





# WANDERLUST







© Wilfried Claus

*Traces*, mixed media, 107 x 182 x 12 cm, 2017 by Chidi Kwubiri

*Was ich nicht erlernt habe, das habe ich erwandert.*

*What i have not learned, I have explored.*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

(1749 – 1832)

Inner cover: *Reconstruction*, 24 x 36inch, Photographic Print, framed, 2017 by Yetunde Ayeni-Babaeko  
Outer cover: *Transition*, acrylic on canvas, 200 x 300 cm, 2017 by Chidi Kwubiri . photo: © Wilfried Claus

# WANDERLUST

CURATED BY SANDRA MBANEFO OBIAGO



JULY 8 - SEPTEMBER 15, 2017

THE WHEATBAKER  
LAGOS, NIGERIA





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*Friends of Matilda 7*, printing paint on Paper, 100 x 80cm, 2017 by Junkman From Afrika







## ...journeying...

During my participation in a collateral project of the Venice Biennale in 2015, I coincidentally met Emeka Udemba and later also Junkman. In the coming days we saw the Biennale together, hung out and enjoyed the great "art"-mosphere of Venice. As diasporic artists we discussed deeply about our desire to contribute to the vibrant art scene in our home country Nigeria.

Like in every exhibition and Art project, location and a good curator is of primary importance. And immediately a collector and a good friend of mine, Sandra Mbanefo Obiako, came to my mind.

After a brief discussion with Sandra in December 2016 about our intention, she connected straight away with the idea and offered to help in realizing it. And in few days of juggling with the concept, the title "Wanderlust" was born. A title that embodies our initial idea, reflects on our actual situation of being travelers between two worlds and touches on the ever evolving life of us all, both as migrants and as artists – always moving, always seeking, always trying to climb greater heights – like engaging in a race, where the farther you go, the farther away the finish line gets. On one hand, you never reach the finish line, but still cannot say you didn't get anywhere. Here we go again - ever moving, a never ending journey of an artist.

Welcome to "Wanderlust"  
Journey Mercies!

Chidi Kwubiri  
Artist  
Pulheim, Germany



*Wanderlust 1*, acrylic, paper on canvas, 2016, 123cm x 98cm by Emeka Udemba



## CURATORIAL INTRO

When Chidi Kwubiri first approached me about curating an exhibition focusing on art inspired by two cultures (Germany, where he has settled, and Nigeria, where he and numerous fellow artists call home) the idea immediately resonated with me. Being a product of two cultures myself, with a deep desire to continue exploring the world, I was drawn to the “why” behind this phenomenon of cross cultural, cross border, mental and physical journeying.

Why do we migrate and settle outside our home countries and how do these travels affect our personal emotional identity, family histories, and community psyche? I began searching for a word that would capture the essence of migration, both the beauty and excitement of exploration, as well as the yearning to sojourn beyond our present reality, which may never be reached.

*Wanderlust* is a term which I believe comes closest to the essence of why we migrate. Be it for rest and recreation, spiritual upliftment, the excitement of discovering new cultures, or whether it is in the quest for education, economic prosperity, conquest, or an escape from poverty, war and terrorism, human beings have for centuries been in a constant state of migration.

*Wandern* can be physical, spiritual, or emotional. We can *wandern* out of a positive desire to explore, or we could travel because we are escaping. Either way, our entire lives are made up of seeking and going through experiences of “deconstruction and reconstruction”, as Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko's cover image so brilliantly depicts.

My first recollection of “wandern” was as a child hiking through the Swiss mountains. We had become refugees from the Biafran war, and my brother and I spent a few months in a children's home in the Bernese Oberland, waiting for my Swiss mother to join us while my father was involved in the war effort at home. At barely 4 years old, I depended on my older brother to interpret the world around us, holding tightly to his hand as we were part of thousands escaping and seeking refuge around the world.

The children's home was in Aeshi, a tiny Swiss village about 1000 meters above the picturesque Lake of Thun; we were made to go for long walks every afternoon, hiking through pastures and montane forests, experiencing first hand the restorative powers of nature. The re-awakening of all our senses and the calming beauty of the idyllic landscape left a lasting impression of the power of *wandern* in a deep reservoir of my childhood memory. Later in life, I continued the journey of exploration, this time as a photo-journalist and filmmaker, seeking new stories and lately, seeking fresh artistic talent.

Throughout the journey of this exhibition, I continue to be deeply impressed by the sensitivity, wisdom, and clarity with which our six artists, Chidi Kwubiri, Emeka Udemba, Junkman from Afrika, Numero Unoma, Jimmy Nwanne and Yetunde Ayeni-Babaeko, have shed light on the complex concept of *Wanderlust*.

Chidi Kwubiri's almost transcendental work, *Transition*, in which a cross-legged human form sits with arms extended within a finely dotted bluish universe, touches on our need to be open and vulnerable in our quest to explore. His work is made up of thousands of tiny fragments of vibrant color which highlight both external exploration vis-a-vis internal journeying. His huge canvases express freedom and isolation, as well as feelings of confidence and doubt in works like “shadow” in which two human forms lean back-to-back against each other within chromatic and colorful soulscapes, co-existing and drawing on each other for balance and continuity.

Yetunde Ayeni-Babaeko's powerful photograph, "Reconstruction" touches on how wandern deconstructs us; we become fragments of ourselves, only to rise up as reconfigured beings inhabiting new emotional and physical landscapes far from home. In "The Holy Grail" we see a mystical woman wearing a feathered indigenous headdress, flying cape and lace corset finding her way through a darkened landscape holding two lanterns, vulnerable and alone in her determined search.

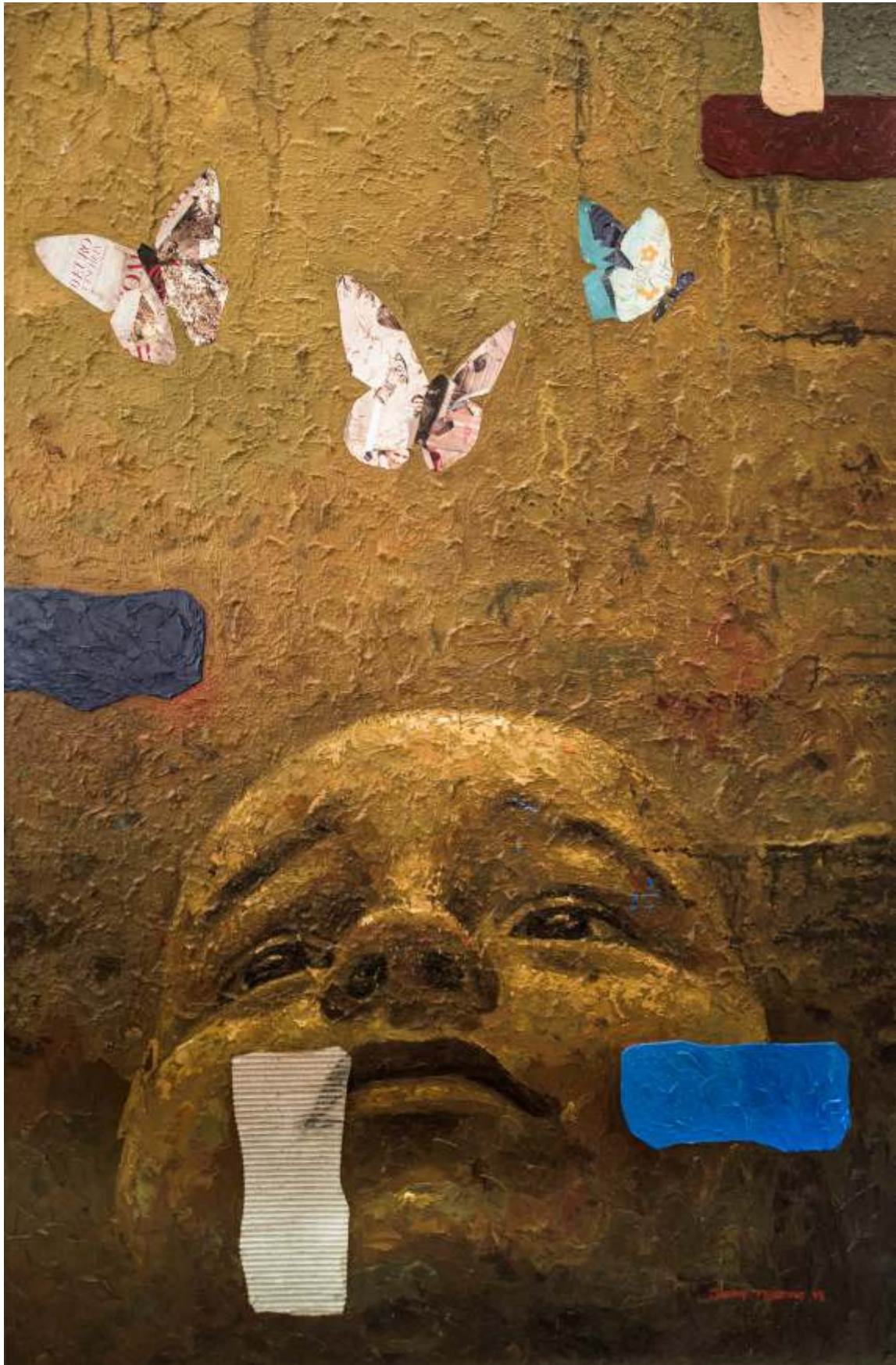
In "Regaining Power" a thinly draped nude woman coils into herself, under the burden of an exaggerated blonde Victorian styled wig, retreating into a finely-textured inner world of safety and memory. We see a spiritual retreat back to her primordial roots where she draws strength and power to overcome the historic burdens and pressures, the expectations and strictures placed on her people.

These highly stylized, glossy images with their nuanced multi-layered, staged reality, are fascinating counterpoints to the uncluttered portraits of young, marginalized wanderers populating Emeka Udemba's canvases. We see faces of adolescents set against plain color fields, their faces and forms sporadically plastered over by strips of newspapers. These "news segments" remind us of how migrants are stereotyped through single-narrative brush strokes, with fragments of their stories reported through over-simplified media headlines. Their diverse histories and personalities lost as they seemingly float in two dimensional worlds, polarized, alone, and without roots.

Udemba's haunting and powerful portraits are juxta-posed against Junkman from Afrika's "transitional realities": abstract human and animal forms migrating through landscapes of color splashes. His works remind us of the crises of Europe's migrants and Nigeria's internally displaced people, and how society easily looks upon these wandering souls with fleeting interest. He encapsulates the quintessential migrant experience through a central character called "Matilda", the "city lady". His *Matildas* are rendered without detail through primary colors bleeding into each other. Snippets of poetry tells us "...of ripples and of hopes and holes..." as his characters presented on paper and as sculptures of rags and found objects, are fleeting, transitional beings, in which their vibrant multi-ethnic personalities are covered up under Red-Cross-hand-me-downs, as they continue *"searching and groping and shuttling for shortish gains..."*

Jimmy Nwanne presents soulful portraits of men and women who seem haunted by memories of fading histories and current crises. In "Seismic Shift" we are drawn into the memories of a youth reliving the horrors of a sinking, capsized ship in a bloody textured sea. In "Clear Skies" we are reminded of migrant stories as a middle aged man fearfully looks up to the sky, under the wings of a World War II twin engine aircraft with swastika emblem; horrors of past and present racial intolerance which has deeply wounded Europe's multi-ethnic soul. Nwanne's work touches on globalization, history and racism, however not forgetting the youthful, flighty spirit of hope in "three little dreams", depicting a young child mesmerized by three floating butterflies fluttering above his head.

Numero Unoma's poetry and conceptual paper works in her signature naïve pop-art style, have seemingly simple messages, which on closer scrutiny, highlight a far deeper irony. For example, in "F.E.A.R.: fuck everything and run" we see a figure running through a green, white and green portal, which is easily identified as the Nigerian flag. We assume the human is escaping or exiting Nigeria, but could this person also be an émigré, a returnee, running back home? There are always two sides to every migration story if we take a moment to reflect.



*Three little dreams*, mixed media on canvas, 150cm x 100cm, 2015 by Jimmy Nwanne





*Regaining Power*, 24 x 36inch, Photographic Print, 2017 by Yetunde Ayeni-Babaeko

In "Reach for the Stars", Unoma cleverly draws the letters "E" and "U" against a background of stars symbolizing the flag of the European Union set over a sea of blue wavy lines, inspired by a Dutch wax print. When one explores in more detail, we notice her 'tongue-in-cheek' subtext: (E) *go betta for* (U), an ironic take on the reason why so many refugees trek across deserts and embark on precarious journeys across the stormy Mediterranean sea in flimsy overloaded boats in a desperate search to lay claim to the EU's golden stars of safety and economic prosperity, only to perish along the way – clinging to nothing but hope.

And so continues the journey. I trust you will be enriched by our talented artists' deep and multi-faceted ways of interpreting *Wanderlust*. We could not have succeeded on this journey without the sterling support of our committed sponsors and art patrons and say a sincere thank you to Deutsche Bank, Still Earth, ELALAN, The German Consulate of Lagos and German winemaker, Louis Guntrum. Deep appreciation to the Wheatbaker management and staff for their unflinching support of showcasing the best of Nigerian and international creativity. And a sincere "thank you" to Oliver Enwonwu, one of Nigeria's finest curators and art publishers, for his excellent essay."

As you reflect on your own journey and experience of *Wanderlust*, I leave you with an excerpt from one of my favourite poems, *Ulysses*, by Alfred Lord Tennyson:

*"...Come, my friends,  
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.  
Push off, and sitting well in order smite  
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds  
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths  
Of all the western stars, until I die.  
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:  
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,  
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.  
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'  
We are not now that strength which in old days  
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;  
One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."*

*Sandra Mbanefo Obiako  
Curator  
June, 2017*



*Wanderlust 5*, acrylic, paper on canvas, 123cm x 98cm, 2016 by Emeka Udemba

## OF BEING PRESENT: BOUNDARIES AND ZONES OF TRANSITION

Founded by curator, Sandra Mbanefo Obiogo, SMO Contemporary Art's commitment to provoking critical discourse on art developments in Nigeria is underscored by its well-received schedule of exhibitions. An increasingly active programme of publications supports this initiative, with critical texts aimed at situating Nigerian and African artists within broader global narratives.

The latest in the series of seminal exhibitions is *Wanderlust*, a term used in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries to describe what was then viewed characteristically as German predilection for wandering.<sup>1</sup> In more recent times, sociologists and tourists alike are agreed that the word is more useful in reflecting an intense urge for self-development by engaging different and often unfamiliar cultural experiences.<sup>2</sup> An alternative view is the confronting of unforeseen challenges and escape from depressive feelings of guilt.<sup>3</sup> Other reasons advanced include the dissatisfaction with one's local environment.<sup>4</sup>

In explaining her curatorial thrust, Mbanefo Obiogo asserts:

The focus of the exhibition is the interpretation of 'wanderlust', the joy of travel, adventure, and exploring new worlds, vis-à-vis the global political, and economic issues of migration.

On showcase is the work of 6 of the more established names in contemporary African art; Junkman from Afrika; Chidi Kwubiri; Numero Unoma; Yetunde Ayeni-Babaeko; Emeka Udemba; and Jimmy Nwanne. The selection of the artists is incisive, and takes into account, their close ties with Germany. Individually, they have on one hand been born, raised in Germany and relocated to Nigeria and on the other, studied and live in Germany. Moreover, they all share personal experiences of establishing a trans-Atlantic practice, which ensures they travel regularly between Nigeria and Germany to facilitate research, production, and exhibitions. As Mbanefo Obiogo observes, they are at once, Nigerian and German, African and European, Bantu and Caucasian.

An overarching purpose of *Wanderlust* is to stimulate the Lagos exhibition circuit, while encouraging a cross-fertilisation of ideas centered on issues of identity, migration and belonging between African artists who define their practices on the continent and those in diaspora, that remain true to their roots. The exhibition also seeks answers to questions such as how relevant is the concept of wanderlust to an increasingly polarised and fragmented world? Considering their European sensibilities, what meanings do their journeys portray? Does a process of internalisation or an external one accomplish wanderlust? This latter concern is perhaps the chief focus of this essay.

Their shared experiences are accentuated by the fact that the artists are separated by an age span of 29 years, the oldest, Junkman born in 1960, and the youngest Nwanne in 1989. Interestingly, this exhibiting group is part of a significant number of established international artists like ruby onyinyechi amanze and Wura-Natasha Ogunji whose practices are defined by a fusion of indigenous aesthetics and European modes of representation, acquired largely through Western education. This phenomenon of hybridity is intensified today because of the rapid spread of information and ideas through the Internet, as well as commercial forces.

According to historian Eva Langret:



Their cosmopolitan personal narratives have led them to develop echoing artistic languages, inspired by the experience of navigating life as hybrids. A result of growing up and living between several places and cultures, they envision a world where identity has no permanent, essential meaning, but is transient, continuously formed and transformed in relation to the cultural systems, which surround us.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps more relevant because they are resident in Germany are the examples of celebrated artists like Ransome Stanley, born in 1953, Owusu-Ankomah, born in 1956 and Manuela Sambo in 1964, of Nigerian, Ghanaian and Angola descent. Stanley reflects on colonial clichés of exoticism and images of Africa rooted in Western concepts of rusticness and innocence. Sambo is well known for her depictions of nude female portraits and figures. Her work employs stylistic elements of the body painting traditions from her home country while integrating European elements, including ornamental pieces dating back to the medieval ages.

Onwusu-Ankomah's figures are naked, bold, and powerful but differ from Sambo's figures by a covering of complex symbols in a manner that renders them almost invisible. He is influenced by the philosophy of his Akan-speaking people of Ghana, reflected in his frequent use of the *adinkra* symbols.

Other similarities can be drawn between these various groups of artists in reasoning along Langret's thoughts that theirs is not a story about dislocation or searching for their roots; one which is neither celebrating nor despairing their cultural hybrid identity. The narrative is simply about being present, a state defined by their critical outlook towards the condition of being in transit between places with different languages, customs, material culture and ideas.

This 'in-betweenness' as defined by Homi Bhabha, begins with a critical challenge and an attempt to break it down to locate their own position and construct their own story with new historical and conceptual connections. This state of becoming, fueled by multiple belongings rejects traditional definitions of gender, race, sexuality, class, religion, and nationality, to engender creative freedom, allowing numerous possibilities for re-interpretation, as can be seen from the blend of diverse cultural references in the artists' work.

Works by Junkman set the tone for the exhibition. He studied art at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and taught between 1989 and 1999 at the University of Benin, Nigeria. He holds an MFA from the University of Dundee, Scotland and presently teaches creative concepts and self-development at the universities of Bonn, Soest, Giessen and Bayreuth in Germany. With a focus on Africa, Junkman investigates the city and the life of its inhabitants as a curious concept of modernity, against the influences of indigenous cultures and philosophies. Employing used and disused materials including old clothing and other detritus found on city streets, to create sculptural installations, he records the ensuing conflicts and tensions.

Although, not featured in the exhibition, his installation *Wear and Tear* is a fine example of his work that does well to define his overall creative output.

He explains:

Wear and Tear as a concept attempts to expose the often overlooked and underrated elements of the Africa-urban life, which largely influence it. The alienated situation of the African in his own society becomes tragic. There is a struggle inside him, a consciousness of living with the complications of an imposed civilisation. He can no longer go back to pick up the fragments of his father's shattered culture; neither is he equipped enough to keep pace with the white-man's world.<sup>6</sup>





*Between the two of us*, mixed media on canvas, 160cm x 100cm, 2015 by Jimmy Nwanne

Chidi Kwubiri, born 1966 in Umuahia, southeastern Nigeria discovered a love for drawing and painting as a child. In 1993, he was a guest student in Michael Buthe's masterclass at the Kunstakademie Dusseldorf, later becoming a regular student and studying painting between 1994 and 2002, at the same institution under A.R. Penck. Kwubiri lives and works with his family in Pulheim near Cologne. He has exhibited his work extensively in Germany and across Europe.

In Kwubiri's canvases, densely complex layers of small, distinct dots of intuitive colour are dripped, and sprinkled in a manner vaguely reminiscent of Pollock, and smoothened to create abstract backgrounds from which indigenous symbols such as masks and human forms emerge. This skilful balance of abstract passages and realistic forms, as well as modernity and the traditional, is perhaps the hallmark of Kwubiri's art. The results rely on the ability of the eye and mind of the viewer to blend these spots of colour into a fuller range of tones.

Gérard Goodrow, director of *Art Cologne*, has described Kwubiri's working methods as a reflection of his complex personality—an oscillation between his African heritage and his new life as an internationally active artist living in Germany.

Importantly, another quality of Kwubiri's work is its spatiality. Here, the virtual and the abstract act as metaphors for the ephemerality of physical boundaries and the ease of mobility through space, across geographical locations. Implying the co-existence of several time zones, these dual properties of fragility and mobility imbue his canvases with functionality as flexible sites of exchange and connectivity.

German-born Numero Unoma, explains:

Apart from ticking the right professional box for the sake of my father's Nigerian ego, my years in the belly of the beast amounted to a research sabbatical, from which I have been able to derive insider information on capitalism and globalisation, as well as gender and race politics and economics. I have experienced this from the geographical and cultural perspectives of two diametrically opposite continents – Africa and Europe, from which, incidentally, my own gene pool and identity, is composed.

From these stirring words, we gain a deeper understanding of her emotional connection to her art through which she expresses her motives and experiences. More importantly, we are allowed into her inner space and world.

Born in Enugu and raised in Germany, Yetunde Ayeni-Babaeko, like Numero Unoma, is of mixed parentage. In 2000, her career began in the European country with an apprenticeship programme in advertising photography. Today, she is one of the most exciting photographers working in Nigeria. Ayeni-Babaeko draws from a deep knowledge of Western conventions of portraiture with a substantial part of her oeuvre engaging Yoruba mythology and folklore.

Emeka Udemba was born in 1987, in Enugu. He studied art and art education in Lagos but lives in Germany. Our place within the urban environment is a recurring theme in his practice. His work also interrogates media representations of violence, suffering and trauma while tackling issues pertaining to cultural diversity and memory, within a global context. According to the artist, his body of work including paintings explores the aspirations of those existing in the periphery of mainstream society. Here, he employs the human body to question and challenge pre-arranged systems or relationships in society.

Jimmy Uche Nwanne was born in 1989, in Kaduna, Nigeria, and later studied fine art, majoring in painting at the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Presently, he lives and works in Kaiserslautern, Germany. "Art is a fabric woven with the texture of life". In these words, Nwanne's underlying philosophy resonates strongly with the central thrust of the exhibition.

Portraits and figure studies form a special part of his oeuvre. Inspired by universal themes such as gender, race, religion, love and relationships, as well as contemporary politics. In an increasingly globalised world, Mbanefo Obiako also observes the artist's growing focus in ensuring his work transcends geographical boundaries and specific national contexts through colour and the textural qualities of his canvases. To achieve his aim, Nwanne often divides his picture plane with faces of his subjects assuming a different colour in each segment to emphasize individuality. In his world, several parts function as a whole. Other pictorial devices are his incorporation of winged insects and iconic objects like ships, to suggest travel and boundaries.

Strongly individual, all the works presented here, are a testament to each artist's quest in exploring new visual vocabularies and the development of new techniques. Hopefully, Nigerian audiences will approach their work with openness to a different worldview, one rooted in an ancient and distinctive cultural heritage, yet embracing the artistic expression of other regions of the world.

Oliver Enwonwu,  
M.A Art History  
President, Society of Nigerian Artists  
June, 2017

*The process of "wandern"  
starts with one single step  
and is never ending...*



# CHIDI KWUBIRI



© Dieter Härtl/MISEREOR

Chidi Kwubiri, born in Umuahia/Nigeria, studied fine arts (painting) at the Art Academy Dusseldorf with Prof. Michael Buthe and Prof. A.R. Penck (Master of Fine Arts [Meisterschüler]).

He has had multiple solo exhibitions in Nigeria, USA, Germany, South Africa, France and the Netherlands. Over the years his works have been shown at the Casablanca Biennale, Morocco, the "Palm Beach Contemporary", Florida, USA, the UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, Goethe-Institut, Dusseldorf, Germany, OPERA Gallery, Paris and at the 50th Anniversary of the Nigerian Independence at the Nigerian Embassy and Deutsche Bank, Berlin, to name a few – and recently at the Venice Biennale 2015 and at the Dom Museum of Trier, Germany in March this year.

He is the recipient of several art sponsorship awards..

In 2016 Chidi Kwubiri has been selected by MISEREOR to design the renowned "MISEREOR-Hungertuch" with the title "Ich bin, weil Du bist" (I am because you are) for their global lenten campaign 2017/2018.

As an artist the lust to wander is a natural impulse for me. My day starts with a spiritual journey at home and in the studio. I embark on the journey of the unknown, when I create and experiment, and later, both the artist and his creations wander to a different world to meet and interact as in this exciting exhibition.

I try to interpret "Wanderlust" in my works through several perspectives:

In "transition" I want to talk about the spiritual journey of the mind and the soul, which often move from one state of mind to another.

In "priceless" and "Eze goes to school" it's about the journey and importance of knowledge and the need to broaden ones horizon

"shadow" and "how many rivers to cross" are about the obstacles, risks and dangers of "wandern"

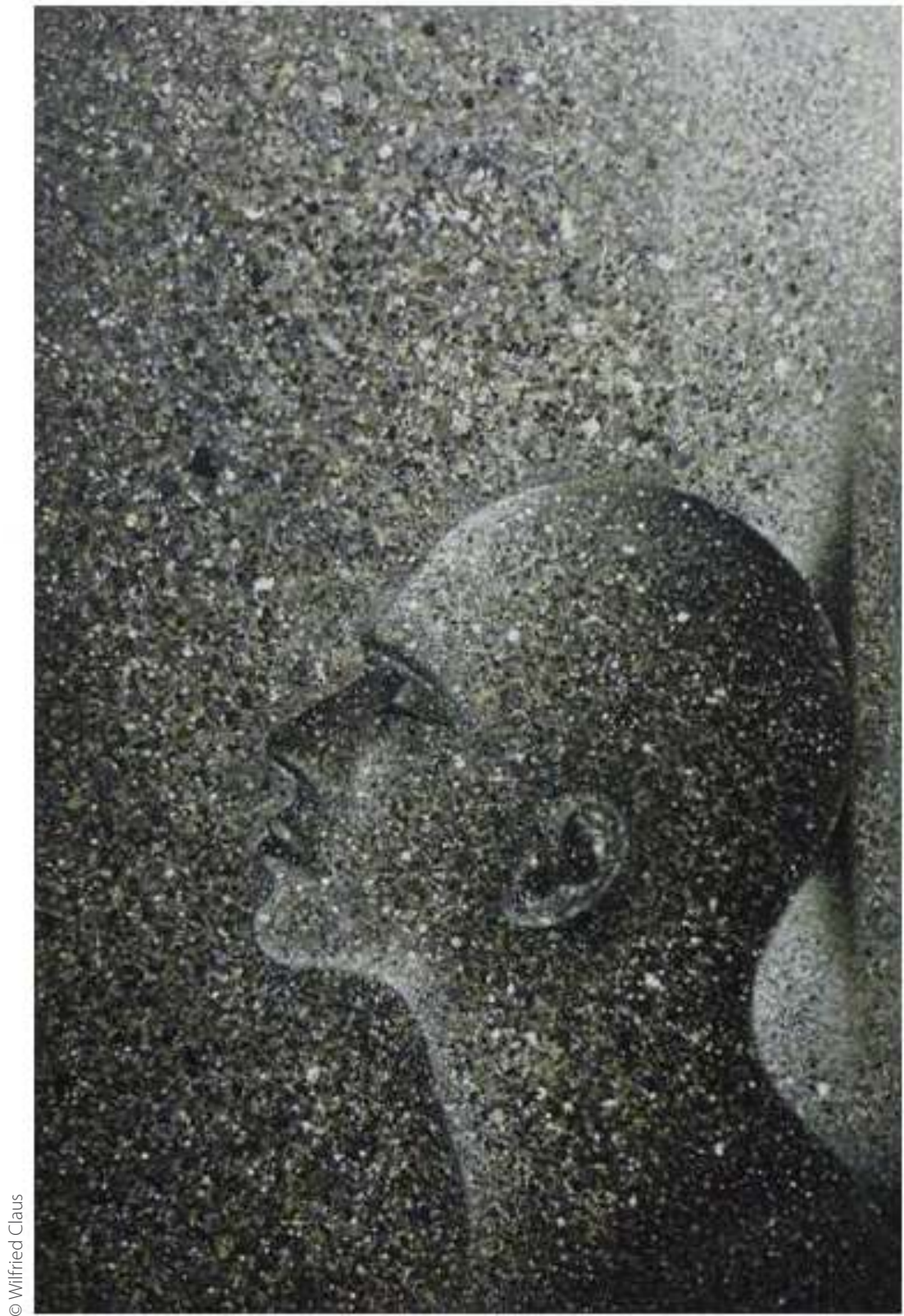
And in "traces" I want to address the process of "wandern", which starts with one single step and is never ending.

© Wilfried Claus



Eze Goes to School, acrylic on canvas, 195 x 175cm, 2017

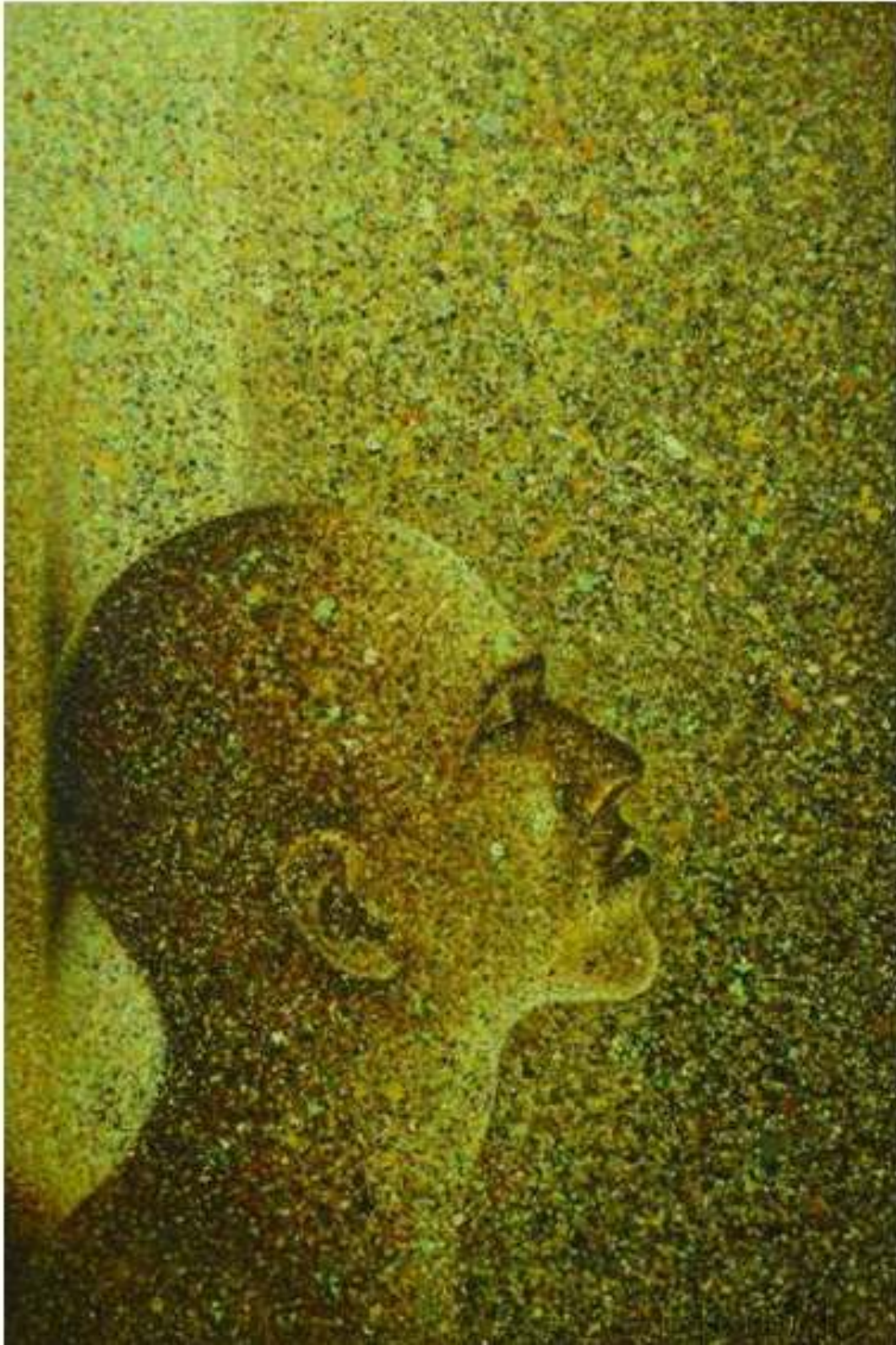




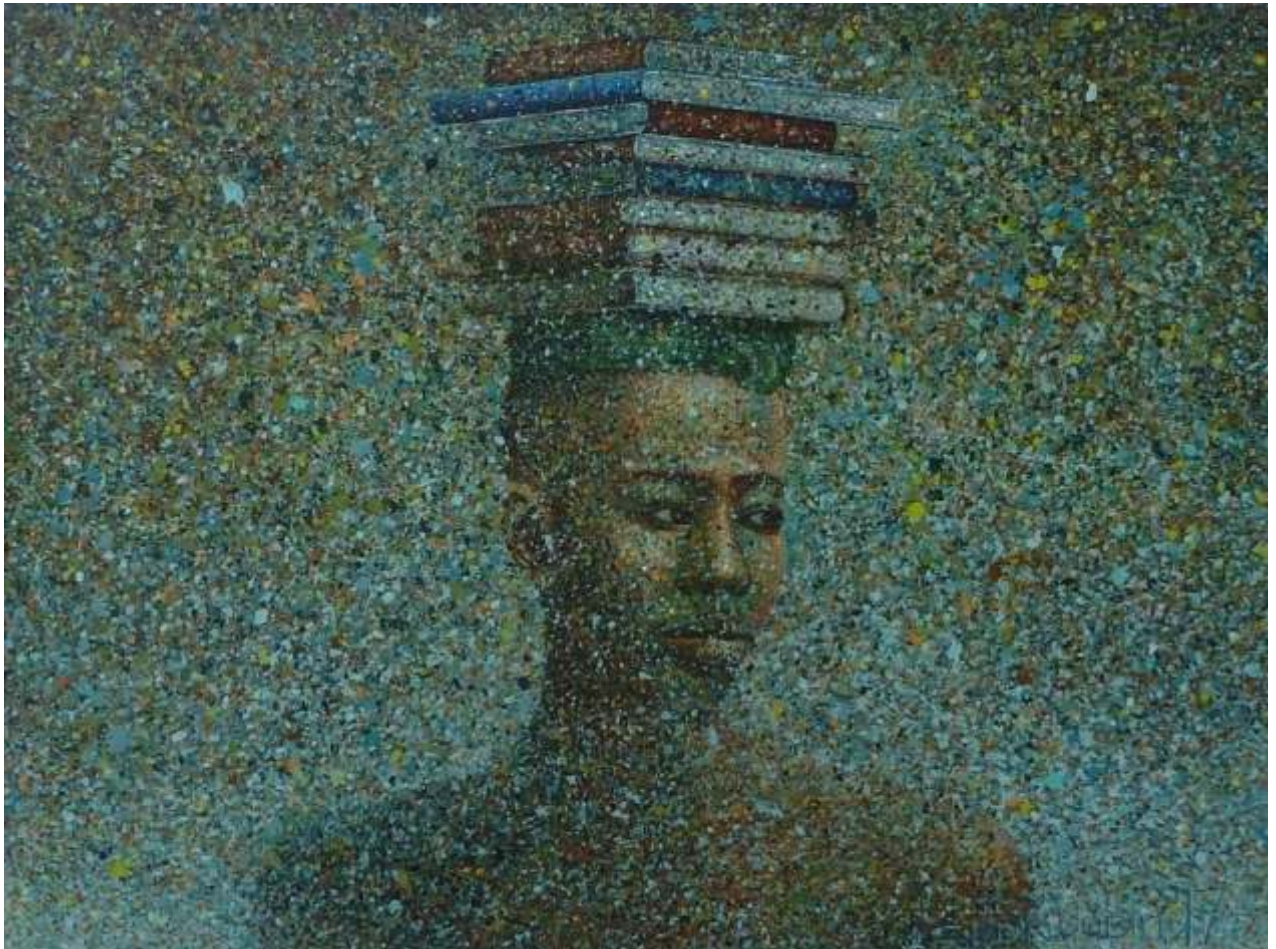
© Wilfried Claus

*Shadow*, acrylic on canvas, dyptich, 150 x 100cm, 2016









© Wilfried Claus

*Priceless*, acrylic on canvas, 150 x 200cm, 2017



*How Many Rivers to Cross*, acrylic on board, 70 x 90cm, 2017

*wanderlust*

*First name: Matilda*

*Second name: Utopia*

*Third name: Utopus*

*...searching, groping and shuttling on grounded  
pins for shortish gains*

*Vera`s saw-dust toilet and the high-star Hotel.  
Of ripples and of hopes and of holes; and foams...  
... in the time continuum*

*Isabel.*

*Johannes offered a beer.*

*and there was Pizza in the Banquette.*

*... and then we had Crackers for Dinner...*

*...only yet in the continuum of time.*

*thejunkmanfromafrika  
2017*



# JUNKMAN FROM AFRIKA



Internationally known as the junkmanfromafrika, Dilomprizulike holds a BA (University of Nigeria Nsukka), and an MFA( University of Dundee, Scotland) in Fine and Applied Arts. From 1989 to1995, he lectured at the University of Benin, Nigeria, before leaving to pursue full-time studio practice. Today he is also a writer, song writer and composer, performer; director and founder of the junkmania creative concepts.

He has featured as guest lecturer in many Universities, speaker in many conferences and symposiums and performed on important platforms in various parts of the world..

Some major exhibitions in which he has participated held in Museums and Biennals such as Centre Pompidou; Paris, Tate Modern; London, Moderna Musert; Stockholm, CCCB Barcelona, COCA; Osaka, Herzliya Museum; Telaviv, JAG SouthAfrica, as well as Dakar and Guandju Biennals....

He currently teaches SELF DEVELOPMENT in two universities of applied sciences in (Soest and Giessen) Germany.

My work concentrates on the CITY and city life as a curious concept of modernity, which particularly in Africa confronts, as it interweaves with cultural characteristics and traditional philosophies of the people. The conflicts, agitations and new concepts of life and life styles which emerge from these transitional realities therefore constitute the bases of my creative expressions as i attempt to mold stories and imageries of these emergent realities by employing used and disused materials to create forms of their aesthetic character...





*Friends of Matilda 6*, 100 x 80cm, printing paint on paper, 2017

*Friends of Matilda 5*, 100 x 80 cm, printing paint on canvas, 2017





*Friends of Matilda 1*, 59 x 67cm, printing paint on Paper, 2017





*My Wanderlust explores  
the aspirations of those  
among the periphery of  
mainstream society.*



# EMEKA UDEMBA



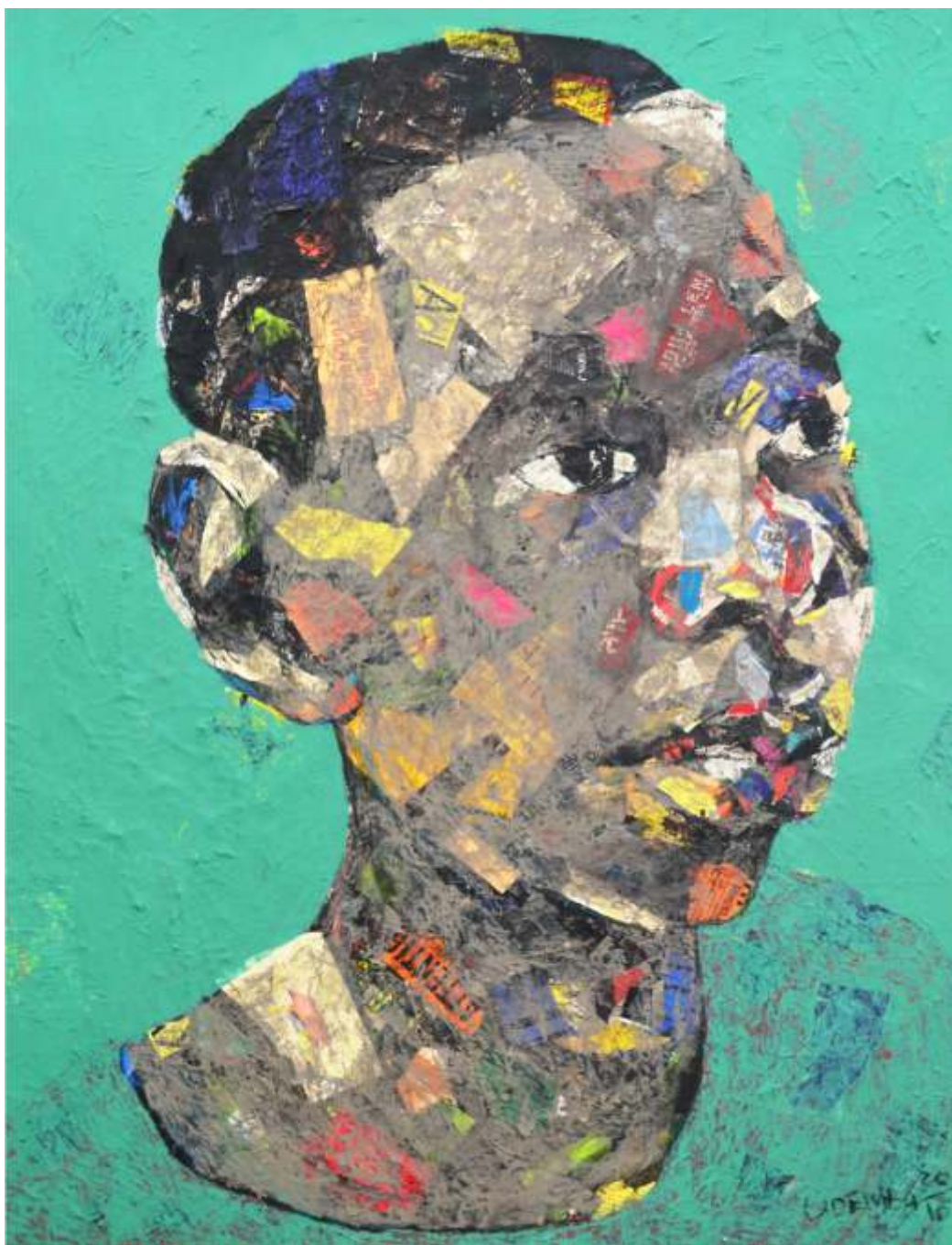
Born 1968, Emeka Udemba studied art education at the Lagos State College of Education/University of Lagos, Nigeria. He produces installations, performances, photography, video and drawings. His works explore questions underlining individual as well as collective experiences dealing with issues of socio-cultural influences and politics. One of his ongoing projects is Molue Mobile Museum of Contemporary Art. He has won various prizes, grants and residencies and is also involved in curatorial art practices in public spaces. He lives and works in Freiburg, Germany and in Lagos, Nigeria.

*Wanderlust 2*, acrylic, paper on canvas, 123cm x 98cm, 2017









*Wanderlust 4*, acrylic, paper on canvas, 166cm x 139 cm, 2016





*Wanderlust 3*, acrylic, paper on canvas, 166cm x 139 cm, 2016

*Wanderlust 7*, acrylic, paper on canvas, 123 x 98cm, 2016



*My "Wanderlust" speaks to issues one can encounter regardless of where one travels to, because human nature is pretty much the same regardless of location.*

*Our views of the world sometimes depend on where we stand. However, globalisation has broadened our view enough that we show interest in matters that happen beyond our borders.*



# JIMMY NWANNE



Jimmy Nwanne was born in Kaduna, Nigeria in 1989. He studied fine arts at the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Nigeria, with a major in painting. He currently lives and works in Kaiserslautern, Germany. He has exhibited his works in Denmark, Germany and Nigeria.

My art reflects social, political and cultural issues in a thought provoking way to spark a dialogue.

In my work am open to the use of variety of materials and process, but the subject matter of each work determines the materials, process and technique. One consistent feature in my work is my desire to manipulate the surface of my canvas, by juxtaposing, breaking down the appearance, pasting shapes, colours and texture to add some element of abstraction and playfulness.

Consequently, works in this show echoes that, as they express different basic human conditions from within and beyond the borders of Germany.

Seismic shift: points to the looming deterioration or decay of our human co-existence. The ship symbolizes one of man's technological accomplishments, a bridge and a means of travel. Man's ability to travel beyond his boundary, overcoming the physical challenges of the sea to establish invaluable intercontinental relationships like trade and commerce; cultural exchange and tourism cannot be overemphasized. However, with the threat of war, populism, religious extremism and other extreme views, this relationship is on the brink of collapse. The sinking of this ship denotes the defeat of global progress made by trying to bridge the gaps between various international boundaries.

Between the two of us: is a love story between a man and the butterfly (woman). He appears to be kneeling over something he protects with his hands; that thing is their relationship. Love can be found anywhere, but in some places it is faced with barriers like background, religion, tribe, economic status etc. In order for their relationship to survive, they have to protect it and nurture it until they are strong enough to confront these threats. However, the pressure could actually break up of such fragile union. Meddling in other people's affair is not the best. We should allow people to love who they please and not teach them to hate or incite any form of discrimination.

Confrontation I: lends a voice to the feminist movement. I want to encourage women to stand up and dream big. To confront whatever fear or impediment that obstructs their path in society. For example, here in Germany we have a woman leader who will be running for a fourth term in office and I do not see any reason why such success cannot happen in Nigeria, Africa or around the globe.

Three little dreams: speaks about the pursuit of an ambition or dream which could inspire migration and the desire to travel. Just like plant always grow towards the sun, children nurse dreams which they wish to accomplish through to adulthood. These dreams are like butterflies which are fascinating to a child and something they would chase after happily.

Meine Heimat: portrays a feeling of reminiscing. It is a feeling we experience long after we leave home.



*Seismic Shift*, mixed media on canvas, 150cm x 120cm, 2016





Jimmy Thorne 17





*Confrontation*, mixed media on canvas, diptych, 120cm x 80cm, 2015

*Wanderlust*, mixed media on canvas, 140cm x 100cm, 2017

*Clear Skies.* oil, collage on canvas, 160cm x 120cm, 2017



*The fact is, the grass  
is not greener on the  
other side, if you use  
a sprinkler on yours.*



# NUMERO UNOMA



Numero Unoma was born in Heidelberg, to a German mother and a Nigerian father. She grew up in Benin City, and studied at the University of Ife, where she graduated with a Bachelor's degree in psychology. She later studied photography & multimedia at the University of Westminster in England and recently obtained a certificate in copyright law from Harvard Law School in the United States.

Although Unoma's first love has always been writing and art, she spent many years working as an international banker and was once a registered stock broker on the New York Stock Exchange. In 1995, she returned to her passion with her UK company Ethnic Majority for which she designed and also collected African and afrocentric gifts and lifestyle products from across the African continent and beyond. She is committed to addressing important issues such as identity, gender, ethics and the environment with a critical and enquiring eye, and became involved in numerous creative initiatives. Unoma was a founding member of the Invisible Borders Trans African Photography Project and also wrote for the Nigerian film industry working with celebrated Nigerian filmmaker Tunde Kelani and many others. In April this year, she published an anthology of poems 'CONTROverseY'. Unoma's current focus is on fostering tolerance and honing excellence in Nigeria, using art as a vehicle; she has a penchant for nurturing pop art at her small Abuja independent Gallery Arnuvo, as a new voice in the creative landscape.

While photography, painting and poetry are my most prolific media, nothing is excluded that would enable the expression of the workings of my mind, heart and soul.

For me, expression spontaneously combusts at the intersection between semantics and semiotics, and is informed by the zeitgeists of the timeline of my life, during which black civil rights have first progressed and then regressed, consumerism and globalization have mushroomed, wars have been hot, cold, real and virtual, gender has become fluid and technology is in the process of abbreviating even physical and emotional engagement between humans.

I was not permitted to study art, my first, true and only calling, though I have no regrets for the financial freedom that working in capitalism afforded me.

Apart from ticking the right professional box for the sake of my father's Nigerian ego, my years in the belly of the beast amounted to a research sabbatical, from which I have been able to derive insider information on capitalism and globalization as well as gender and race politics and economics. I have experienced this, from the geographical and cultural perspectives of two diametrically opposite continents – Africa and Europe, from which, incidentally, my own gene pool, and identity, is composed.



*F.E.A.R. fuck everything and run, acrylic on canvas, 114 x 61cm, 2016*



*Hunger Strikes, mixed media (acrylic and glaze) on 600g cotton rag paper, 56 x 38cm, 2016*



*Reach for the stars*, mixed media (acrylic, aquarelle & oil pastel) on 300g cotton rag paper, 112 x 76 by Numero Unoma



## Reach for the stars

Ask a Nigerian how he or she is, and they will answer with an invocation of God's benevolence. "How are you?" "We thank God!". Tell us about a problem you are having, and the probable response will be our panacea invocation: "It is well".

A quintessential element of our cultures, invocation is a linguistic manifestation of our constant tuning in to the spiritual realm, and while it transcends religion, the content of an invocation may be informed by the invoker's faith. Invocation has always been an inherent part of fast disappearing social rituals like the breaking of kola nuts in a gathering, or the pouring of libations to our ancestors, in recognition of the paths they have trodden, and the trails they have blazed for us.

Your life will be good!  
May a good spouse and children find you!  
Nothing will stand in your way!  
Your enemies will fail!  
May you prosper!  
E go better for you!

With our words, we invoke our dreams and hopes to come true. But to hope is not to plan, or in the words of New York's former mayor, Rudy Giuliani, hope is not a strategy.

This is probably what drives so many Nigerians to take horrific risks to get across to Europe - across a desert, across a sea, across a border, across a fence. Anything to get across the imaginary line between poverty and prosperity. It is as if any plan, no matter how questionable, is better than just hoping. Even with all the invocations in the world.

E go better for you - better go for EU!

One of the great 20<sup>th</sup> Century Jazz Standards, the tune 'Airegin', which was made famous by Miles Davis in 1957, was actually composed and originally recorded at Davis' studio in 1954 by Sonny Rollins, who had named it in tribute to a photograph he had seen in a magazine, of Nigerian dancers. Rollins simply flipped the name Nigeria around, one wonders why he might have done that.

Travel is something we Nigerians have always done a lot of, both at home and abroad. Personally, I have flown and sailed between, and driven around Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and the Americas since early childhood, and only ever proudly on a Nigerian passport.

I mean, for those of us who travel on Nigerian passports, we are so spoiled by the preferential treatment we receive at ports and airports around the world, that we wouldn't dream of disguising who we are. It's pretty straightforward, really:

In Mauritania and Italy I am a prostitute  
In Morocco and Spain, an illegal immigrant  
In the UK I am a benefit fraudster  
In the US, a terrorist  
In Canada I am a legal alien and student  
In South Africa a drug dealer  
In Togo I am a pirate  
In St Vincent, a conman  
In France and Germany I am a refugee asylum seeker  
And back home in Nigeria, I am a returnee. And a consultant...ask me anything.



*Miles from Home*, mixed media (acrylic, charcoal and glaze) on canvas, 92 x 61cm, 2016

Race is just one of those things. Especially in my life, it's not to be relegated to the paltriness of a monosyllabic word in a sea of language, not even when referring to the defunct Louis Vuitton yacht race, because even though I am only of one race, the human race, somehow I am deemed to be biracial.

We'd better stick to sailing and sailors. Like Gil Eannes, who was born in an Atlantic port settlement named Lagos, situated on the southwestern coast of the box-shaped Iberian peninsula, in a region named the Algarve, al-Gharb, being Arabic for the west, which was once ruled by African Moors, who generally sailed north.

He was the navigator of whom it is recorded in European history, that he won the race to sail south, past the dreaded Cape Bojador, also named in Arabic as "Abu Khatar", meaning "the father of danger".

Beyond the cape, it was believed that the sea was boiling, on account of the effect on compasses of the ferrous rocks, and of the violent effect on the water, of its rocky underwater reefs and gullies. Moreover it had a coast of dunes and red sand, shallow depths, ceaseless breakers and north-easterly winds, all of which it turned out, were easy to avoid by simply by sailing around the cape, farther out to sea. However, many a ship was wrecked on the continental shelf just off the cape.

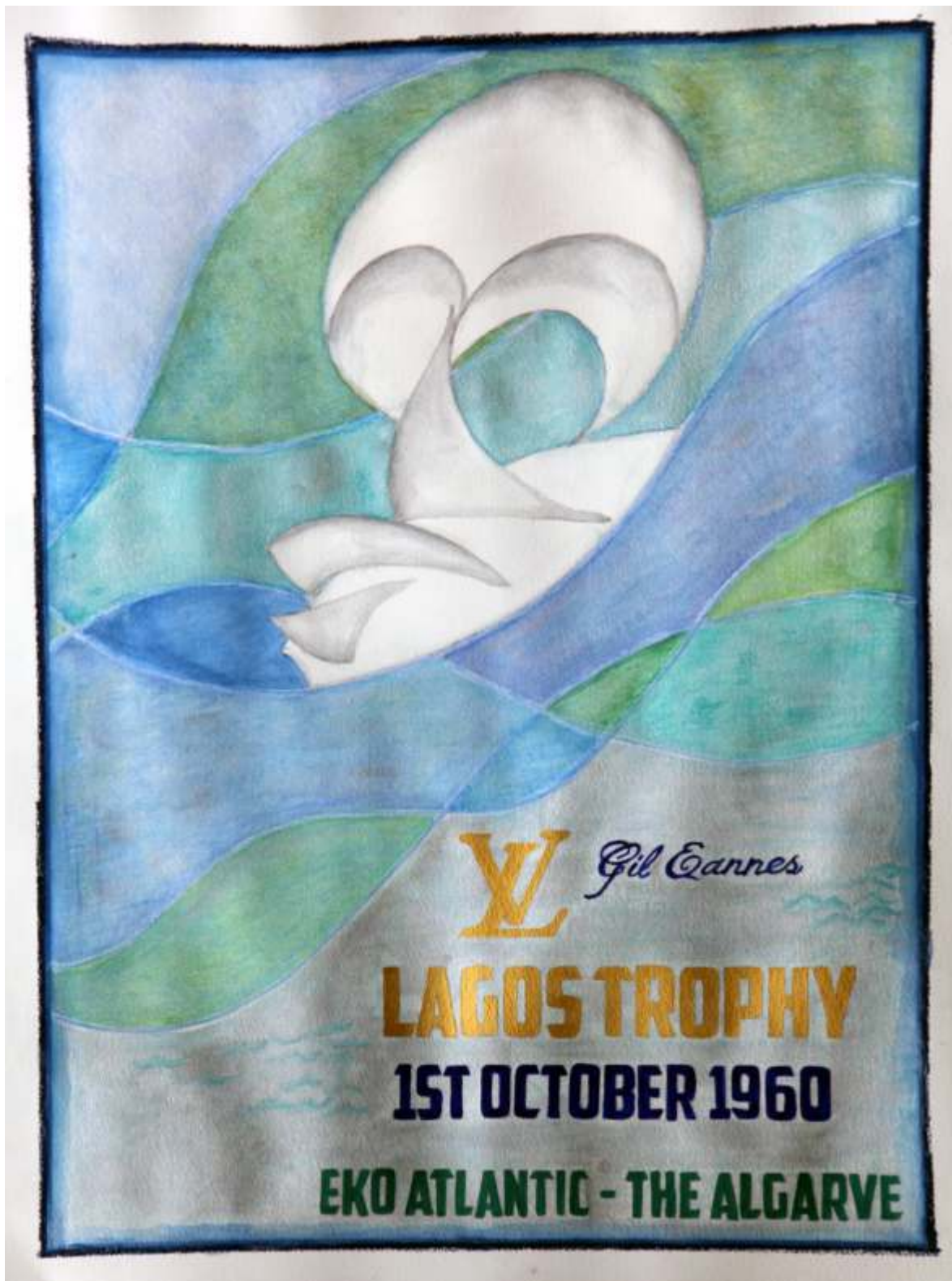
It was he with the celebrity-sounding name, Gil Eannes, who first opened up West Africa to Europe for slave trade and other exploitations. Consequently, and uncannily, there is now another Atlantic port settlement which the Portuguese have also named Lagos, situated in almost the same position in a similarly box-shaped territory, now named Nigeria.

Apart from the affluent exclusivity, property development boom, high-end shopping and vibrant nightlife of today's Lagos, whether in Portugal, or in Nigeria, both cities share a history of being the erstwhile capital of the region, and of playing a major role in the transatlantic slave trade.

Significantly, both cities of Lagos also share historical and present-day traditions of boating, shipping and sailing.

Race...did I say race? I'll race you to the beach!





*Race*, mixed media (acrylic, aquarelle & oil pastel) on 300g cotton rag paper, 76 x 112cm, 2017

*My work is about the beauty  
of lightness and defying  
gravity. It is about escaping  
reality and freeing yourself of  
the heavy weight of life.  
For many people this process  
of finding yourself is journey.*

# YETUNDE AYENI-BABAEKO



Yetunde Ayeni-Babeko was born in Enugu in Eastern Nigeria to a Nigerian father and German mother. She moved to Germany as a schoolgirl and embarked on a photography apprenticeship majoring in advertising photography at “Studio Be” in Greven, Germany. In 2003 she returned to Nigeria and joined Ess Ay Studio program in her paternal homeland. Subsequently she enrolled at Macromedia School for Art and Design in Osnabrueck, Germany. In 2005 she returned to Nigeria as a freelance photographer and in 2007 she opened her own studio in Nigeria. She has worked closely with the Goethe Institute in Lagos and facilitated numerous photography workshops looking at women’s empowerment and healthcare, with a focus on cancer survivors. Her exhibitions are beautiful and highly aesthetic works that convey stories, symbols and sometimes, movement. Her work is in many important collections and she has exhibited her photographs in Europe and Nigeria. From 2013-2015 she focused on a critically acclaimed project on dance in Lagos, called *Eko Moves*.

It might appear ironic that for an exhibition called "Wanderlust" all my images have been taken inside the studio. I like working with models and in an enclosed and controlled environment. But with professional editing and layering I can create spaces and ambiances of my own imagination. The black and white image "Reconstruction" for instance represents the idea of falling apart but then embarking on the journey of putting oneself together again the way one always wanted to be.





*The Holy Grail*, 24 x 36inch, Photographic Print, 2017



*Tamed* , Photographic Print, 24 x 36inch, 2017

*Solace of Indifference*, 24 x 36inch, photographic print, 2017





*Finding The Gold*, 24 x 36inch framed, Photographic Print, 2017

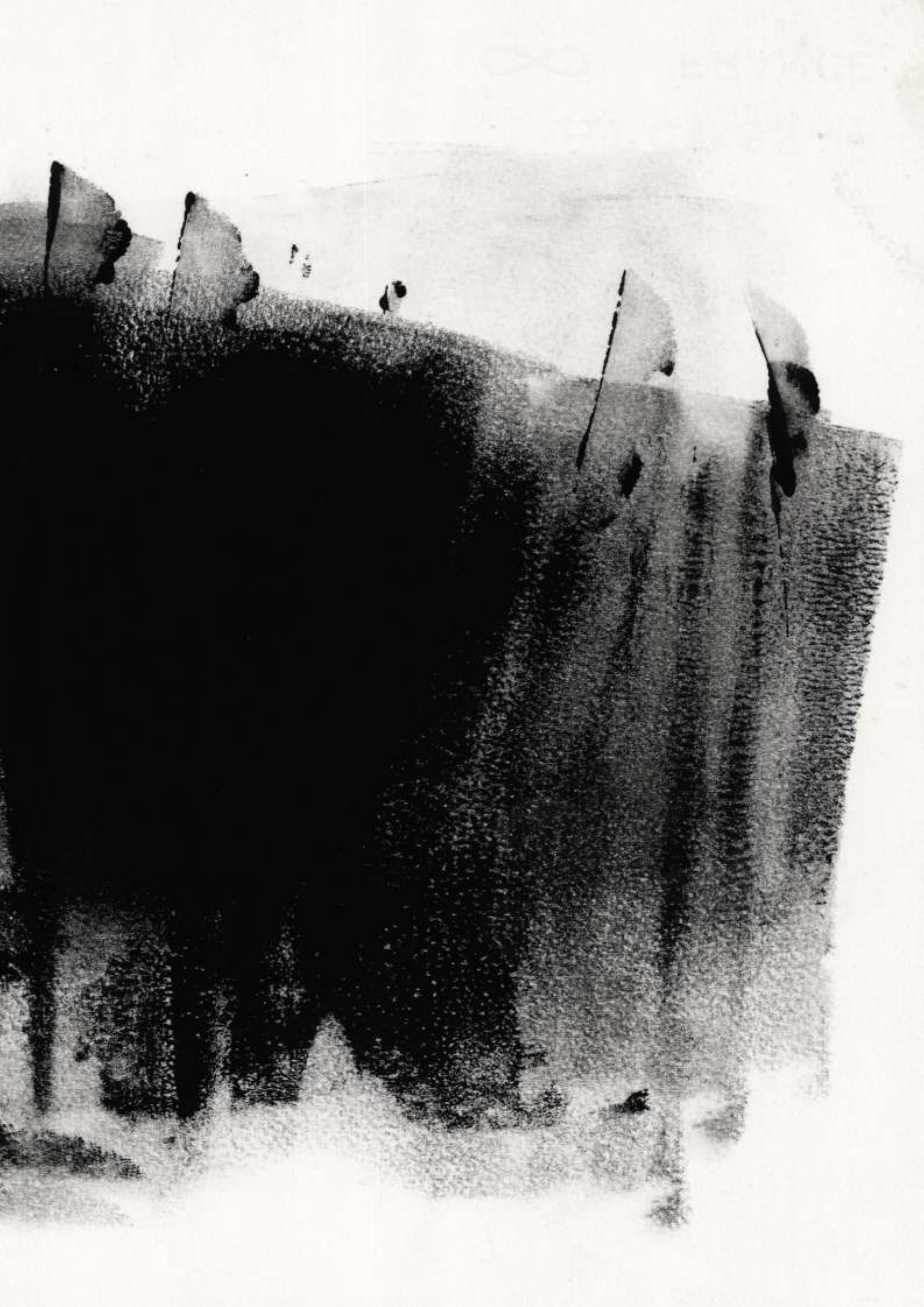








*Friends of Matilda 4*, 59x67 cm, printing paint on Paper, 2017 by Junkman From Afrika







*Wanderlust 6*, acrylic, paper on canvas, 2016, 123 x 98cm by Emeka Udemba



## Time to go

Long after the *are we there yet* is gone  
Moonlight reflects where sunlight shone  
And flowers, those once colourful blooms  
Are transformed into fruitful wombs

I stop to catch a breath between my words  
Stay quiet so as to hear the tweeting birds  
The journey here was long and slow  
But all too soon, already now it's time to go

Grandmother once took me up onto the hill  
One warm evening, aromatic and still  
She said to me gently "When we're apart  
Child, don't ever let it break your heart"

Here is the moon and so am I, and so are you  
To see me, look up at him, just as I will too  
Go live your life wherever you are without care  
And know, I and the moon forever will be there.

Numero Unoma

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Art builds. Art questions. Art transcends borders. Art works.

With its art program Deutsche Bank is making a sustainable contribution to the development of society. Creativity is a source of innovation and progress. That's why Deutsche Bank has been enabling access to contemporary art worldwide for more than 30 years: with its substantial collection, in exhibitions, and through cooperation around the world. The "Art Works" concept is an integral part of Deutsche Bank's Corporate Citizenship program. In line with this motto Deutsche Bank offers employees, clients and the general public access to contemporary art through its collection at the workplace, in international exhibitions, at the Deutsche Bank Kunst Halle in Berlin, as well as through education programmes. Deutsche Bank supports joint projects with museums, art fairs and other institutions to award and encourage emerging talents, which is best shown in the "Artist of the Year" award which provides a platform to the contemporary artists. The magazine ArtMag provides insight into the international art scene. These extensive global activities – designed and accompanied by a team of experts – enable increasing numbers of people to engage with contemporary art. We are creating opportunities, enabling talent and fostering creativity.



The Wheatbaker as part of the Legacy Hotel Group, has keenly supported Nigerian arts and culture since opening its doors in 2011. The hotel's commitment to celebrating the best of Nigerian creativity saw it dedicate its walls to showcasing exceptional traditional, modern and contemporary art. The Wheatbaker has hosted world class art exhibitions including the *Collectors' Series* showcasing Duke Asidere, Kelechi Amadi-Obi and Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko (2011), *Making History* showcasing ancient Nigerian art (2012), *Sequel 1a* showcasing works by Olu Amoda, *Recent sculptures* by Billy Omabegho (2012), the *WW Independence Series* featuring Tayo Ogunbiyi, Karo Akpoki, Folarin Shasanya, Hakeem Salaa, Toyosi Faridah Kekere-Ekun (2012-13), *Flow* showcasing mixed media installations by Nenna Okore, *Here & There* showcasing paintings by Polly Alakija (2013), photography by Lakin Ogunbanwo, *Duality* showcasing paintings by Isaac Emokpae, *Unfurling*, showcasing photography & poetry by Sandra & Amara Obiako (2014), *Eko Moves* showcasing photography by Yetunde Ayeni Babaeko (2014) and *AKALAKA* showcasing paintings by Tayo Adenaike and sculptures by Obiora Anidi, *The Contemporaries*, showcasing Nnenna Okore, Duke Asidere, Uchay Joel Chima, Gerald Chukwuma, Raoul Olawale da Silva, Anthea Epelle, Taiye Idahor, Chika Idu, Tony Nsofor, Onyeama Offeodu-Okeke, Tony Nsofor and Adeyinka Akingbade, and *Save Our Art! Save our Heritage!*, a charity exhibition supporting the restoration of the Osun Groves UNESCO World Heritage Site that featured 18 artists including Sangodare Ajala, Adebisi Akanji, Rabi Abesu, Buraimoh Gbadmosi, Kikelomo, Ajibike Ogunyemi, Bisi Fabunmi, Jimoh Buraimoh, Muraina Oyelami, Prof. Bruce Onabrakpeya Chief Nike Okundaye & Chief Tola Wewe, Polly Alakija, Wura-Natasha Ogunji & photographer Adolphus Opara in 2015-2016 ; *Equal Rights* showcasing Mike Omoighe, *Evolving Currents* featuring Raqib Bashorun and Chika Idu , and *Mental Space* showcasing paintings by Duke Asidere, *Freedom* featuring Gbenga Offo in 2016. This year we featured Tayo Olayode in *Permutations*, and celebrated Nigerian female artists in Standing Out II which featured Amami Isiuwe, Bunmi Oyesanya, Data Oruwari, Marcellina Akpojotor, Ngozi Ezema, Olawunmi Banjo, Omo Udentia, Ozoz Sokoh, Sade Adebowale and Taiye Idahor.



We are a multi-professional services company providing cutting edge solutions with focus on the improved quality lives. Through our commitment continuous improvement and uncompromised professional standards, we provide smart and premium solutions for our esteemed customers; operate safe, environmentally responsible facilities that are well maintained and cost effective; and develop mutually beneficial relationships with our clients and the communities within which we operate. This is achieved by employing a custom-made approach, while taking into consideration the peculiarities of each project well tailored to our clients' preferences and needs, we pride ourselves in our broad-based and extensive knowledge and experience in our key areas of specialization and competence which include; construction, real estate and project finance.

We build bridges with various strategic partners to ensure that only the best skills are brought to bear on project awarded to STILLEARTH. Be it large or of a medium size, we have the relationships in place to cater for our customers, providing only the best skills for every task at all times.

Our consultancy take many forms; from strategic options analysis, to value assessment, deal structuring, designing mechanisms for presenting deals to the marketplace, transaction process management, to negotiating and securing the optima terms for a successful closing





Louis Guntrum was established in 1648, and eleven generations later, Louis Konstantin Guntrum has elevated the wines to fresh new heights. With their commitment to artistry, tradition and excellence, the Guntrum family is proud to introduce these new wines that represent the tradition and vision of a rich winemaking legacy in Germany's Rhine valley.

Louis Guntrum award winning wines are enjoyed in over 80 countries worldwide. A newcomer in the Nigerian market, Guntrum wine is pleased to support African creativity.



From Residential to Commercial Towers, Industrial Mills, Factories, Power plant structures, Hotels, El-Alan has done it all. For more than thirty years, El-Alan has strategically grown to become one of the most dynamic and fastest growing construction and civil engineering companies in Nigeria.

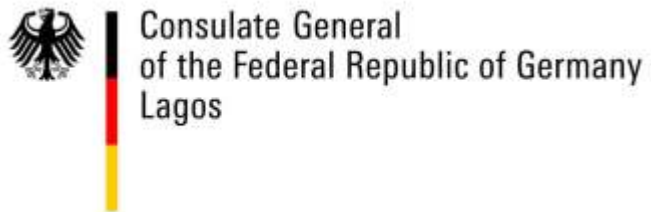
From an initial focus on renovations and sub-contracting work, learning their paces and strengths, the company has built an enviable reputation founded on the ideals of quality and efficient project delivery.

The complexity and diverse nature of the company's works can be seen in their projects including Abuja Sheraton Hotel, Bagco Factory (Floor Mills of Nigeria), Glaxo Smithkline Head office, Marina Securities Head office, Bel Papyrus Paper Mill; Tango Towers and Cereal Plant for Nestle Nigeria amongst others.

Also providing building maintenance and facility management solutions, this holistic approach delivers cost effectiveness, streamlines project management and shortens construction timelines.

This is embedded in the company's core values, Quality, Integrity; flexibility, commitment alongside exhibited capabilities such as creative expertise, customer satisfaction, timelessness, value-added services, and teamwork.

El-Alan commitment to quality growth has seen it blossom into a specialized highly regarded construction company with the commitment, capabilities and expertise to handle effectively and efficiently any level or sort of project undertaken by the company.



The cultural ties between Germany and Nigeria are diverse and lively. The cultural sections of the German Missions in Nigeria maintain excellent working relationships with a number of Nigerian and international partners to support local cultural organisations and activities, but also to bring the best of German culture to audiences within the country.





# CURATOR

Adolphos Opara



Sandra Mbanefo Obiako is a multi-faceted writer, photographer, poet, art collector & curator, and award winning filmmaker. She has curated art shows and worked with the local creative industry to promote the best of Nigerian art.

She ran the communications program in Sub-Saharan Africa for environmental group, WWF International for eight years before founding and running Communicating for Change, a media for development social enterprise in Nigeria for fourteen years. She is a social activist and her campaigns, films, radio programs and publications have touched on themes such as human rights, women's empowerment, health including HIV & AIDS, environment, democracy and good governance. She organized conferences, workshops, and symposia for Nigeria's growing film industry and helped develop a course on *Media Enterprise* at the Pan African University.

Obiako produced and directed many films over the years, including a five-part documentary film series, *Red Hot: Nigeria's Creative Industries*, featuring artists from the film, music, performance and visual arts sectors. She was Associate Producer of the feature film, *Half of A Yellow Sun*, adapted from the award winning novel by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

She has been involved in many community initiatives and served as a trustee of the Convention on Business Integrity (CBI), was a member of the Advisory Council of the Nigerian National Film Institute and has served as a member of the jury of the *Nigeria Media Merit Awards*. Obiako is a Fellow of the Aspen Institute's *African Leadership Initiative for West Africa (ALIWA)* and has served as Sunday School teacher since her teens. She received an M.A. in Telecommunications from Michigan State University, and a Bachelor of Education degree in English and German from the University of Manitoba, in Canada. She is happily married with three children.

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*Nu Benchmark 1: 'Have a seat'*, mixed media (acrylic, marker, varnish) on wood, 1800 x 30 x 45h cm, 2017 by Numero Unoma

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