



G B E N G A O R I M O L O Y E

aso - an art exhibition at terra kulture gallery

“Gbenga Orimoloye is a Nigerian painter. Several works by the artist have been sold at auction, including ‘ONIDIRI META’ sold at Arthouse Contemporary Limited ‘Modern & Contemporary Art’ in 2013. ”

- *Mutual Art* [www.mutualart.com]

“Gbenga Orimoloye already has a long, prodigious and distinguished history as an artist and we, at The Saffron Walden Gallery feel very excited to have become part of the journey”.

- *Bill Tickner & Sara Horncastle* [Foreword to the catalogue of the solo exhibition by Gbenga Orimoloye, at The Saffron Walden Gallery, Saffron Walden, Essex, United Kingdom, March 2014]

FOREWORD

When I first came into contact with Gbenga Orimoloye over 30 years ago in Ikoyi, Lagos, neither of us knew, I would one day be a great admirer of his talent and works.

Gbenga Orimoloye needs no introduction in the Nigerian Art scene, and his stature globally is growing fast. He had his first solo exhibition in Lagos in 1992 at the Russian Cultural Centre. That show was an immediate sell out, with the majority of the works sold on the very first day.

Since then he has had several successful solo and group exhibitions, including a recent solo at the Saffron Walden gallery in the United Kingdom.

Gbenga Orimoloye has a tenacious and audacious spirit. That he has a mission is absolutely without question. His commitment to his goal and dedication to his craft comes across when you encounter the quality of his works. His masterpieces, exhibit his style, with vast amounts of paint, which he applies, almost wastefully at times, when you consider that often he begins a piece without even making a sketch, resulting in some works looking like others he has done before, especially in the themes which feature the elegantly dressed ladies in their gele and regal outfits. The topic and theme may be the same, but each work is AN ORIGINAL. This is however a very deliberate strategy. Something that cannot easily be put into words happens. It also essentially guarantees that even the artist himself cannot easily reproduce each work.

His style is unique and consistent and clearly comes across when you encounter his works, many of which I think are absolutely amazing, superb! At a time when it is becoming “fashionable” to create “abstract” work of

Catalogue of the exhibition “Aso” by Gbenga Orimoloye
at Terra Kulture, Victoria Island, Lagos. 24th - 30th May, 2014.

Photography and design by Gbenga Orimoloye.
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www.orimoloye.com
On twitter: <http://twitter.com/orimoloye>

My food is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.
John 4:34

Cover (detail): “Aso”- Rhapsodies in yellow (2). Oil on board, 2014. 123 x 82 cm



A quiet place. Oil on board, 2014. 81 x 62 cm

questionable merit and quality, all in the name of being “current”, some artists remain true to their craft.

Gbenga Orimoloye is one of them. He has stubbornly held onto his personal artistic values, style, tradition and unique rendering, painting in thick oils. His work must look like an “Orimoloye” and they do, in spite of his wide repertoire of subject matter. His works are instantly recognizable. Your DNA is your DNA and your fingerprint is yours and should be yours alone. An artist can be inspired, but identity is sacred and must be manifest. The world deserves to see and celebrate the good in each individual as they really are...and not what others want or expect them to be.

For an Artist, the creative journey must be one characterized by truth, sincerity and integrity. It must be personal and genuine. This journey should sing a clear distinct note, emitting melodies that are rather seen with the eyes, felt with the mind and understood with the heart.

Still, it may happen that not every person will appreciate or understand this journey, nor hear these melodies. But for those who do, when they see art they actually hear it speak to them also.

Gbenga Orimoloye has tremendous talent, which one can see, hear and feel. It is a privilege to be able to do all three, and am delighted to have been asked to write this piece.

I wish Gbenga all the best and though it may seem incredible, considering the amazing talent we have already seen, I believe the best is yet to come.

Chief (Mrs) Marlies Allan
Hon Consul of Switzerland.



Aso. Oil on board, 2014. 123 x 82 cm



The family (2). Oil on board, 2014. 123 x 82 cm



Eleja (Fish seller). Oil on board, 2014. 123 x 82 cm



Aso (2). Oil on board, 2014. 81 x 62 cm



The family (1). Oil on board, 2014. 123 x 82 cm



"Aso" - Rhapsodies in yellow. Oil on board, 2014. 123 x 82 cm



Untitled. Oil on board, 2014. 122 x 61 cm



Contentment. Oil on board, 2014. 82 x 62 cm



Rhapsodies in orange. Oil on canvas, 2013. 61 x 46 cm



"Aso" - Rhapsodies in brown. Oil on board, 2014. 123 x 82 cm



Boat boy with blue and white paddle. Oil on board, 2014. 82 x 62 cm



"Aso" - Rhapsodies in colour. Oil on board, 2014. 123 x 82 cm



"Aso" - The red pocket square. Oil on board, 2014. 123 x 82 cm



Late morning. Oil on board, 2014. 82 x 62 cm



The trip. Oil on board, 2014. 82 x 62 cm



African women at work. Oil on board, 2013. 123 x 82 cm



"Aso" - Rhapsodies in red, orange and white. Oil on board, 2014. 82 x 62 cm



Badagry beach. Gouache, 2014. 47 x 30 cm



Reclining figure. Oil on board, 2014. 82 x 62 cm



"Aso" - Rhapsodies in yellow (2).
Oil on board, 2014. 123 x 82 cm



Elegantly dressed - Rhapsodies and impressions.
Oil on canvas, 2013. 61 x 46 cm



Elaborately tied gele.
Oil on board, 2013. 123 x 82 cm



Figure on a red background.
Oil on board, 2014. 82 x 62 cm



Untitled. Oil on canvas, 2014. 80 x 60 cm

PROFILE

Place of birth: Lagos Nigeria, 26 November 1966.

Married: three children.

Education:

University of Lagos Staff School (Primary).

Govt College Ojo, Lagos / St. Finbarrs' College, Akoka Lagos (Secondary).

The Polytechnic Ibadan (Eruwa Campus) Nigeria.

Yaba College of Technology, Lagos Nigeria.

University of Westminster, London.

Qualifications:

National Diploma (Upper Credit) General Art. 1988.

Higher National Diploma (Upper Credit) Painting. 1991.

MSc. Interactive Multimedia. 2003.

Awards:

1990. Academy Press Award for excellence in painting.

1990. First prize, Lagos State Council for Arts and Culture Painting Competition.

1991. First prize, Tower Aluminium Art Exhibition/Competition.

1991. Lintas Award for best final year art student.

Professional Experience:

To date: Studio practice.

1999. Judge at The Annual Milldon Art Society Exhibition/Competition, Mill Hill, London.

1998 Nov -1999 Apr. Watercolour painting Lecturer, Adult Art Classes, Triumph Press Art Club, Edgware England.

1992-1994. Lecturer in Life Drawing, General Drawing and Painting, Yaba College of Technology, Lagos.

1989. Illustrator, Graphic Advertising and Associates Ltd, Lagos Nigeria.

1987. Sculpture apprentice, Art Studio, Centre for Cultural Studies, University of Lagos.

Membership of professional body:

Founding member, Nigeria Art Society UK.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2014 - Solo Exhibition

The Saffron Walden Gallery, Saffron Walden, Essex, United Kingdom - 22nd March to 5th April 2014.

2013 - Nigeria Art Society U.K, Winter Art Exhibition

WAC Gallery, 14 Baylis Road, London - 2nd to 21st December 2013.

2013 - The Gallery, Cork Street, London.

Cork Street juried exhibition - 9th to 16th August 2013.

2013 - "Oju"

Solo exhibition of paintings hosted by Terra Kulture Gallery, Lagos Nigeria - 4th to 9th May 2013.

2012 - "Ona"

Solo exhibition of paintings hosted by Terra Kulture Gallery, Lagos Nigeria - May/June 2012



2012 - A Parent's Eye View, 'Education' and 'Cheltenham' - Exhibition of paintings by Cheltenham Ladies' College Parents. The Parabola Arts Centre, Bayshill Rd. Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England - May 2012.

2012 - IMFFA Winter Art Exhibition.

At the International Monetary Fund (IMF) HQ1, Washington DC, United States - February 2012.

2011 - "Iwa"

Solo exhibition of paintings hosted by Nike Gallery, Lagos Nigeria - July 2011.

2005 - A Tale of a Continent; Africa.

Exhibition of Contemporary Art - June 2005. North York, Ontario Canada.

2005 - Millinery Works Gallery, Islington

Exhibition of Contemporary British Art, Islington, London - January 2005.

2004 - Rainbow Art Exhibition (40th Anniversary, African Development Bank Group - September 2004).

African Development Bank Headquarters, Rue Pierre de Coubertin BP.323 - 1002 Tunis Belvedere, Tunisia.

2002 - "Iya ni wura" Didi Museum, Lagos.

Exhibition of paintings and drawings.

1998 - "Africa at Whiteley's" London.

Exhibition of paintings and African sculpture, The Atrium, Whiteley's, London, United Kingdom.

1997 - "Colourful Moments" Didi Museum, Lagos.

Solo exhibition of drawings & gouache paintings.

1995 - Texaco Exhibition, TOPCON Building, Ikoyi, Lagos.

Exhibition of paintings and drawings.

1993 - Private show at The Syrian Club, Ikoyi, Lagos.

Solo exhibition (Salon) of paintings.

1992 - "Vivid Impressions" Russian Cultural Centre, Lagos.

Solo exhibition of paintings and drawings.

1992 - The Artist Now, National Museum, Lagos.

Exhibition celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Society of Nigerian Artists (SNA).

1991 - Tower Aluminium, Indian High Commission, Lagos.

Exhibition of paintings and sculpture - November 1991.

1990 - Young Masters Art Trust, Quenelle, Lagos.

Exhibition of paintings, sculpture and drawings.

1990 - Exhibition of sculpture and painting at Master Craft Surulere, Lagos.

- *More info on exhibitions available at www.orimoloye.com*

WORKS IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS / OTHER NOTABLE INFO

Shell, Chevron / Texaco, Statoil, Tower Aluminium, Lagos State Government, The Cheltenham Ladies' College, Cheltenham Gloucestershire plus several other public and private collections all around the world.

-Two paintings featured in McDougal Littell Literature book (hardback, ISBN-13:978-0618-98379-7 /

ISBN-10: 0-618-98379-1), published in the United States. Orimoloye's paintings are featured on pages 899 and 903 respectively.

SELECTED ART AUCTIONS WITH WORKS SOLD

- 2013 (May). Art House Contemporary, Lagos.
- 2011 (November). Art House Contemporary, Lagos.
- 2011 (March - "Africa Now"). Bonhams, New Bond Street, London.
- 2010 (November). Art House Contemporary, Lagos.

SELECTED NEWS FEATURES

- Interrogating social media in Orimoloye's Oju – The Guardian, Friday May 17, 2013.
- The Ways of a Genius – Arts, Books & Culture, Thisday, Saturday Newspaper, May 12, 2012.
- Ona.. a metaphor for life's journey – The Guardian, Sunday, May 20, 2012.
- For Gbenga Orimoloye, it is journey back with Ona - Saturday Independent, May 26, 2012.
- Orimoloye brings ONA to Terra Kulture - The Moment On Sunday, May 27, 2012.
- The Narrow Road - Arts & Review, Thisday, Sunday, June 3, 2012.
- Character in the beauty of Art – Arts & Culture supplement, Next on Sunday, 26th June 2011.

CONTACT DETAILS
www.orimoloye.com



Almost bedtime. Oil on board, 2014. 82 x 62 cm

ASO - MUSINGS AND BASICS

These days, I begin many of my works without a preliminary sketch. This is deliberate. I am keen to leave some things to time, chance and The Spirit that creates. As such many of my compositions, including and especially the “aso” series are the result of as much spontaneity as possible. Still, so far, many of my results inevitably bear my fingerprint. Incidentally, I have attempted to fight this, perhaps due to much pondering over thoughts and ideas that are not my own. Thankfully, as soon as I disregard persuasions and disputings and simply let the spirit flow, I become the first fan of my own work. My artist’s instincts tell me this is where I need to be.

In this harvest of work which I have titled “aso”, I look figuratively at our obsession with elaborate festive dressing. Aso is a Yoruba word for cloth. But it is also used colloquially as regards groups of people dressed in identical fabric and or colour, especially as seen at a typical Nigerian wedding. As an artist, I am fascinated with the dressing, colours, textures and styles present at many of these events. A great deal goes into our dressing and into selecting our “aso”. I believe that if we could be as fervent and enthusiastic in many other more important areas of our existence as we are with our dressing, our collective attitude will adorn us with majesty and excellency; we will be arrayed with glory and splendour. These describe spiritual clothes. In them we will surely stand out as one of the greatest nations on the earth, in all spheres of life.

Gbenga Orimoloye
April 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To our Creator, Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I thank you Father for this platform, through which, by your sovereignty and grace, your creation may be blessed.

My dear wife Gloria; beautiful both without and within. Today, you are even more beautiful! Thank you. The coolest children ever! Zoe, Oluwajomiloju and Faith; I love you!

A very special thank you to Chief (Mrs) Marlies Allan.

Appreciation to Mrs Bolanle Austen-Peters and the Terra Kulture staff.

My dear family, collectors and friends. Sincere gratitude and appreciation for all your encouragement and support over the years.

Gbenga Orimoloye





“Aso” - Elegantly dressed. Oil on board, 2013. 123 x 82 cm