



ANCESTRAL SPACE

Translated Identities



ANCESTRAL SPACE Translated Identities

'as it is !'

Contemporary African Art Exhibition Series

In memory of my beloved father, Okechukwu (Okey) Mark Nwankwo

Annabelle Nwankwo-Mu'azu

*'For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one.
In the depth of your hopes and desires lies your silent knowledge of the beyond;
And like seeds dreaming beneath the snow your heart dreams of spring.
Trust the dreams, for in them is hidden the gate to Eternity...'*

The Prophet, Kahlil Gibran

A R I S E
AFRICA'S GLOBAL STYLE & CULTURE MAGAZINE

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'as it is!'

Contemporary African Art Exhibition Series

as it is!, the exhibition of African art in the Arab world strikes me as a most essential dimension of creative dialogue between two vibrant cultures. Art has always proved the disinterested bridge across world views, a source of illumination as much as inspiration.

Wole Soyinka,
Professor Emeritus,
Obafemi Awolowo University,

Ile Ife Nigeria
Nobel Laureate in Literature, 1986



as it is!

CONTEMPORARY ART FROM AFRICA & THE DIASPORA

DECEMBER 2010 – MARCH 2011

As It Is! Contemporary Art From Africa & The Diaspora is an unprecedented series of exhibitions taking place for the first time in Dubai.

This exhibition's four-part series explores and celebrates the creative vigour of over 20 astounding artists from the African continent and its diverse and far-reaching Diaspora. The project focuses on the artist's voice and their pursuit to capture an audience through an aesthetic that is distinctly personal, but breathtakingly all-encompassing. It articulates an increasingly evolutionary desire to sever stereotypical thought modes about 'African art' and an African aesthetic or identity; a notion widely perpetuated in the mainstream art world for so long.

As It Is! aims to challenge these widely assumed belief systems, by giving the artist a platform to present their narrative, as they wish it to be viewed, heard and interpreted. Founded and curated by Nigerian born London based curator, and African art enthusiast, Annabelle Nwankwo – Mu'azu, the series of shows will bring to the fore a diverse range of international artists who wish to be critiqued for their creativity, and to be seen as individuals rather than a collective. However, as a postscript, As It Is! will extol and celebrate the greatness of their African heritage, which directly or indirectly is an overriding influence in the creative passage. Many of the artists live like nomads, between the 'motherland' and the Diaspora, whilst others are

predominately based on the African continent - a generation of dynamic artists, both established and emerging originating from Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Cameroun, Senegal, Ethiopia and South Africa. All of these artists are exponents of African visual culture, innovators, free styling and captivating as they pursue their goals. Featured artists include recognised darlings of the international art world, El Anatsui, the celebrated Ghanaian sculptor, and Nigerian born maverick, Yinka Shonibare, MBE; to emerging but equally praised Nigerian-born, painter, Obiageli Okigbo, installation artist and painter, Ayo Aina, Ugandan, US based-actor and photographer, Ntare Guma Mbaho Mwine, and hip-hop commentator Rushay Booyesen.

As It Is! Contemporary Art From Africa and The Diaspora, will illustrate beautifully a vision of Africa, void of the commonly perpetuated ideologies and will capture the greatness and zeal of an African aesthetic valid and invigorating and at the forefront of- the new world order. Simultaneously, this series of exhibitions will demonstrate a continuous journey of discovery, interaction, exchange and collaboration between the UAE and the African continent and Diaspora. Poignantly, 2010 marks a significant milestone as 17 African nations celebrate 50 years of independence. As It Is! is proud to be taking place at such a monumental time in world history.



ANCESTRAL SPACE

Translated Identities

as it is! ANCESTRAL SPACE – TRANSLATED IDENTITIES

JANUARY 2011

Ancestral Space – Translated Identities is the second exhibition in a four part multi-faceted series at The Mojo Gallery titled 'As It Is! Contemporary Art From Africa and The Diaspora.'

In many countries in Africa, ancestors are held in high esteem and it is believed that they hold great mystical powers of authority. They retain an important role in the world of the living: they are considered to be the link between the living and the traditional gods, a guiding light at momentous occasions in life's circle.

Traditionally, the link to the ancestor comes through the Elders close connection to them. Viewed as the representatives of the ancestors and the mediators between both realms, elders impart the teachings of the ancestors to new generations, along with the gifts and the forewarnings of the past.

As long as there has been a creative process, African visionaries have communicated the vital significance of this ancestry through visual art, dance, performance and literature. In many ways, the artists represented in this exhibition are acting as a bridge themselves – a bridge between the traditional arts and the modern. Their wisdom is respected, revered and extolled. Through their work they illustrate the importance of past histories and its relevance to a future modern Africa. They recognise and walk in the ancestral space.

Ancestral Space – Translated Identities explores these links on a number of compelling levels, but also celebrates the work of a group of who through their work provide perspectives on the past, present and future. The exhibition aims to illustrate how these traditional thought processes can be translated to Africa today.



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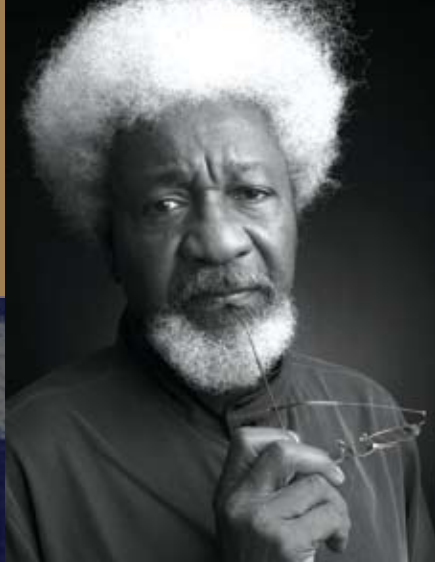
Translated Identities



FEATURED ARTISTS:

K. Kenny Adewuyi	Sculptor	Nigeria
Owusu-Ankomah	Painter	Ghana
Momodou Ceesay	Painter & Printmaker	Gambia
Pélagie Gbaguidi	Painter & Installation	Benin
Tola Wewe	Painter	Nigeria

'As it is!' is the first ever group exhibition presenting contemporary African art in the Middle East. Over four months at The Mojo Gallery 'As It Is!' is showcasing 21 leading and emerging artists who articulate a progressively evolutionary break from European stereotypes about 'contemporary African art'. The concept for the exhibition series is an artist-led ideology. It is about their narrative, their experience of being an artist and expressing their identity.



'as it is!'

Contemporary African Art Exhibition Series

PAINTING ACROSS CULTURES BY PROFESSOR WOLE SOYINKA - PATRON

Usually, African art turns its face towards Europe, occasionally also towards the United States but, mostly towards Europe. This is not surprising, once we recall that what most of what we know as modern Africa is a creation of Europe, through colonialism. Consequently, any external exposure, or dialogue between artistic forms and motifs follows the same path of exchange and influence as other forms of creativity – literature, music, dance and drama, and indeed, architecture.

The colonial cords remain as effective as ever—Francophone, Lusophone, Anglophone or Hispanophone. And yet a powerful 'external' creative language exists on the continent itself – the Arab/Islamic, beckoning towards the larger Arab world.

One of the very few statesmen to address this option was, not surprisingly, a poet and intellectual in his own right – Leopold Sedar Senghor. He was the earliest to recognize and articulate the need for a black African linkage to that cultural repository that he named Arabite, and he matched his words by deeds in creating opportunities, as head of state, for the mutual cultural interrogation

between both sides through expositions and Festivals, even while committed, a priori, to the founding of such exchanges on the cultural actualities of the African continent itself.

Despite such efforts, the weight of contacts between Africa and Europe still predominates, awaiting the moment when the pendulum would swing the other way and bring the Arab cultural world just as close, if not closer to the African. \This exhibition of African art in the Arab world therefore strikes me as a most essential dimension of such creative dialogue between two vibrant cultures. Despite a historic foothold in the African continent, the Arab world still exists in as profound ignorance of the African world, its history and creative vitality, as the African world also does of the Arab. While, all too often alas, politics divides, Art unites.

Art has always proved the disinterested bridge across world views, a source of illumination as much as inspiration. This is one of the reasons, for instance, that I gladly accepted an invitation to the Dubai International Poetry Festival that took place this year, under the patronage of Prince Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum, the Ruler of Dubai who,



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just like his Senegalese counterpart, the late Leopold Senghor, is a highly considered poet of the Arab world. I was already acquainted with a few established names in Arab poetry, but it was a revelation to encounter the works of the younger generation of poets and engage them in person over a variegated field of existential and creative concerns.

It is my hope that this exhibition ('As It is!') will mark a beginning in the construction of such bridges, a mutual opening out between two already interconnected worlds, that will further enrich both, inspire new directions in articulating the realities of both traditional and modernized worlds that such societies – especially their artistes simultaneously inhabit.

This exhibition should travel, evolving eventually in a joint presentation of representative works from both cultures, for the edification of both, and the rest of the world.

Wole Soyinka,
Professor Emeritus, Obafemi Awolowo University,
Ile Ife, Nigeria
Nobel Laureate in Literature, 1986



PROF. WOLE SOYINKA - BIOGRAPHY

Wole Soyinka was born in Abeokuta, Nigeria, in 1934 and is the first black African author to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, which he obtained in 1986.

After preparatory university studies at Government College Ibadan in 1954, he continued his education at the University of Leeds, where he earned a PhD in 1973. During his years in England, he became a playwright for the Royal Court Theatre in London. In 1960, he received a Rockefeller bursary and returned to Africa to study African theatre. During the same period, he taught theatre and literature in various universities in Ibadan, Lagos, and Ife, where he has been professor of comparative literature since 1975. In 1960, he founded the theatre group, The 1960 Masks, and in 1964 The Orisun Theatre Company in which he produced and acted in his own plays. Whilst an Overseas Fellow at Churchill College, Cambridge, he wrote his widely acclaimed *Death and the*

King's Horseman. He has been awarded the George Benson Medal of Royal Society for Literature and the UNESCO Medal for the Arts.

During the civil war in Nigeria, Soyinka appealed in an article for cease-fire. He was arrested in 1967, accused of conspiring with the Biafra rebels, and was held as a political prisoner for 22 months. Forced into exile in 1994 by the military dictatorship, he now divides his time between Nigeria and California, and lectures in universities across Europe and the USA.

Soyinka has published over twenty works: drama, novels and poetry and is influenced by the popular tradition of African theatre with its combination of dance, music and performance, as well as the popular mythology of his own tribe, the Yorubas.



CURATORIAL STATEMENT BY ANNABELLE NWANKWO – MU'AZU

'ITUNMANYA'

The African continent is recognised for her richness of culture and traditions, of which religion and beliefs in a higher power are widely documented. The desire to find the meaning of life, and the reason for death, and existence is articulated through various rites and rituals celebrated in the everyday life throughout Africa. Rites and rituals are intermediate forms of communication and enticement of the spiritual world in order that the deity and ancestors can be involved in the lives of the living.

One such ritual amongst the Igbo of South Eastern Nigeria is Itunmanyá or the pouring of libation, which is the pouring of a liquid, usually wine or spirits to give thanks to God (gods) and to honour loved ones and ancestors who have passed away. This ritual was performed in millions of Igbo family homes, including mine, over the recent Christmas celebrations and I recognised on a personal level the importance of acknowledging and committing to memory our ancestry, who are in fact our loved ones who have passed away, our life lines and our identity. In order to still keep


them close, there should be no distinctions between the 'seen' - the realm of the living and the 'unseen' the spiritual world - and this for me, is the essence of this exhibition.

The title, 'Ancestral Space' was inspired by an excerpt from a statement by one of South Africa's recognised artists, David Koloane. I was taken by his unequivocal and unapologetic stance on attributing and recognising the importance of his ancestry and legacy in his creative purpose. I have often wondered if artists of African descent have felt under pressure to disregard traditional belief systems and idioms, less they be seen as too African, and therefore unworthy of being called 'an artist', a label that can only apply if you are to be considered on an international level!

The relationship between the past and the present is complex, but more and more artists from the continent are returning to tradition as a source that enables them to innovate and develop. The artists represented in Ancestral

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Space insist that the past ideologies and modernity can co-exist engaging in new methods of art making, which in turn create new avenues of artistic storytelling, and these narratives re-interpret common injustices but with enlightened and richer pallets; with the hope that this coming together may change the future, for the better.

I have had the privilege of working with Kenny Adewuyi previously, when I curated the exhibition, 'Accident and Design. Gani Odutokun and his Influence', at the Brunei Gallery London in 2000. A sculptor of tremendous passion he incorporates the ancient modes of lost wax with modern lost wax casting techniques. Always concerned with paradoxical issues of human existence and the injustices within that reality; the choice of bronze as his medium, is poignant and apt, the mass against empty space, is symbolic of the weightiness of issues raised and yet in the despair, his sculptural manifestations illustrate man's ability to persevere in the face of adversity.

An outstanding artist of our time is Owusu-Ankomah, who has transcended the label of 'African artist' to 'artist'. A revolutionary visionary and social documenter, his highly stylised paintings draw inspirations from the ancient cultures of the world, including from his native Ghana, the Adinkra symbols of the Akan people. His work addresses the effects

of multiculturalism and the relationships between individual and collective realization. Owusu-Ankomah paintings cross all realms by fusing the best of the old and new cultures. His symbolic interpretations with the male figure as its central point encompass a spirituality of breathtaking dignity and energy that one is transfixed and meditative in response. The powerful imagery evocative of the gods of the past, secret messages and images that mask and expose at the sametime - the ancestral link reverberates and infuses and draws us in. As one of the most important representatives of contemporary African art, we are honored to have his work in this show.

Gambia's best known artist over the last 30 years Momodou Ceesay has produced transcendent masterpieces in his time. Ceesay's images are poetic expressions about the symbols of Africa's ancient spiritual beliefs. He honours his ancestry in his paintings by capturing myths and folktales and taking the viewer 'on a spiritual odyssey...of unseen dimensions'. A parallel world that will engage and free one's mind of structural thinking and preconceived notions, and in so doing, perhaps reassess cultural values.

Pélagie Gbaguidi is a self proclaimed 'Griot' of our time. An oral historian, her work in recent years has been about appealing to a wider audience on a spiritual level, by connecting the modern and traditional.



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For humanity to engage passionately with the here and now, one must reflect inwardly and understand the philosophy and language of our heritage. Her poetic ideology, a combination of forces including a conscious and subconscious imbibing of the past, breaking from 'commonplace rhythm' and navigating the injustices of life, is compelling and profound; as it is hopeful of a better understanding amongst peoples of all continents, not just Africa.

Her epic installation, *Le Chariot de l'Humanite* is her interpretation of a traditional ritual in Benin where a horse and chariot signifies the spiritual channel through which the living can enter and access the sphere of the ancestors. This breathtaking piece asks the audience to participate as one enters each space - birth, life and death, culminating in a spiritual awakening on both a personal and collective scale.

Tola Wewe is one of Nigeria's most gifted and respected artists. He exuberantly weaves Ona symbols from Yoruba culture into his textural, but simple masterpieces, projecting traditional folklore and myths of his native culture. His new works which he describes as 'Terracotta paintings' echo the

same symbolism, drawing upon the past as a resource for a discourse that is relevant to everyday existence in the present day.

This exhibition is an exploration of the spiritual and traditional. A poetic journey of the historical origins of Africa, of forgotten and living memories intertwined. Perhaps by engaging in a discourse that was once described as 'primitive' we are raising culturally sensitive issues that could be misunderstood or misinterpreted, providing ammunition for those who would wish to still see Africa as the Dark Continent. However, Africa is surging into the 21st Century relishing in all that modernity has to offer, but always aligned are the traditions and belief systems, intrinsic to the soul of Africa's people, the ancestors are protecting, strongly connected.

As an artist one should be prepared to journey into ground that may be seen as controversial and the artists represented in this exhibition, traverse and negotiate that unspoken space illustrating the importance of Africa's rich historical culture and its relevance in a future modern Africa.

CURATOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Annabelle Nwankwo-Mu'azu is an independent curator & consultant specialising in the promotion of art from Africa and the Diaspora. She has been engaged in addressing how artists of African descent have been and are represented in the international art forum for 15 years. A graduate of the School of Oriental and African Studies, (SOAS) University of London, she received a BA Degree in Art & Archaeology, under the eminent African art historian, Prof John Picton.

She went on to join Africa 95 as one of the founding members, working alongside the Artistic Director and Finance Director with institutions like the Whitechapel Gallery on their landmark exhibition Seven Stories About African Art. Consequently she curated several solo and group exhibitions at the British Council, Goethe Institute and Alliance Francaise in Nigeria.

'As It Is!' is her brain child and a continuation of an ongoing pursuit to address preconceived notions about African art to a wider audience. This was first highlighted in her first internationally acclaimed exhibition, Accident & Design, Gani Odutokun and his Influence, co-curated with Nigerian artist and art historian, Jacob Jari at the Brunei Gallery, SOAS in January – March 2000. The project and the accompanying catalogue explored the life and work of the late influential artist, Gani

Odutokun and examined and highlighted the contributions that Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, has made in the development of contemporary Nigerian art.


Her second major exploration was the acclaimed exhibition Tapping into the Known also held at Brunei Gallery, in April–June 2007. It was an exhibition of poetry, paintings and installations by the late eminent Nigerian poet, Christopher Okigbo and his artist daughter, Obiageli Okigbo; with contributions in the catalogue from Nobel Literature Laureate, Professor Wole Soyinka. Her most recent exhibition was a group exhibition held at the Coningsby Gallery London, in September 2008 with works from Paris based Sculptor, Stevens Dossou Yovo and paintings from Kis Keya from Belgium and German artist Julia Roder.

Annabelle has also worked as a consultant for The Christopher Okigbo Foundation, Kwangju Biennale, CDT Design – London; and Brussels based cultural groups - PAAPA & Mbari Brussels. In spring 2008, she was engaged by Harvard University to research a project on the Trans – Saharan slave trade. The project titled Breaking the Silence was a UNESCO and Harvard initiative, funded by the Ford Foundation and overseen by Professor Wole Soyinka and Prof. Henry Louis Gates Jnr, of the W.E.B Du Bois Institute, Harvard.



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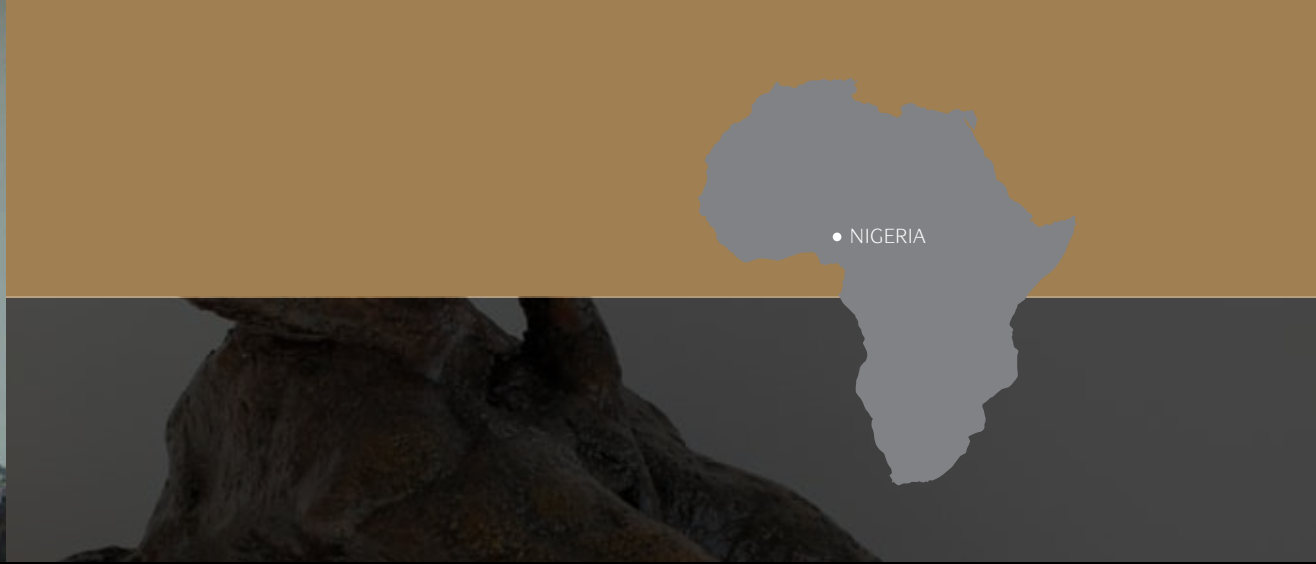
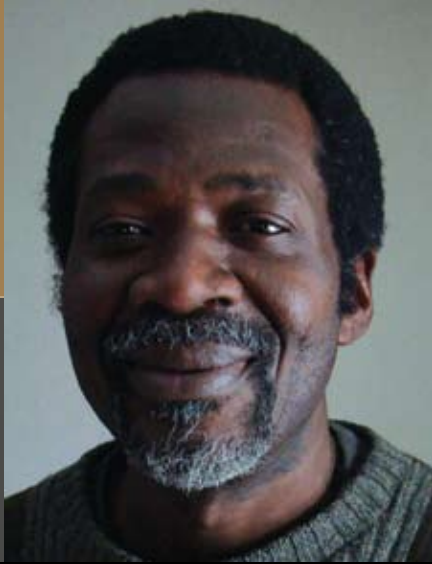
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She has written articles for several magazine publications including 'West Africa Magazine' and 'Nka:Journal of Contemporary African Art' - an international arts magazine edited and published by African art historians Salah Hassan and Uche Okeke at Cornell University, USA. In 2009, Annabelle was invited by Nka to contribute a review on her exhibition 'Tapping into the Known' for the NKA 21st Century & the Mega Shows Edition.

Annabelle is the founder and Director of Cocoa Arts. Established in late 2007 from her passion for the contemporary arts of Africa and the Diaspora; and a desire to dispel pre-conceived modes of thinking about 'African Art' and highlight and convey the wealth of vibrant artistic creations, from this wonderful continent and beyond, to diverse audiences worldwide. Cocoa Arts is an internet based gallery and art consultancy specialising primarily in contemporary art from Africa. However, diversity and interaction with artists from all corners of the world are intrinsic to the portfolio ethos and Cocoa Arts also promotes emerging artists from outside Africa and the Diaspora.

www.cocoaarts.com



KEHINDE KEN ADEWUYI

“At times in life one finds oneself, irrespective of one’s age, gender or status, in situations not desired by oneself consciously or subconsciously. These are the kind of moments I reflect on, and see my art as a means of communicating these instants, my voice self expression.

I employ methods of exaggeration and elongation of the human figure to best portray and express my inner feelings about the subjects that I often see in my environment. The human existence is full of ups and down but man must take courage and not lose hope despite the challenges of life”.

Kehinde Ken Adewuyi, (a.k.a. K. Kenny) was born in Sango Otta, near the bustling metropolis, Lagos Nigeria. He studied sculpture at one of Nigeria’s premier institutions, Ahmadu Bello University in the city of Zaria, where he learned the ancient forms of bronze casting practiced in Nigeria. He has exhibited extensively within

Nigeria and internationally. His first major exploration was in the group exhibition, ‘Accident and Design, Gani Odutokun and his Influence’, at the Brunei Gallery, London in 2000.

Kenny has also participated in a number of international workshop programmes. Since 1997 he has been regularly invited by artists Olivia Vosges and Thiébaud Chagué to Tain in the Vosges, to participate in sculpture workshops. In these workshop, “Kenny works his art and sculpts the earth to create his bronzes” and imparts his knowledge to students at the vocational training company “Celine Lawrence Ceramics” in Velaine en Haye.

He has gained further exposure, touring American universities such as New York University, University of Michigan and California Lutheran. In 2008, he was featured on CNN’S I-REPORT and this year was the invited Speaker at the San Francisco State University panel discussion Black Online.



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GROUP EXHIBITIONS AND PROJECTS

- 1995 "Times no Boundaries", Maison de France, Ikoyi Lagos. Nigeria.
- 1996 "2+2" Alliance Française. Kaduna. Nigeria
"Sanctuary" Alliance Française. Kaduna. Nigeria.
- 1997 "Sanctuaries Ephémère" Musée Départemental d'Art Ancien et Contemporain. Epinal. France.
- 1999 "Accident and Design" Alliance Française. Kaduna
Maison de France. Ikoyi. Lagos. Nigeria.
- 2000 "Accident and Design" Brunei Gallery. S.O.A.S. London. UK.
"11ème Festival de la géographie", Galerie Espace des Arts Plastiques. Saint Dié des Vosges. France.
"L'Afrique en Création" Hôtel de Ville. Roubaix. France.
"Exposition de Résidence d'Artiste", Tour de la Liberté, Saint Dié des Vosges. France
- 2003 "Bambaras, Baoules, Dogon et cie",
Musée Sundgauvien. Alsace. France.

2006 "Rencontre en Matière" La Douera. Malzeville. France

2008 "October rain "SNA Lagos Chapter,
National Museum, Onikan Lagos.

2009 "Anniversaire de la cinquantième année d'existence
de l'Alliance Française au Nigeria" National Museum,
Onikan Lagos.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1998 "Kenny in the Recent" Alliance Française. Kaduna. Nigeria.

2002 "Festival Bol d'Air Bol d'Art" Lapoutroie. Alsace. France.

2004 "Times in Life" Maison de France. Ikoyi. Lagos. Nigeria.
"Echanges de dialogues intérieurs" Centre Georges
François Leclerc, Dijon. France.

2006 "Kenny en Bronze", Espace Volontaire, Remiremont. France
"Automne Africain", Chapelle St Vincent –Art Act- La Rochelle. France.



SELECTED WORKSHOPS AND RESIDENCES

- 1996 "Sanctuary" Maraba Pottery. Kaduna. Nigeria.
- 1997 "Sculpture en Bronze" Beaux Arts. Mulhouse. France.
- 1998 "Bronzes et Formes" Maison de la Céramique. Mulhouse. France.
"Bronzes et Formes" Ecole des Arts Plastiques. Monaco.
- 2006 "Approche de la Sculpture en Bronze" Atelier Céline Laurent, Jean Laincourt. France.
- 2000 "Résidence d'Artiste" Séjour de trois mois. Ecole des Arts Plastiques. Saint Dié des Vosges.
"Résidence d'Artiste" AFAA. Afrique en Création. Transculturelles de Roubaix.

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUMS

- 2002 "12ème Festival International de Sculpture: Camille Claudel" La Bresse. Hautes Vosges. France.
- 2004 "14ème Festival International de Sculpture: Camille Claudel" La Bresse. Hautes Vosges. France.

PERMANENT EXHIBITIONS

- Galerie Musée des Arts Derniers. Paris. France.
- Galerie Schemes. Lille. France.
- Gallery Signature. Lagos. Nigeria.

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

- 1985 Sculpture Garden . Ahmadu Bello. Zaria. Nigeria.
- 1998 Alliance Française. Kaduna. Nigeria.
- 2001 Ecole des Arts Plastiques. Saint Dié des Vosges. France.
- 2004 Centre Georges François Leclerc. Dijon. France.

AWARDS

- 1985 Recipient award for best student in sculpture and general drawing. Ahmadu Bello University. Zaria. Nigeria.
- 1990 Award for the best Art Educator in Colleges of Education. Federal Ministry of Education. Lagos. Nigeria.



But Why? | Bronze | 20cm x 34cm x 51cm | 2002



Dignity of Labour | Bronze | 27cm x 19cm x 34cm | 2002



Victim of Circumstance | Bronze | 8cm x 53cm x 68cm | 2002



It Is a Hard Way To Go | Bronze | 55cm x 19cm x 20cm | 2002



Tenth Month | Bronze | 74cm x 19cm x 23cm | 2002



OWUSU-ANKOMAH

*"Nothing...
Belongs to me
Not...
Even my Body...
I Am..."*

Owusu-Ankomah 2006

Owusu-Ankomah was born in Sekondi, Ghana in 1956. He studied under F.H. Savage at the College of Art (Ghanatta) in Accra, Ghana from 1971 to 1974. From 1979 through 1985, he traveled throughout Europe and came into contact with European artists. His work has been widely exhibited in, among other places, the UK, the US, France, Belgium, Senegal, Japan, South Africa and Germany. In 2006, Owusu-Ankomah was invited to participate in the World Cup FIFA Art Edition Project. He also collaborated with designer Giorgio Armani to develop a line of clothing for the Red Campaign, raising funds to help fight AIDS in Africa. He lives and works in Bremen, Germany.



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SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

SOLO

- 1976 YMCA-Hall, Accra, Ghana
- 1987 Villa Ichon, Bremen, Germany
- 1988 Galerie Roche, Bremen, Germany
- 1992 Galerie la trastienda del arte, Madrid, Spain
- 1993 Savannah Gallery, London, GB
- 1995 Hochschule St. Gallen, Switzerland
- 1998 Galerie Arsenal, Bialystok, Poland
- 1999 Skoto Gallery, New York, USA
- 2003 Artificio, Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, Spain
- 2004 Galerie Walu, Zürich, Switzerland
- 2004 Heroes, Sages and Saints, Ghana National Museum, Accra, Ghana

- 2006 FUTURE TRACK, ARTCO Galerie, Herzogenrath, Germany
- 2007 FUTURE TRACK, Skoto Gallery, New York, USA
- 2008 BODY & SOUL, Nomad Gallery, Brussels, Belgium

GROUP

- 1981 Group Show of Ghanaian Painters, Oakland, USA
- 1985 Artists for Human Rights, Überseemuseum, Bremen, Germany
- 1988 Bremer Förderpreis-Ausstellung für Bildende Kunst, Weserburg Bremen, Germany
- 1995 The Right To Hope, Johannesburg, South-Africa
- 1995 Absolute Ghana, Accra Contemporary Art ACA, Accra, Ghana
- 1995 African Art of our Time, Tokyo, Japan
- 1996 Biennale Dakar, Senegal

'as it is!'

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- | | | | |
|------|--|------|---|
| 1996 | Africana, Sala 1, Rome, Italy | 2005 | Africa Remix, Hayward Galley, London, GB |
| 1997 | Biennale Havana, Cuba | 2005 | Africa Remix, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan |
| 1997 | Polarisation, Dokoupil/Dahn/Owusu-Ankomah, Galerie Jörg Heitsch, Munich, Germany | 2005 | Africa Remix, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France |
| 1998 | Aids Worlds, Les Mondes du Sida, Geneva, Zug, Bellinzona, Zürich, Switzerland | 2006 | Biennale Dakar, Senegal |
| 1999 | Five Continents One City, International Salon of Painting, Museum of Mexico City Transavantgardia, October Gallery, London, GB | 2006 | LEND ME YOUR EAR, Kunstverein Bad Salzdetfurth, Germany |
| 2000 | Kunstkoffer, Dialog der Kulturen, Expo 2000, Hannover, Germany | 2006 | RELATIVE DISTANCE, Michael Stevenson Gallery, Cape Town, South-Africa |
| 2000 | Transafricana, Bologna, Italy | 2006 | SALON D'ART CONTEMPORAIN AFRICAIN DE BRUXELLES, Belgium |
| 2003 | Ghana Yesterday and Today, Musée Dapper, Paris, France | 2007 | AFRICA SELECT, ARTCO Gallery, Herzogenrath, Germany |
| 2003 | Espacios Mesticos II, International Contemporary Art Meeting, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain | 2007 | FROM COURAGE TO FREEDOM, October Gallery, London |
| 2003 | Journeys and Destinations, National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institute, Washington DC, USA | 2007 | AFRICA REMIX, Johannesburg, South Africa |
| | | 2007 | THE WORLD BANK COLLECTION, World Bank, Washington DC, USA |
| | | 2007 | The Fowler Museum, Los Angeles, California, USA |



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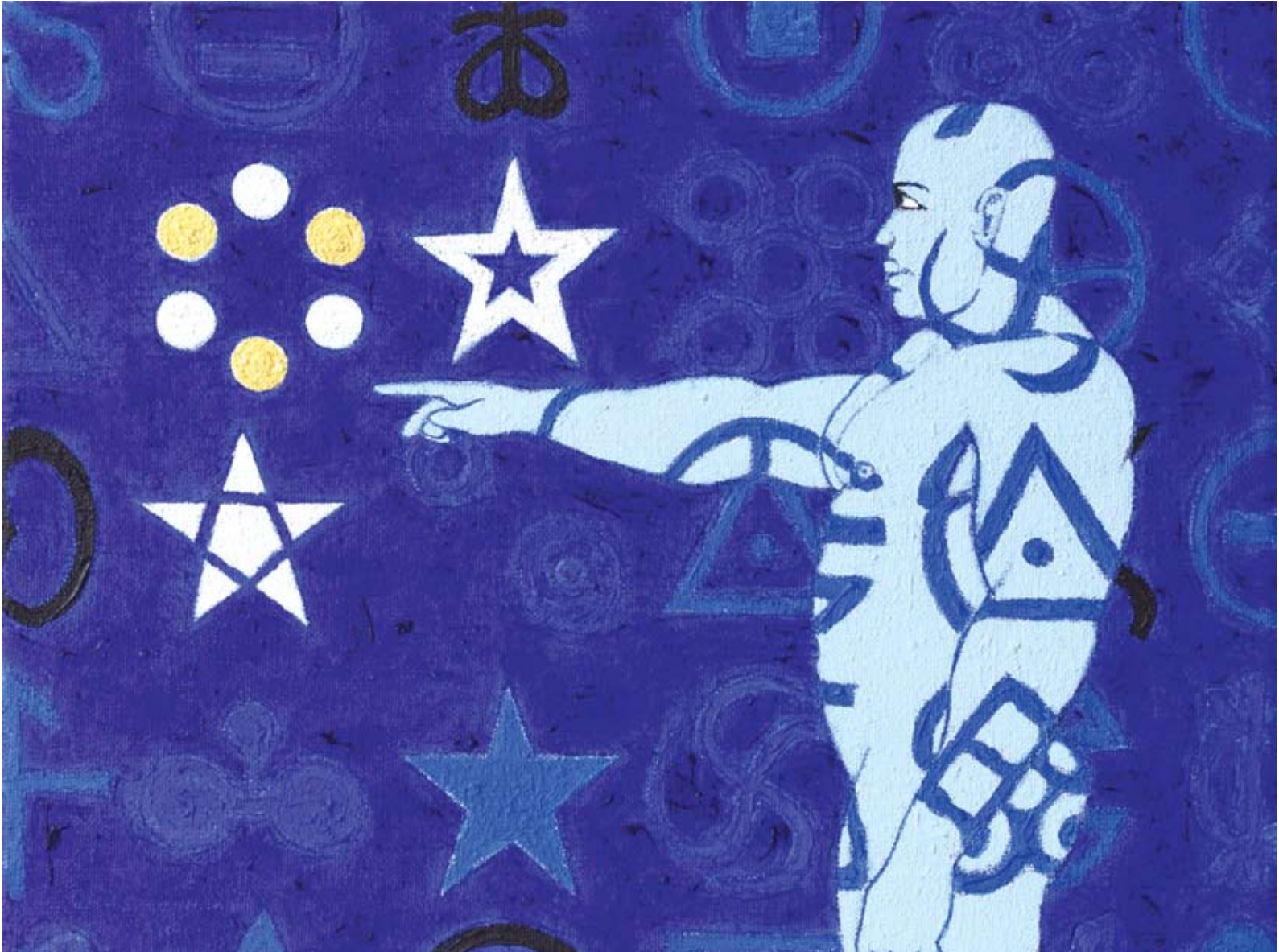
- 2007 IN AND OUT OF AFRICA, Museum Haus der Völker, Schwaz, Austria
- 2007 Group Show, Skoto Gallery, New York
- 2008 ANGAZA AFRICA, October Gallery, London
- 2008 PLEASE CAST AN EYE, Kunstverein Bad Salzdetfurth, Germany
- 2008 AUF AUGENHÖHE, Städtische Galerie Viersen, Germany
- 2008 INPUT, Museu National, Luanda, Angola
- 2009 MULTIPLE ART, ARTCO Gallery, Herzogenrath, Germany
- 2009 AUS LEIDENSCHAFT, Kunstverein Bad Salzdetfurth, Germany
- 2009 Unbounded: New Art Of The New Century (Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey, USA)
- 2009 Joburg Art Fair, Johannesburg, South Africa (ARTCO Gallery, October Gallery)
- 2010 Is There a Contemporary African Art? (INFLUXCONTEMPORARY, Lisbon, Portugal)
- 2010 Joburg Art Fair, Johannesburg, South Africa (ARTCO Gallery)



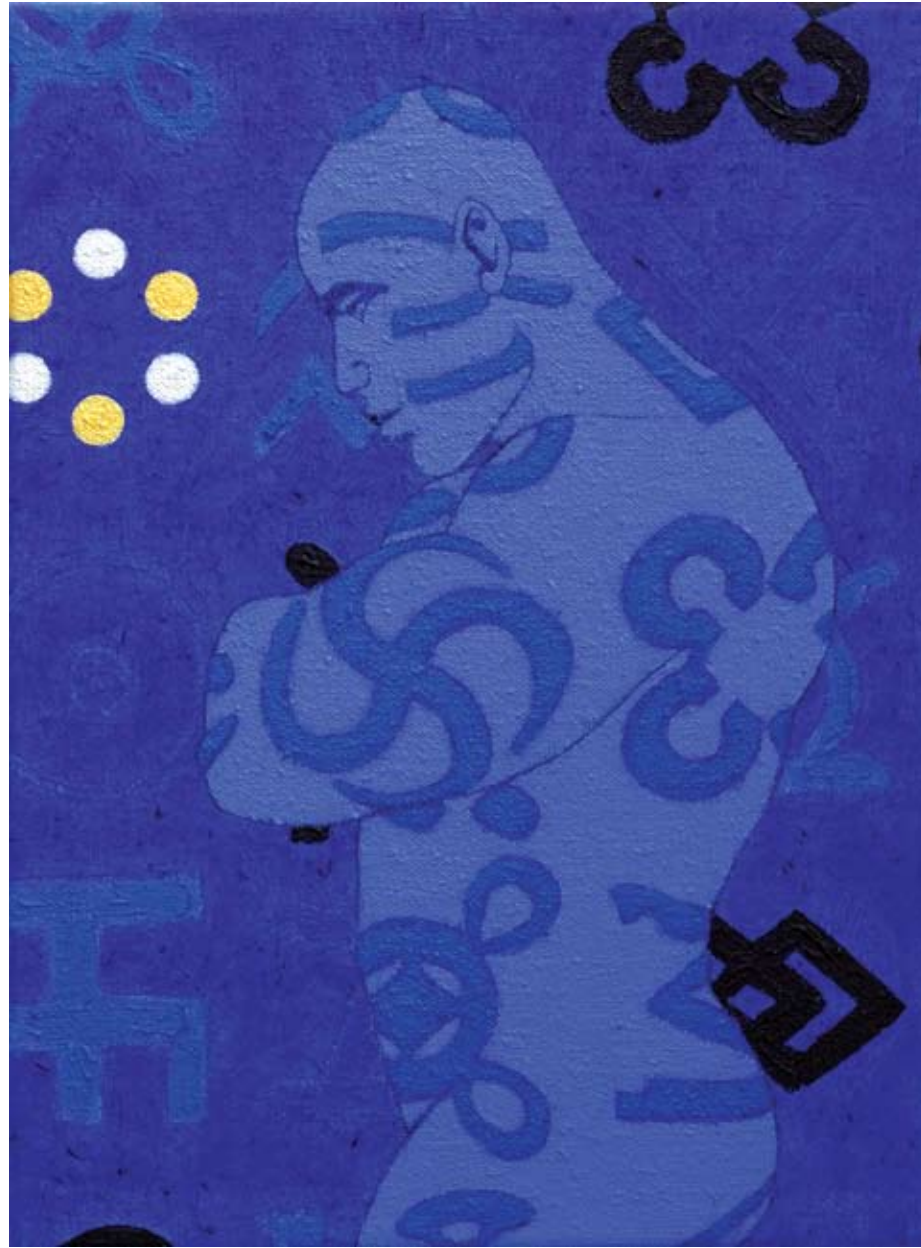
The Innocent | Acrylic on Canvas | 100cm x 120cm | 2005



Protest | Acrylic on Canvas | 120cm x 100cm | 2007



Prelude To The Microcon No.1 | Acrylic on Canvas | 30 cm x 40 cm | 2010



Microcon No.6 | Acrylic on Canvas | 40cm x 30cm | 2010



Microcon No.10 | Acrylic on Canvas | 30 cm x 40 cm | 2010



Prelude To Microcon No.13 | Acrylic on Canvas | 40cm x 50cm | 2010



Perspective / View / Vision
Sculpture | 60cm x 62cm x 0.5cm | Steel | Base 15cm x 15cm x 15cm | 2009



MOMODOU CEESAY

"I describe my artwork as an exploration of images that inculcate a system of values that are consistent with my culture and heritage. My objective is to take the viewer on a spiritual odyssey that suggests unseen dimensions. A world parallel to a true flight of imagination and belief, and where I quietly listen to the rushing breeze, to give an ear to those who came before me, and whose voices I see and hear, as they beseech me to speak for them.

The story of art and practice of art varies from one school of thought to another. In Africa, it is one of the last remaining refuges for free thinking. As African artists our art work does reflect the richness of our culture; but over and beyond that however, our art also articulates and prospers from that universal yearning for truth, justice, and equality, common to all peoples and all cultures."

Momodou Ceesay was born in Banjul, the capital of The Gambia, in West Africa. His early education was received in Banjul, but in his teens he was granted a number of scholarships to study abroad, at Suffield Academy and Wesleyan University in Connecticut. In 1970, he received a Bachelor's Degree from that University, majoring in languages and literature. He has also received diplomas from the

University de Poitiers in Tours, and La Sorbonne in Paris, in France, for studies of the French language.

After graduation, Momodou decided to pursue his true passion and he became an artist. Essentially self-taught, he focused on a highly individualist vision, seen in the uniqueness of his style and use of colours. This trend is seen in his numerous acrylics, watercolors, and serigraphs. In his printmaking, Momodou shuns modern technology, producing small editions by hand, without the aid of a mechanized studio. One of his earlier serigraphs entitled "Evening Works" was selected by UNICEF as one of their 1976 designs.

Momodou expands his talents in many directions; in textile design, and children's book illustrations. In the United States, his design work has been featured on gift items published by the Heritage Collection New York. His original works can be found in many public and private collections across the US and abroad. Johnson Publications, DuPont, National Museum of History/Taiwan, Canterbury Museum/New Zealand, AT&T/New York, Studio Museum in Harlem/New York, Citibank/New York, and the Chase Manhattan Bank, are among the collectors of his work.



2 ANCESTRAL SPACE
Translated Identities

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

SOLO

Goethe Institute, Lagos, Nigeria

La Gruta Galeria, Bogota, Colombia

National Museum of History, Taipei, Taiwan

Theatre National Sorano, Dakar, Senegal

University of Massachusetts Library, Harbor Campus,
Boston, Massachusetts

Galerija Likovnih Samorastnikov, Trebnje, Slovenia
Ille-lfe Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

GROUP

Gallery of Art, Howard University, Washington, D.C.

Canterbury Museum, Christchurch, New Zealand

Studio Museum in Harlem, New York

ISC Art Gallery, U.C.L.A., Los Angeles, California
International Biennial of Color Graphics, Grenchen, Switzerland

Museum of Afro-American Art, Los Angeles, California

Golden State Mutual Insurance Company, Los Angeles, California

National Center of Afro-American Artists, Boston, Massachusetts

Africa-NOW, IMF-World Bank, Washington, DC.

'as it is!'

Contemporary African Art Exhibition Series

MUSEUM, CORPORATE & PRIVATE
COLLECTIONS (Selected)

President's Office, Banjul, The Gambia

National Library, Banjul, The Gambia

Museum of African American Art, Los Angeles, California

Canterbury Museum, Christchurch, New Zealand
Ministry of Culture, Dakar, Senegal

The New York Hospital, New York, New York

Johnson Publications, Chicago, Illinois

The Chase Manhattan Bank, New York, New York

Dallas Public Library, Dallas, Texas

National Museum of History, Teipei, Taiwan

First National Bank of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company,
Los Angeles, California

National Center of Afro-American Artists,
C/O Museum of Fine Arts, Boston,

Banco Republica, Bogota, Colombia

Ghana Arts Council, Accra, Ghana

IMF-World Bank Art Collection

Late Anwar Sadat of Egypt

Amadou Mochtar Mbowe, former Director General,
UNESCO, Paris, France



Cosmic Consciousness | Watercolor on Rice Paper | 53cm x 76cm | 2010



Rwanda | Mixed Media | 55cm x 83cm | 1994



Exodus | Watercolor on Rice Paper | 76cm x 53cm | 2010



PÉLAGIE GBAGUIDI

“As a painter, I have included matter as a dimension into the manner to perceive the real. I am at an intersection between the material and in the immaterial. It has to do with the order of breath and the unseen. Working in such a space helps me to see a different reality and to decipher my outlook, as if I was turning transparent and that, at that very moment I could merge with my surroundings...”

Recently the body of my work has evolved into frescos, in order to contemplate the signs which came to me like visions... Today, it is necessary to look upon history through different angles. My artistic engagement leads me to face the history of my origins, the history of black people through time, to better understand the cultural, social and economical issues of the world which I am part of. ‘

Pélagie Gbaguidi, was born in Dakar in 1965 from Benin origin. She graduated from the Beaux Arts, Belgium in 1995. She works and lives in Brussels, Belgium. Her recent exhibitions include, the Museum of Modern Art in Arnhem, Afrika Museum Arnhem, Gallery Ifa, Berlin and Stuttgart, Pan Africa Festival Algeria and Show Off Fiac.

Pélagie Gbaguidi’s work can be seen as an ensemble – an

anthropologic frieze; using working material as painting, photo, writing, drawings, installation, as reflections of individual and collective memory.

Her stance as a “griot” is an engagement towards the collective. Her definition of “griot” is one, who through the spoken word can operate in different artistic fields, creating a link between the contemporary and traditional. Her approach to her heritage takes on a critical and innovative form. In a poetic sense, the “griot” has the power to trigger in each of us the need for introspection. He absorbs the words of the ancestors to shape them with notions of his times into a “ball of grease” that he leaves in the belly of the passer-by. In a practical sense, he breaks the commonplace rhythm, by inserting subtle incidents, integrating his part of eternity.

Statement of the Installation "Le Chariot de l'Humanité"

This work is an initiatory trip into living memory and ancestral worship. Belief is extremely rooted in Africa through rituals, which place favour on the notion of the sacred, of life, and of death. It is perhaps urgent to settle this question at the striking hour of globalisation. This philosophical and spiritual concept finds a universal echo today.



SELECTED EXHIBITIONS AND PROJECTS

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|--|
| 2001 | Biennale de la photographie Africaine, Bamako | 2006 | Musée d'Art moderne, Saint Domingo, République Dominicaine |
| 2001 | Musée d'Art Moderne et contemporain de Liège, Passages Belgique | 2007 | Casa Africa, las Palmas de Canarias, Spain |
| 2003 | Biennale de la Photographie
Bamako Rites Sacrés Rites Profanes | 2007 | Black Fine Art Show Atlanta |
| 2003 | Rhizome, Espace d'Art Contemporain, Torcy, France | 2007 | Dockanema festival du film Mozambique |
| 2004 | Biennale de l'Art Contemporain Africain, Dakar | 2008 | Museum of Modern Art Arnhem Netherlands |
| 2004 | Rites Sacrés Rites Profanes Mexico/ exposition collective | 2008 | Biennale de l'Art Contemporain Africain, Dakar |
| 2005 | National Black Fine Art Show, New York | 2008 | Exposition Musicale Conservatoire Royal de Musique Bruxelles |
| 2005 | Centre Wallonie Bruxelles, Paris | 2009 | Museum National Modern Art Alger festival panafricain |
| 2006 | National Black Fine Art Show, New York | 2009 | Ifa Institut Berlin Dak'Art |
| 2006 | Biennale de l'Art Contemporain Africain, Dakar | 2010 | Apex pro art e.V Göttingen solo show |
| | | 2010 | Show off , fiac off , Galerie Girot |

FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS

2011 Residency Thamgidi Foundation

2012 -

2013 Divine Comedy

PERFORMANCE / VIDEO

1998 Masque Résidence pour la nuit P.Gbaguidi
Performance/ M Mihindou photographe

2001 Dans le ventre du Serpent, P.Gbaguidi Performance /
G. Langlois Photographe

2004 Vidéo les femmes vaut mieux les aimer P. Gbaguidi
Réalisatrice A.Kasasa Performance

2008 Vidéo Somewhere in the World Gbaguidi Pélagie Réalisatrice

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

2002 N.Paradoxa, International Feminist Art Journal, London, UK

2002 Le Monde 2 oct 2003

2003 V Rencontre de la photographie Africaine Bamako

2004 6ème Biennale de l'Art Africain Contemporain Dak'art 2004

2005 'L'imaginaire de Pélagie' portait de la RTBF réalisé par
Olga Baillif & Katy N'Diaye

2006 'la visite est terminée' edition la trame

2006 7ème Biennale de l'art africain Contemporain Dak'art 2006

2007 Victoria et albert musuem The uncomfortable truth catalogue

2008 L'afrique Miroir Dak'Art

2008 L'homme est un mystère ODDCC Côtes d'Armor

2009 Slavery in Art and Literature Frank & Time

2009 African Women MAMA Alger

2010 Non pas ce soir La trame Espace Regards



PRIZES

- 1999 Fiacre de la DRAC REUNION
pour le projet 'Le chariot de l'humanité.'
- 2006 Prize Res Artis for A residency in Air Krems Progamme
Austria Biennale de Dakar
- 2008 Prize Thamgidi Fondation Biennale de Dakar

ART COLLECTIONS

- Artothèque île de la Réunion
- Holocauste Memorial Fondation Illinois
- Casa Africa Las Palmas Grand Canary



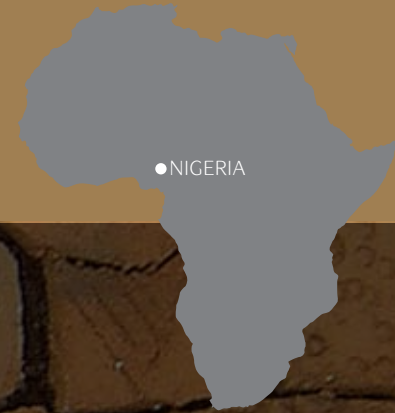
Le Chariot de l' Humanite' No.1 | 250cm x 250cm x 200cm
Oil on Canvas, Wood , Plastic & Metal | 1999



Le Chariot de l'Humanite' No.2 | 250cm x 250cm x 200cm
Oil on Canvas, Wood , Plastic & Metal | 1999



Le Chariot de l' Humanite' No.3 | 250cm x 250cm x 200cm
Oil on Canvas, Wood , Plastic & Metal |1999



TOLA WEWE

Tola Wewe, born in Okitipupa, Ondo State, Nigeria in 1959, trained and graduated with a degree in Fine Art from University of Ife in 1983. He then went on to obtain a Masters degree in African Visual Arts from University of Ibadan, Oyo State in 1986. Tola Wewe worked as a cartoonist before becoming a full time studio artist in 1991.

At the beginning of his career, three major influences characterised Tola Wewe's works; the first was his basic academic training at Ife, the second his masters research programme in the Ijaw water spirit mask and thirdly the society particularly the Yoruba society. His style draws from the Ona symbols of the Yoruba and his themes project traditional lore and myths of his native Yoruba culture. Wewe describes himself more as a witness than an author, "communicating with the spirits of the ancestors, and drawing out the invisible spirits - the anjonnu, emere and the ebora - who make the art works...I am the vehicle, and they are the drivers. We go on these strange journeys to the most remote ends of imaginative experience."

His work, defiant of classification, 'silently grows on viewers, blending with their moods, simultaneously taking their minds

to strange and familiar colourful places full of false nostalgia. Often the attraction is mutual and instant: for those who can consume the spectacular banquet of colours, Wewe cooks up spicy visual rhythms, sometimes playful, sometimes serious, sometimes dense, sometimes scattered, carefully orchestrated, although seemingly extravagant.' (Moyo Okediji, University of Colorado).

Tola Wewe is a founding member of the Ona movement which emerged in February 1989. The movement is a group of scholars, critics and practicing artists committed to pursuing artistic excellence through the adaptation and interpretation of traditional materials & methods, forms & styles of contemporary Yoruba art and design.

Tola Wewe, whose works are widely acclaimed for their originality, simplicity, surface texture and mastery of colours, is considered one of the most talented minds from the African continent. His work is a hybrid of African and western sensibilities and images, reflecting his own training and experience as an international artist. Beyond Nigeria, Tola Wewe's work has been exhibited across Europe and the US. As a full time artist, he lives and works in Ondo State, Nigeria.



2 ANCESTRAL SPACE

Translated Identities



SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2000 Lola Gallery, Lagos, Nigeria , centre Culturel Francais, Cotonou, Rep of Benin
- 2001 Lola Gallery, Lagos, Nigeria
Parish Gallery, Georgetown, Washington DC, U.S.A
- 2002 Galerie Im Schlossgarten, Gauangelloch, Germany
- 2003 Kunst Forum Das Carre, Heidelberg, Germany
Galerie Im Schlossgarten, Gauangelloch, Germany
Elf Village, Port-Harcourt, Nigeria
- 2004 Platteforum, Denver, Colorado, U.S.A
Galerie Im Schlossgarten, Gauangelloch, Germany
Espace Alberica, Paris, France
Nimbus Art Centre, Lagos, Nigeria
12th Pan African Film/Art Festival, Los Angeles, California, USA
Nicon Hilton Hotel, Abuja, Nigeria
- 2005 Coningsby Gallery, London
Neo Art Gallery, Denver, Colorado, U.S.A
Nimbus Art Centre, Lagos, Nigeria
- 2006 Galerie des Beaux Arts, Heeze, Holland, modern African art exhibition at BTJ, Lund, Sweden
Galerie Im Schlossgarten, Gauangelloch, Germany modern African art exhibition at Mäklarhuset Hellborg & Partners, Lund, Sweden

OUTSTANDING AWARDS

- 2003 "Merit For Creativity", An award presented by the Culture and Creative Art Forum [CCAF], in recognition of outstanding contribution to creativity
- 2004 "Artist Honoree", an award presented by the County of Los Angeles, California, U.S.A
- 2004 "Overall Winner" a certificate of merit awarded by GUINNESS Nigeria Plc to Tola Wewe, in a competitive exhibition titled "Working with communities to make life better"
- 2005 "Outstanding Alumnus Award" by the Dept. of Fine Arts, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, Nigeria

ART COLLECTIONS

Many of Tola Wewe's paintings are in public and private collections in different parts of the world. Two paintings were recently collected by the Denver Art Museum, U.S.



Lyric Of An Embrace | Clay | 61cm x 61cm | 2010



Portrait Of My Cat | Clay | 61cm x 61cm | 2010



Twins | Clay | 61cm x 61cm | 2010



Encounter | Clay | 61cm x 61cm | 2010



Fish for All | Clay | 61cm x 61cm | 2010



Folktales | Clay | 61cm x 61cm | 2010



Smiles of the Sun | Clay | 61cm x 61cm | 2010





