Malaysia. He is the winner of World Environment Day photography competition 2007, Life in my City Art competition 2009, First Photo Africa contest, Spain 2008, Pictet Award for Photography 2012. He is a two-time nominee of World Press Photo Joop Swart Master class in documentary Photography, was nominated for the National Geographic All Roads Master class, a two-time nominee of the Prix Pictet Prize and also a two-time nominee of the Magnum EMERGENCY FUND.

Iya Moopo: The Deity of Women's Professions, 2015, Direct Print on Aluminium, 80 x 119 cm



Lakin Ogunbanwo



Lakin Ogunbanwo (Born in Lagos, Nigeria in 1987), studied Law at Babcock University, Nigeria and Buckingham University, England before beginning work as a fashion photographer in 2012. His work has been featured in The Times New York, ID Online, British GQ, and Riposte Magazine. Working at the confluence of fashion photography and classical portraiture, young Nigerian Photographer Lakin Ogunbanwo creates enigmatic portraits with an erotic and subversive undertone. His subjects exist defiantly in the frame often masked by shadow, drapery and foliage. His use of vibrant flat colour and bold compositions form a more minimalist homage to the African studio photography popular in the 1960s and 70's. Solo exhibitions include 'Are We Good Enough' (2015) and 'New Work' (2014) at WHATIFTHEWORLD, and 'Portraits by Lakin Ogunbanwo' (2013) at Rooke & van Wyk Gallery in Johannesburg. Recent group exhibitions include 'Dey Your Lane!' at BOZAAR, Lagos Photo Festival 2016 and Art X Lagos, Nigeria, and Art 14, England. Lakin Ogunbanwo has been recognised by the British Journal of Photography as one of the Top 25 Photographers of 2015 in their annual 'Ones to Watch' edition. Ogunbanwo was recently commissioned to create several installations for the window displays of Galeries Lafayette in Paris, as part of the 'Africa Now' exhibition.



Ujunwa, 2013, Photograph, 40 x 60.5 cm

*"I said...
You said...
You don't need to try to pretend for someone else
I just need to help you instead of helping myself"*

Lakin Ogunbanwo

Oyebola Famuyiwa



Oyebola Famuyiwa (born 1987) is a fine art photographer with strong interests in architecture and aerial photography. He ventured into photography while studying Electrical Electronics Engineering at the prestigious University of Ibadan. He currently manages ArtbyOye (Fine Art Photography), Potterclay Photography (Lifestyle and Events Photography) and PixBus (Mobile Photo Booth in a 1979 Volkswagen Bus). As a little child he always wondered how a photographer could capture images with a camera and deliver large framed prints. This fascination with image processing at a very tender age encouraged him to save up and buy his first analog camera gear in junior secondary school. Oyebola's works have been featured in exhibitions such as the 2009 Life In My City Art Festival (LIMCAF), British Council iCreative Expo 2011, Lagos Photo "2011 Amateur Photography Competition" and the 2019 "China-Nigeria Friendship in Pictures" Photography Competition. His works have also been featured in international and local magazines. He also has his work in the Lagos Edition of the Monopoly Electronic Banking game which is produced by Bestman Games Limited. As a strong believer in humanity he searches beyond the obvious thereby creating art even in the most uninteresting places. He is inspired by the creative possibilities of nature, the versatility of humans and the opportunities these afford him.



Eko Living, Giclee Print on Metal, 2021, 36 x 24 in

"The city of Lagos is a huge source of inspiration for me, especially when I come across images taken from as far back as the 1960's. I find it interesting comparing old Lagos to present day Lagos. The number of changes in this urban landscape has been enormous. In my quest for historical images of Lagos I have decided to fill in the gap and create my own images of the city in the hopes that it will inspire someone in the near future."

Oyebola Famuyiwa

Bernard Kalu



Bernard Kalu (born 1989) is a documentary photographer based in Lagos, Nigeria, with a passion for humans and the stories they tell simply by existing. His work aims to explore life and humanity. Photography is drawing with light and he's adopted it as a tool to not only tell stories but preserve today for the future. Bernard began working in photography in 2014, exploring street documentary and creative twists to wedding photography with Auxano Photography, now Verteller Studios. He is a certified Canon Miraisha master storyteller, VII Academy Foundry alumni, first runner up in the 2017 NATGEO Portfolio Review and has been on assignment with a number of organizations within and outside Nigeria. To mention a few, The Lancet, Bloomberg, IFAD, NBNL, MyAfricanPassport Inc. and so on. Also, he is a member of Diversify Photo (a global collective of BIPOC visual Journalists) and African Photojournalism Database (APJD) (a joint project by World Press Photo and Everyday Africa) and the convener of the SPWWBK (Street Photography Workshop with Bernard Kalu) through which he engages and mentors a good number of upcoming visual storytellers. He had his first exhibition early 2017 at the Revolving Art Gallery, Lagos, Nigeria. Furthermore, he is an official Fujifilm Global X-Photographer. More recently, he has begun focusing on raising awareness about environmental and social issues in his home country, Nigeria.



"Every time I walk through the streets to create art, that walk inadvertently becomes a journey inwards. The energy and mood of each scene is broken down into shadows, highlights, composition - textures and colours - revealing an essence that not only connects to my past, but resonates with the present while carrying in it some glimmers of hope for the future."

Bernard Kalu

Galácticos, Giclee Print on Metal, 2014, 24 x 36 in

Amara Obiako



Amara (born. 1995) is an avid photographer who starting taking pictures at 8 years of age with a disposable camera. She graduated in 2017 from the George Washington University in Washington DC with Bachelor of Arts degree in International Studies with a specialization in international economics. She grew up in Nigeria and Switzerland, and has taken photographs in Africa, Asia, Europe, and recently in Santiago de Chile, where she studied for 6 months. Amara is passionate about supporting start-ups as an engine for economic growth; she is a serious minded young leader with a competitive and critical mind and has volunteered with startup accelerator in Chile and the United States. She is a certified tour guide for the city of Washington DC and enjoys sharing her love for history and culture with her community. In 2012, she was chosen to speak on languages for TEDx.



*"In every image there is a small part of me, a mirror that reflects
a certain time, place, memory and thought"*

Amara Obiako

Nest, 2010, Giclee Print on Matte Canvas, 99 x 132 cm



Nest II, 2010, Giclee Print on Matte Canvas, 99 x 132 cm

Kevwe Eru



Kevwe Eru (b. 1994) is a Lagos based visual artist who was born in Edo State and studied Law at the University of Benin. After her induction into the Nigerian Bar Association, she chose to explore her interest in the creative arts. Photography was her first medium of expression, but over the years, she has fused it with digital art and other media. In her practice, she takes inspiration from the sciences, spirituality, nature and the human form. Eru has taken part in numerous exhibitions including: The Peace Exhibit (2020) and Becoming (2021) at Terrakulture Gallery. She is also a project manager at Kelechi Amadi-Obi Studios, and has been mentored by leading photographers, Kelechi Amadi-Obi and Uche James Iroha.



Fighting Anxiety III, Photographic print on paper, 16 x 20 in, 2019

"Sometimes the mind is our biggest enemy. It turns against us and chokes us. In fear, we continue to struggle to the point that we give in. We become the mind's puppet until it extracts our will to survive. We allow this to happen because we believe that we are our minds. However, I believe that this is false. We are not our minds. We are something greater. Something the mind cannot even fathom. The mind isn't the pilot. WE ARE."

Kevwe Eru

13 Years With the Wheatbaker - Exhibition List

The Collectors' Series

Duke Asidere, Kelechi Amadi Obi & Yetunde Ayeni-Babaeko
November 13 - 30, 2011

Making History

Nigeria's most outstanding traditional art works from the Femi Akinsanya African Art Collection (FAAAC).
January 26 - February 1, 2012

Recent Sculptures

Billy Omabegho.
May 13 - 28, 2012

The 'WW' Independence Series

Tayo Ogunbiyi, Karo Akpokiye, Hakeem Salaa, Toyosi Faridah Kekere-Ekun
October 19 - November 20, 2012

Flow

Nnenna Okore.
February 16 - April 15, 2013

Inner Worlds Outer Space

Raoul Olawale Da Silva.
June 8 - September 15, 2013

Here & There

Polly Alakija.
October 5 - December 5, 2013

Muse

Lakin Ogunbanwo
December 11, 2013 - February 29, 2014

Duality

Isaac Emokpae.
April 7 - 30, 2014

Unfurling

Amara Obiogo, Sandra Mbanefo Obiogo.
May 29 - August 31, 2014

Eko Moves

Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko.
November 30, 2014 - February 15, 2015

Photographer's Odyssey

Gillian Hopwood.
March 20 - April 9, 2015

Akalaka

Obiora Anidi, Tayo Adenaike.
April 19 - July 15, 2015

The Contemporaries

Adeyinka Akingbade, Anthea Epelle, Chika Idu, Duke Asidere, Gerald Chukwuma, Nnenna Okore, Onyema Offoedu Okeke, Raoul Da Silva, Taiye Idahor, Tony Nsofor, Uchay Joel Chima.
October 12 - November 13, 2015

Save Our Art! Save Our Heritage!

Sangodare Ajala, Adebisi Akanji, Rabi Abiesu, Buraimoh Gbadamosi, Kikelomo, Ajibike Ogunyemi, Bruce Onobrakpeya, Muraina Oyelami, Jimoh Buraimoh, Nike Okundaye & Tola Wewe, Wura - Natasha Ogunji, Polly Alakija.
November 22, 2015 - January 15, 2016

Equal Rights

Mike Omoighe.
January 24 - March 20, 2016

Evolving Currents

Chika Idu, Raqib Bashorun.
April 7 - June 16, 2016

Mental Space

Duke Asidere.
July 4 - September 15, 2016

Freedom

Gbenga Offo.
October 15, 2016 - January 15, 2017

Permutations

Tayo Olayode.
January 21 - March 4, 2017

Standing Out II

Amami Isiuwe, Bunmi Oyesanya, Data Oruwari, Marcellina Akpojotor, Ngozi Ezema, Olawunmi Banjo, Omo Udentia, Ozoz Sokoh, Sade Adebowale, Taiye Idahor.
March 7 - May 15, 2017

Wanderlust

Chidi Kwubiri, Emeka Udemba, Jimmy Uche Nwanne, Junkman of Afrika, Numero Unoma, Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko.
July 8 - September 15, 2017

The Wheatbaker Collection

Amara Obiogo, Billy Omabegho, Chika Idu, Data Oruwari, Duke Asidere, Gbenga Offo, Gerald Chukwuma, Isaac Emokpae, Kelechi Amadi Obi, Mike Omoighe, Obiora Anidi, Olu Amoda, Peju Alatise, Polly Alakija, Raoul Olawale da Silva, Raqib Bashorun, Rom Isichei, Sandra Mbanefo Obiogo, Tayo Adenaike, Tayo Olayode, Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko
September 2017 - February 2018

Unmasked

Djakou Kassi Nathalie, Koromone Yoabere Koroye, Nengi Omuku, Nyancho Nwanri, Queen Nwaneri, Reha Shishodia, Somi Nwandu.
March 10 - May 4, 2018

Gbam!

Daniel Obasi, Kadara Enyeasi, Kola Oshalusi, Lex Ash, Noma Osula, Ola Ebiti.
June 9th - September 15, 2018

The Contemporaries II

Kainebe Osahenye, Kelani Abass, Kenny Adewuyi
September 29, 2018 - January 15, 2019

Eni! You Can Always Tell Where The Elephant Has Passed By

Bruce Onobrakpeya
April 27 - July 22, 2019

If Walls Could Speak

Patrick Akpojotor
September 22 - November 8, 2019

The Wheatbaker Dis Lagos Life

Amanda Iheme, Ayanfe Olarinde, Nelly Ating, Oluwamuyiwa Logo, Omoregie Osakpolor, and Somi Nwandu
February 24 - May 31, 2020

The Wheatbaker Towards the Light

Ibe Ananaba
November 3 - December 4, 2020

The Wheatbaker Particles in Motion

Ada Udechukwu
May 1 - July 31, 2021

Vantage Point

Bernard Kalu & Oyebola Famuyiwa
August 28 - October 24, 2021

Sense of Self

Olawunmi Banjo
November 3, 2021 - January 16, 2021

Crossroads

Adeniyi Adewole, Ashiata Shaibu, The Creatus, Boluwatife Lawal, Christopher Samuel Idowu, Kevwe Eru, David Ibukun Oniyide, Francis Nwajiaku Uche, Odia

Odibo, Ikenna Obinka and Victor Sonoiki.
6 August - 7 October 2022

Kindred Spirits

Tayo Olayode & Ade Odunfa
1 May - 30 June 2023

Journeys

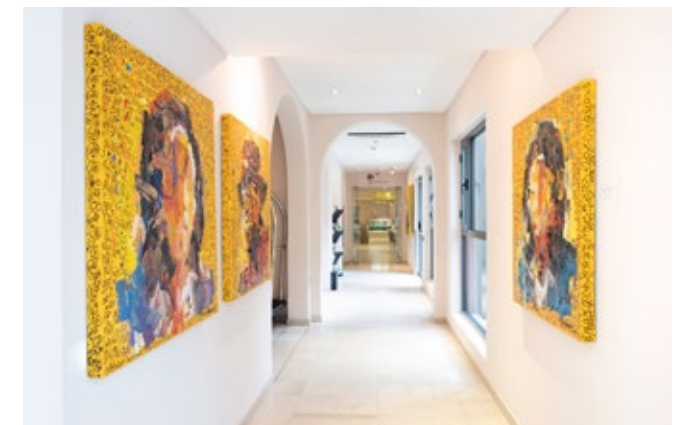
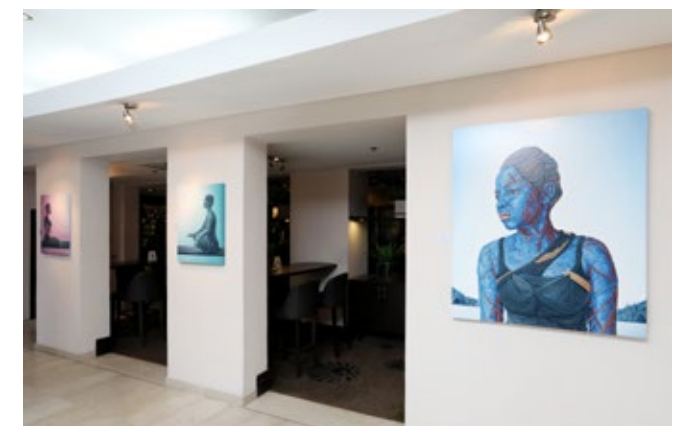
Ademola Ojo, Aluu Prosper, Collins Abinoro, Ejiro Fenegal, Iniobong Usoro, Praise Sanni-Adeniyi, Prudence Chimutuwah, Robert Oniha, Sanjo Lawal and Tumininu Gbebire
9 July - 10 September 2023

Joy

Abiodun Olaku, Abraham Uyovbisere, Ade Ogundimu, Aimufia Osagie, Alex Nwokolo, Ben Ibebe, Bunmi Babatunde, Diseye Tantua, Duke Asidere, Edosa Ogiugo, Emenike Ogwo, Fidelis Odogwu, Gbenga Offo, George Edozie, Gerry Nhubia, Joshua Nmesirionye, Kehinde Adewuyi, Norbert Okpu, Sam Ebohon, Tayo Quaye, Tola Wewe
3 October 2023 - 19 January 2024

Gatherings

George Edozie
23 March - 31 May 2024



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Hope, Sandra Mbanefo Obiago, 2010, Giclee Print on Matte Canvas, 97 x 148.5 cm

Curator: Sandra Mbanefo Obiago
 Assistant Curators: Nneoma Ilogu, Majid Biggar
 Project Officers: Koso Edozien, Adunola Aboaba, Taiwo Mustapha, Lutherking Asuru, Ikenna Bede
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