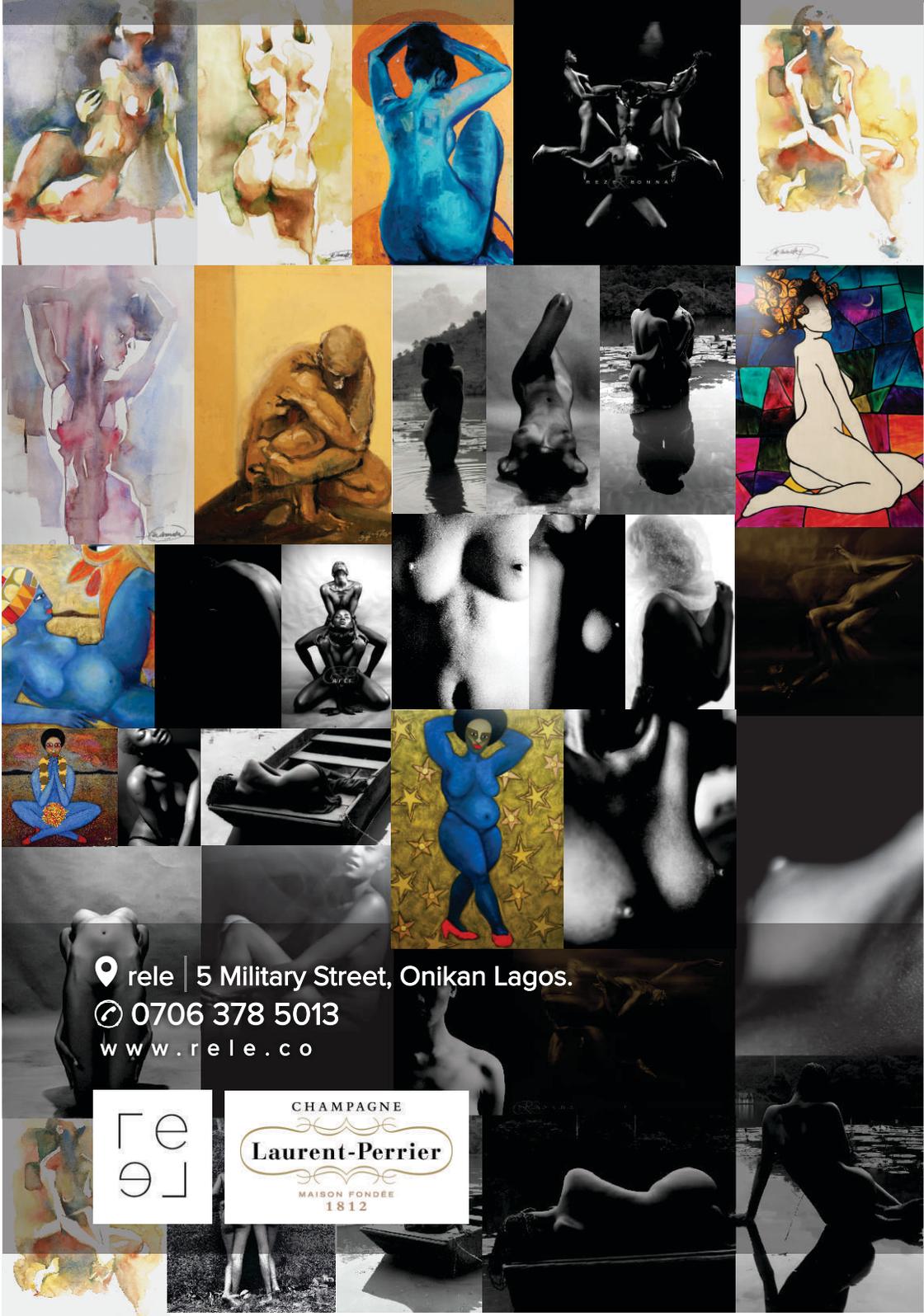


STRIP



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CURATORIAL STATEMENT

EXHIBITION TITLE- STRIP

The body. It is the first thing we encounter, even before the human being. The base before everything else is formed. But is the body just simply what it is? Or is it so much more?

For centuries, the body has been a source of fantasy, obsession, liberation, struggle, oppression, voyeurism, politics, shame, commoditisation and of course a reference point to reality. Artists have long preoccupied themselves with documenting this endless source of expression, a reflection of an enduring time where we as a people are equally obsessed. On the intimate, familiar terrain of the body, we have made discoveries, ascertained self-worth... But these are usually regarded as personal journeys, to be spoken of in hushed tones.

In this exhibition 'STRIP' we showcase a collection of nudes in varying degrees by painters and photographers and we seek to amplify the body of conversation.

The purpose here is to strip bare, rediscover and reopen the discourse around the human form; to provoke keen engagement, investigation of anatomical information; to deconstruct myths and truths of power, shame, freedom, beauty (and more)- the different shades of attendant feelings that accompany an encounter with a naked body.

We strongly encourage you to approach these works stripped of the caution of modesty but clothed with the courage of an open mind.

Have a happy (and enriching) viewing.

Wana Udobang & Ayodeji Rotinwa
- Curators
May/June 2015



■ WANA UDOBANG

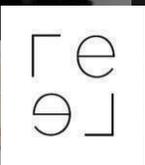


■ AYODEJI ROTINWA

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0706 378 5013

www.rele.co



IBEABUCHI ANANABA

INSPIRATION

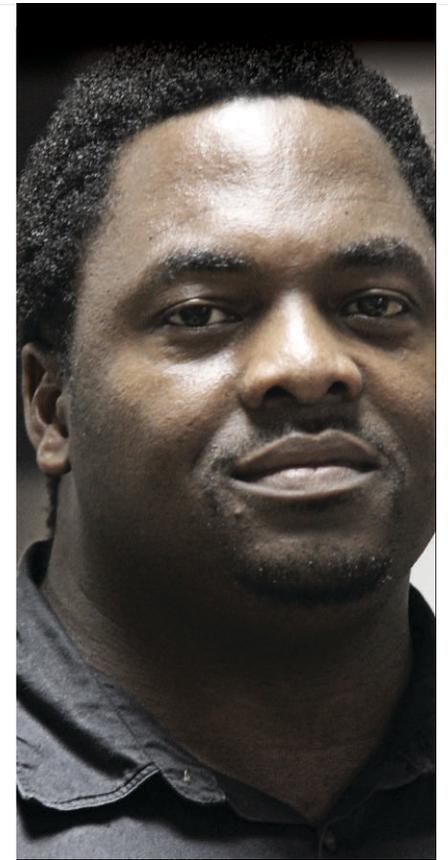
My vision is to visually speak to the depth of a viewer's heart through my art in a way it helps in re-engineering his/her thinking in a positive way. As a creative person, I try as much as possible to remain 'open' so as to soak in information from various sources in various forms and then with time I mentally sieve through and edit so as to get and store the useful ones for future use.

ON EXPLORING NUDITY

My creative direction is largely driven by both exploration and exploitation of the human figure to deliver messages that one way or the other challenges one's thought or warms the other person's heart.

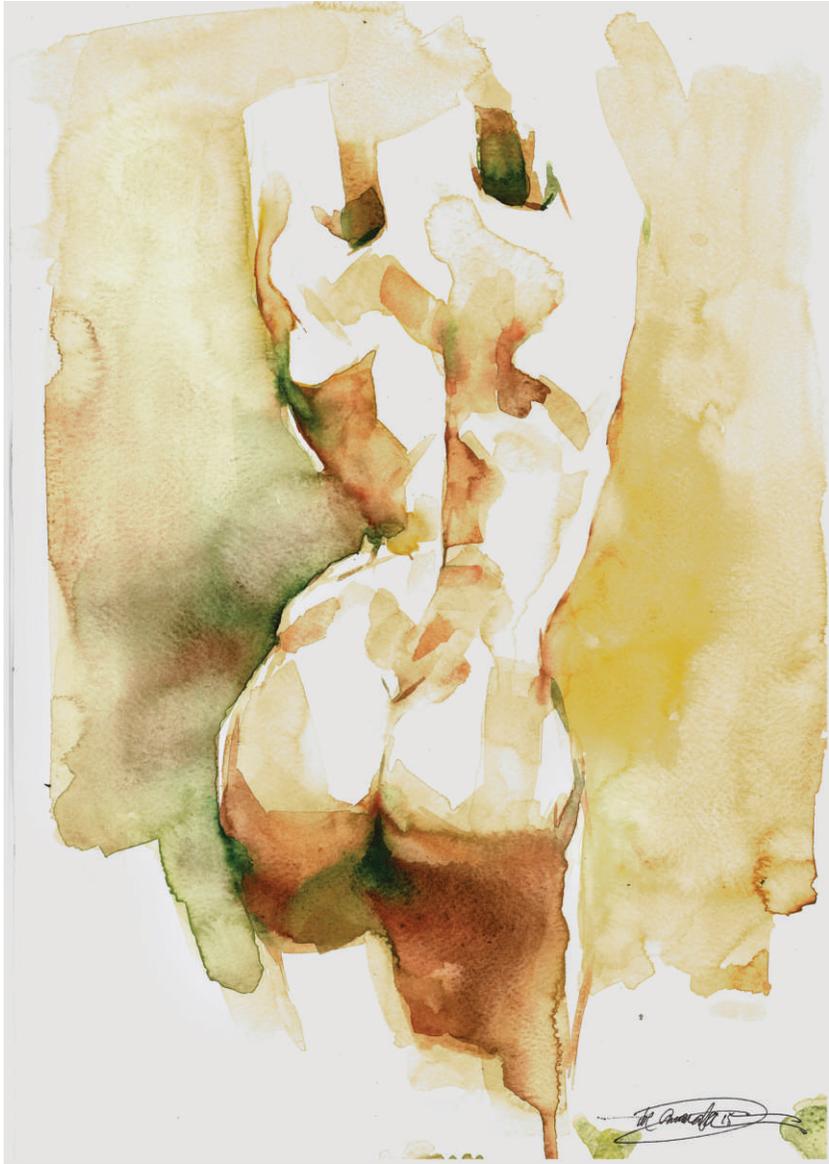
PROFILE

Ibe (as fondly called) graduated in 1999 with a Distinction from Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu, Nigeria where he studied Fine and Applied Arts and majored in Painting .

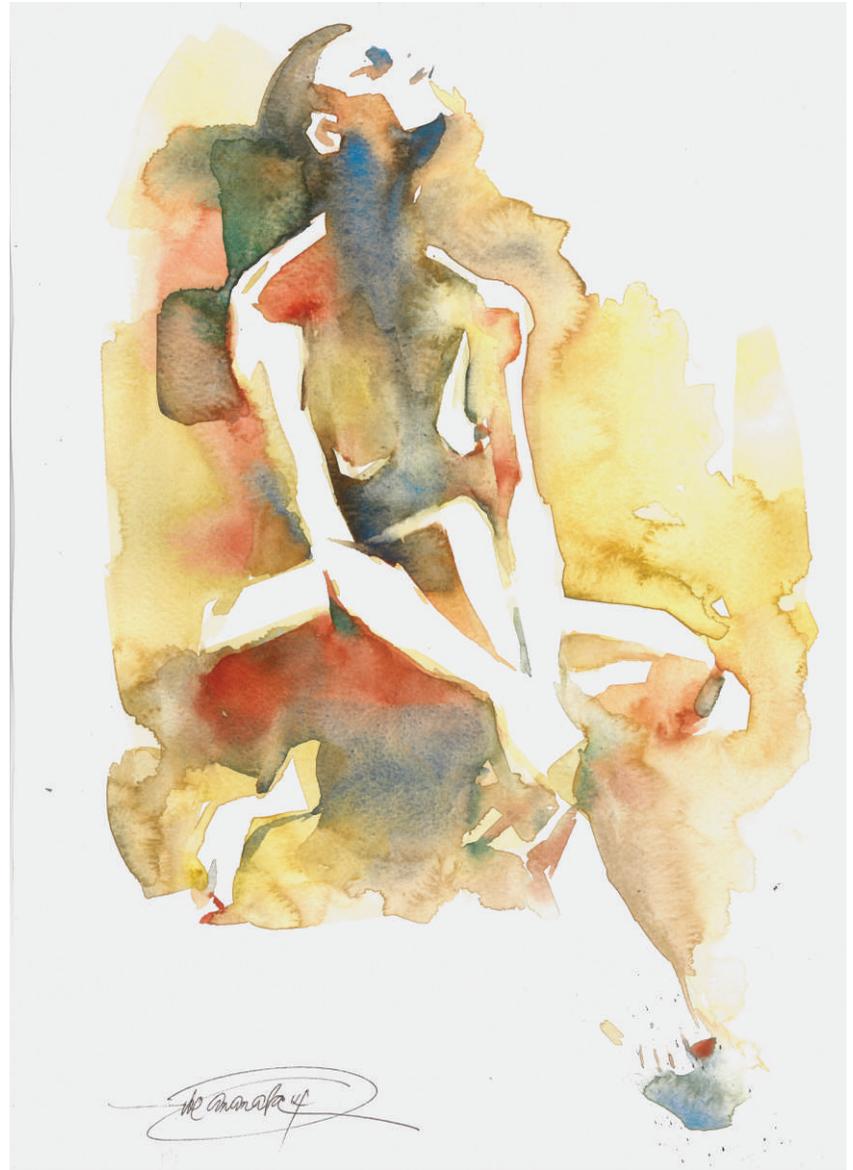


Propelled by a strong passion to provoke thoughts through his creativity, the adventure has taken him through multiple creative phases as a graphic designer, cartoonist, fashion illustrator, painter and currently as an Art Group Head at Insight Communications Limited alongside his art practice.

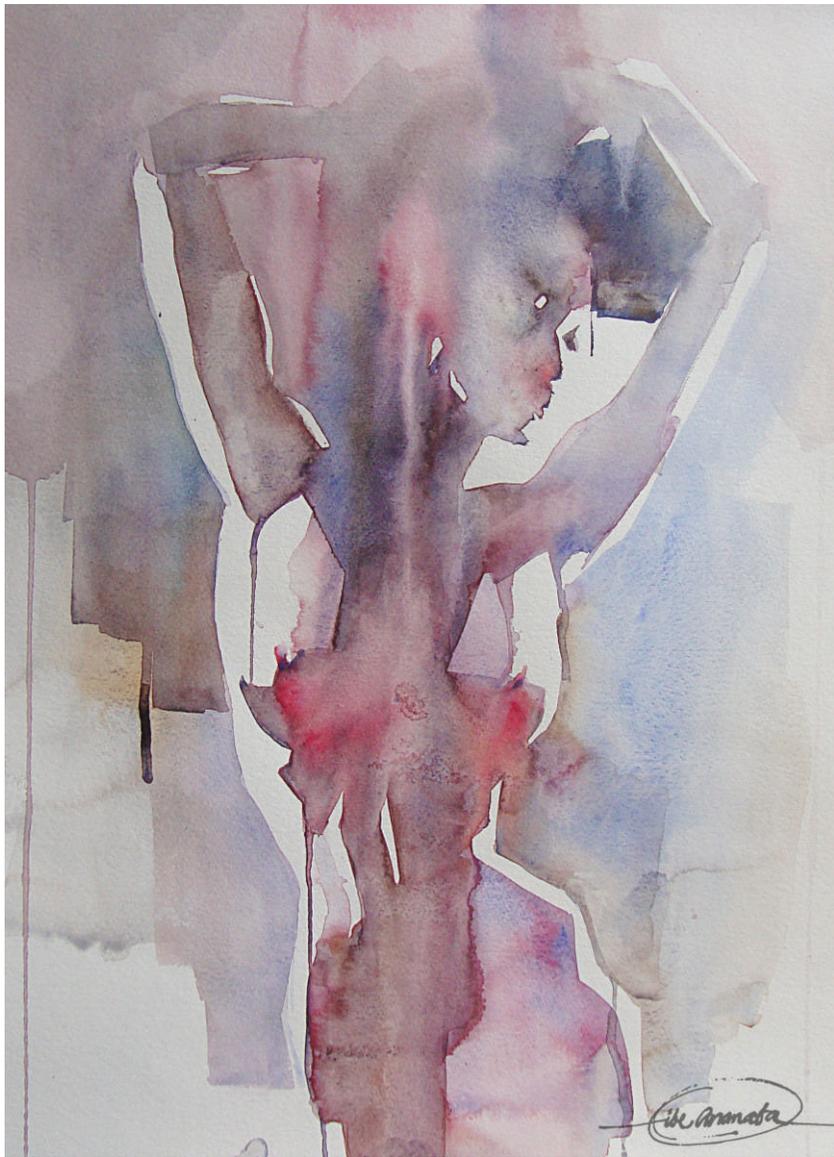
Ibe's works are privately collected in Nigeria, UK, South Africa and United States with his major public collection at National Assembly, Abuja, Nigeria. He has featured in several publications and workshops. He has participated in several group and solo art exhibitions both locally (Nigeria) and internationally (U.S, South Africa, Israel). He is also listed in the Smithsonian Institution Libraries Collections.



Ibe Ananaba
Morning Stretch, 2015
Watercolour on Paper
17 x 23 inches



Ibe Ananaba
Untainted, 2014
Watercolour on Paper
17 x 23 inches



Ibe Ananaba
Deep Feelings, 2014
Watercolour on Paper
17 x 23 inches



Ibe Ananaba
Arise, 2015
Watercolour on Paper
16 x 11 inches

ISAAC EMOKPAE

WHY NUDITY?

“The useful is good because of the excellence of its consequences”

“An object cannot be beautiful if it can give pleasure to nobody “ - George Santayana (The Sense of Beauty)

These words are personified par excellence by God’s most interesting creation: The human form. Whenever I need to inspire myself or re-invigorate my idea stream I just turn to the beauty and tragedy of the human form. I guess that’s

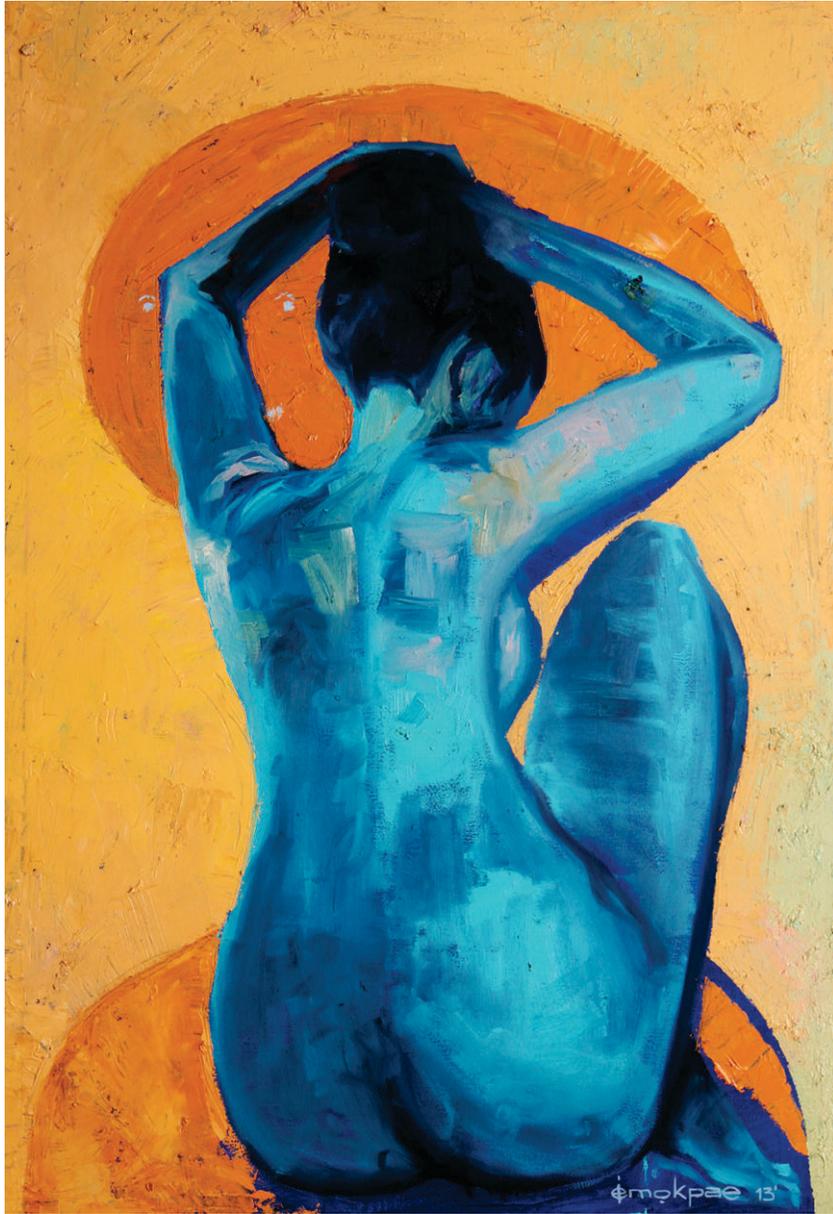


why its called “The Naked Truth”.

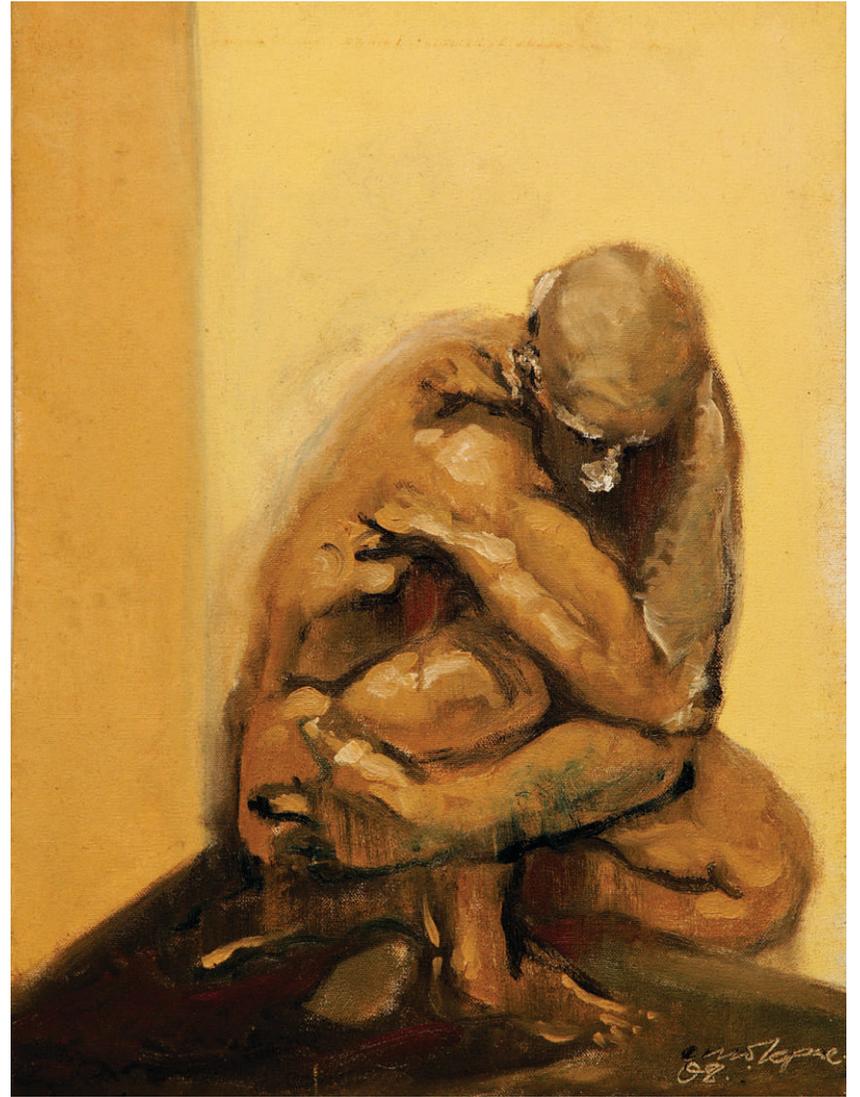
PROFILE

Isaac Erhabor Emokpae, is a world class Visual Artist whose approach to Art is based broadly on the principle of duality. He studied Visual Arts under the tutelage of Professor Abayomi Barber at the University of Lagos. During this time, Isaac honed his skills as a painter working primarily in expressionism and surrealism art movements.

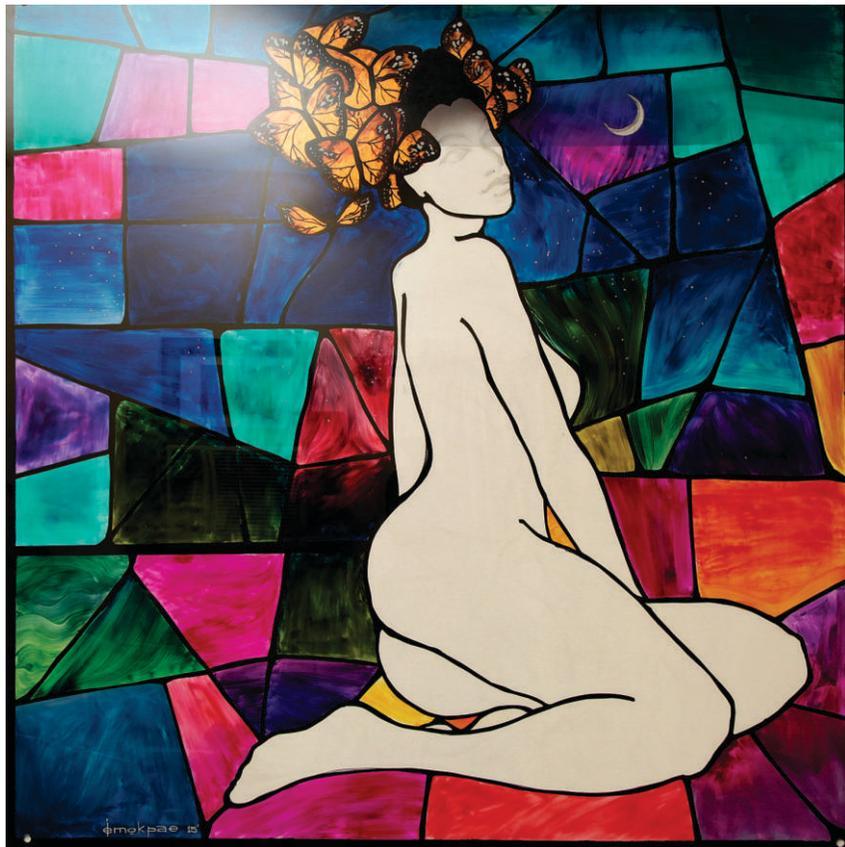
Isaac Emokpae is an award winning artist who has held several group and solo exhibitions within and outside Nigeria. Isaac remains very selective about his work and divides his time between painting and his photography projects with IEP/Youtopia.



Isaac Emokpae
SYBIL, 2013
Oil on Canvas
28 x 40 inches



Isaac Emokpae
Broken, 2008
Oil on Canvas
15 x 20 inches



Isaac Emokpae
Queen of the Night, 2015
Stained Plexiglass
48 x 48 inches

AYOOLA GBOLAHAN

ON THE QUESTION OF NUDITY

From the subconscious comes my inspiration and messages are turned to images.

I don't paint porn, i paint women without clothes.

I don't paint nudity, I paint confidence in her own skin.

These figures are to illuminate and enact a leading to self discovery. To act as catalyst for a discuss on human anthropology. The Socratic tendency should erupt and beget questions like, what do you see when you look at me in skin? What are your expectations? What do you desire? What is fueling your desire? What do you define as the nakedness of a human?

PROFILE

Ayoola Gbolahan is a dynamic, gifted and prolific artist based in Lagos, Nigeria. His works have been exhibited not only in Lagos but around the world. He has won



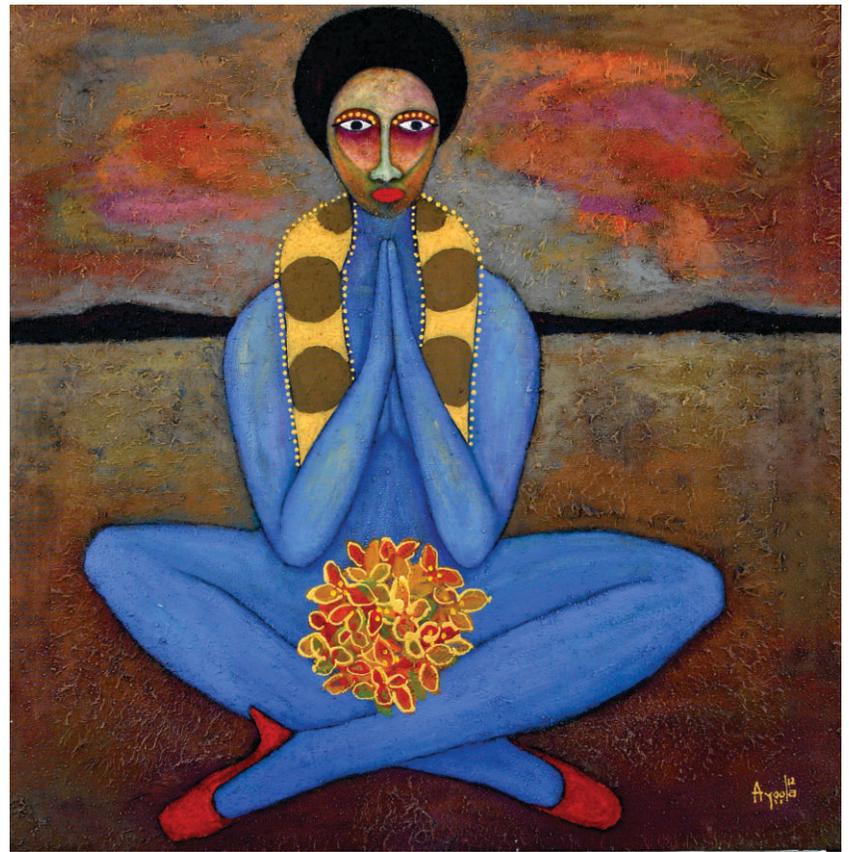
numerous awards and is affiliated with Society of Nigerian Artists, Saatchi Gallery Artists, UK ART slant, USA, and African Artists' Foundation, Lagos.

Listed among the 54 Nigerian art masters by the Embassy of Greece in Nigeria in 2007, he has paintings in The World Bank Washington DC and in published books globally.

He is currently working on the Blue Woman series and has an exhibition in London later this year at the Chelsea gallery. In his own words "The artist's work is a portrait of his relationship/experiences with the rest of creation. Everything about art is spiritual and powerful to me. Art has the power to influence minds. After all, I'm just an artist who knows how to dream and draw, if dreams beget reality".



Ayoola Gbolahan
Blue Star, 2014
Acrylic on Canvas
48 x 60 inches



Ayoola Gbolahan
Blue Meditation, 2012
Acrylic on Canvas
35.5 x 35.5 inches



Ayoola Gbolahan
What Do You Want of Me, 2014
Acrylic on Canvas
60 x 48 inches

TOYOSI FARIDAH KEKERE-EKUN

ABOUT THE COLLECTION

The photographs in this collection evoke a common sentiment, although they were not created as a cohesive collection. Each piece was created during a certain time period of reflection, introspection and vulnerability for the artist, therefore the overall mood, lighting and the techniques used, most notably double exposure in *Spirited Away* (i) and (ii), were applied to convey the artist's state of mind.

WHY NUDITY?

Nudity is an age-old representation of vulnerability and gives a certain rawness to any piece of art when used appropriately.

Nudity is honest and humbling, going back to the basics and connecting with one's true self as we ought to in our quiet moments.



PROFILE

Toyosi Faridah Kekere-Ekun is a professional photographer who specialises in controlled lighting and studio photography.

After graduating from the University of Nottingham with a BA in Politics and International Relations, she trained at the Speos Paris Photographic Institute.

Faridah moved back home to Lagos, Nigeria in 2012 where she began working almost exclusively in fashion and beauty. In February 2014, she hosted her first solo exhibition titled "INDUCTION" at the Omenka Gallery, Ikoyi. Her work now focuses primarily on Fine Art photography and portraiture.



Toyosi Faridah Kekere-Ekun
Spirited Away(i), 2013
Black and White Matte Print
24 x 16.5 inches



Toyosi Faridah Kekere-Ekun
Spirited Away (ii), 2013
Black and White Matte Print
24 x 16.5 inches



Toyosi Faridah Kekere-Ekun
Shrapnel, 2014
Black and White Matte Print
24 x 16.5 inches



Toyosi Faridah Kekere-Ekun
1:1, 2014
Black and White Matte Print
24 x 16.5 inches



Toyosi Faridah Kekere-Ekun
Voile, 2013
Black and White Matte Print
11.5 x 17 inches

LOGOR OLUWAMUYIWA ADEYEMI

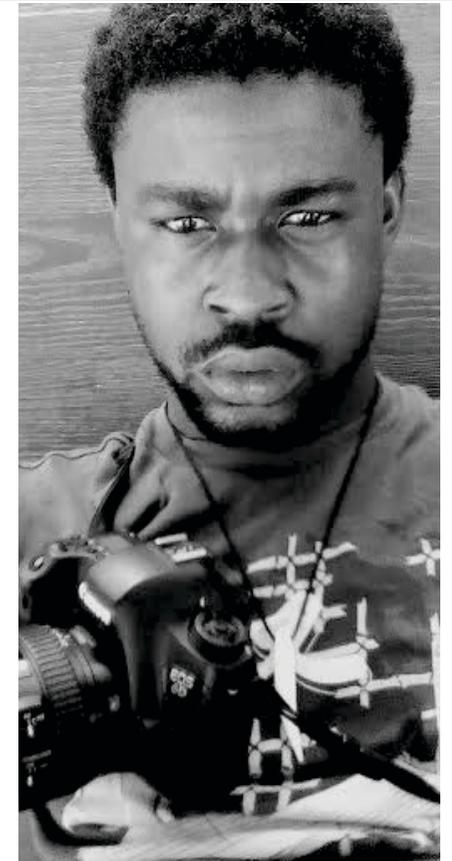
INSPIRATION

THE 'GEORGIA O'KEEFFE SERIES:

The body of work explores a complex yet powerful relationship between a Master of Photography Alfred Stieglitz and his Muse, a painter, Georgia O'Keeffe.

Emotions constantly framed in love letters of Georgia O'Keeffe and Alfred Stieglitz number upwards of 25,000. It's such a prolific amount, it makes you marvel that they had any time at all to live the lives they did. It makes you wonder how much richer your experience of life would be if you had to rehash every day of it to someone else, constantly searching through your yesterdays to find something beautiful to tell you lover today.

As well as masterpieces of photographs of body forms by Stieglitz; they are an expression of the indelible influence they had upon each other, and upon modern art.



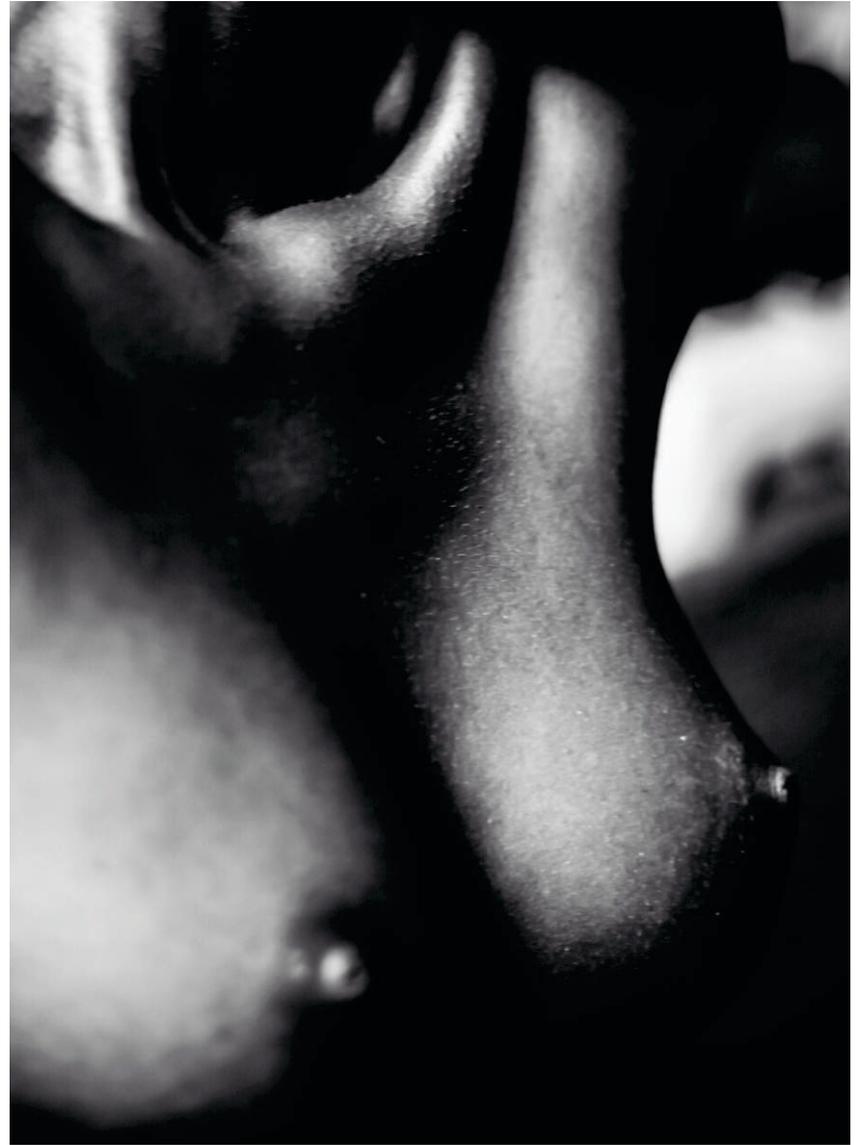
In attempt to re-imagine what it is they felt and how it strongly influenced their entire life's work together, it offers a gentle reminder of what it is to be an Artist, and a lover — and the difficulty of both.

PROFILE

Logor Oluwamuyiwa Adeyemi is a photographer who works predominantly in black and white, and long term conceptual and documentary projects. He runs a virtual platform exclusively for his "Monochrome Africa" project which is a digital archive curated and photographed by him celebrating Africa and her aesthetics especially Lagos — The city he is in a romantic relationship with. He is a member of the Centre for Contemporary Arts.



Logor Oluwamuyiwa Adeyemi
Georgia, 2015
Photography
16 x 23inches



Logor Oluwamuyiwa Adeyemi
Hey Georgia, 2015
Photography
20 x 27 inches



Logor Oluwamuyiwa Adeyemi
Georgia O'Keeffe, 2015
Photography
23 x 23 inches



Logor Oluwamuyiwa Adeyemi
Oh Georgia, 2015
Photography
23 x 15 inches

KELECHI AMADI-Obi

INSPIRATION

STORY BEHIND THE SERIES:

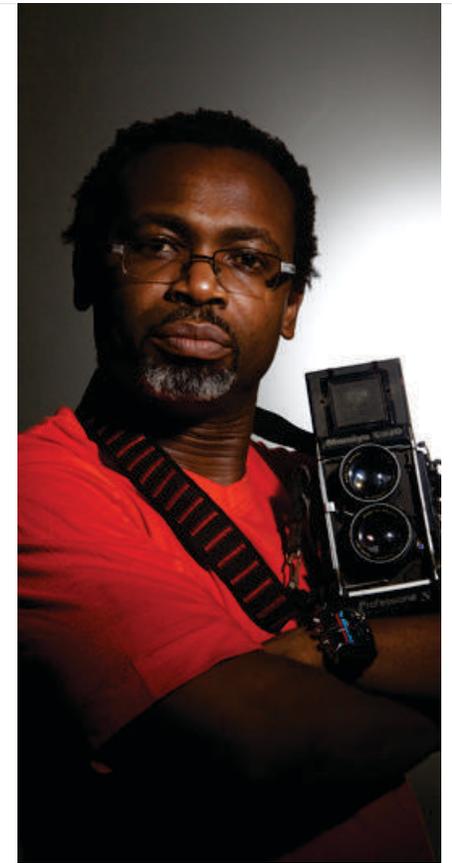
I wanted to explore the relationship between man and nature and his environment, and with all the elements: Water, Air, Earth & Fire. Man was made from ash and so he will return. With this series, I was very spontaneous. A lot of my earlier work has been done in the privacy of a studio but here I wanted to explore the outdoors and that was what gave birth to this.

ON EXPLORING NUDITY

I've realized that the human being can communicate in a lot of detail just by the way they pose. If there's someone who has his head down and not maintaining eye contact, he comes across as timid. You see a lady sitting down, with her head up & legs crossed, and she seems very confident. So somehow, we have a repertoire of language flowing through our bodies. Also, when we strip the human form of clothes, you're dealing with something that is timeless. By this I mean, clothes are a record of time, culture, geographical environment but without clothes, this isn't the case. In this state, the bodily movements/poses are universally understood; you are speaking to humanity at once.

PROFILE

Kelechi Amadi-Obi, after obtaining a law degree and his call to bar in 1993, settled to full-time studio art. He has earned



international renown for both his photography and paintings. His unique style and mastery of aesthetics and creative lighting in his paintings have been reinvented in his photography to create understanding, dynamic and result oriented photography for his clients.

Some of his works have been featured in exhibitions within and outside Nigeria. These include; 2006 "Snap Judgement" - New Positions in Contemporary African Photography, International Centre of Photography, New York, USA; 2005 "Depth of Field" South London Gallery, UK, 2004; "Lagos" Ifa Gallery, Stuttgart, Germany; 2003 "Transferts" Africalia, Brussels, Belgium. In 2004, he won the St. Moritz Style Award for Photography.



Kelechi Amadi-Obi
At Peace, 2007
Print on Aluminium
23 x 32 inches



Kelechi Amadi-Obi
Friends, 2007
Print on Aluminium
26 x 32 inches



Kelechi Amadi-Obi
Afloat, 2007
Print on Aluminium
33 x 24 inches



Kelechi Amadi-Obi
Encounter, 2007
Print on Aluminium
33 x 23 inches



Kelechi Amadi-Obi
Ripples, 2007
Print on Aluminium
33 x 20 inches



Kelechi Amadi-Obi
A Place of Dreams, 2007
Print on Aluminium
32.5 x 20 inches



Kelechi Amadi-Obi
Reflection, 2007
Print on Aluminium
32 x 20 inches



Kelechi Amadi-Obi
Harmony, 2007
Print on Aluminium
33 x 19.5 inches

REZE BONNA

ON EXPLORING NUDITY

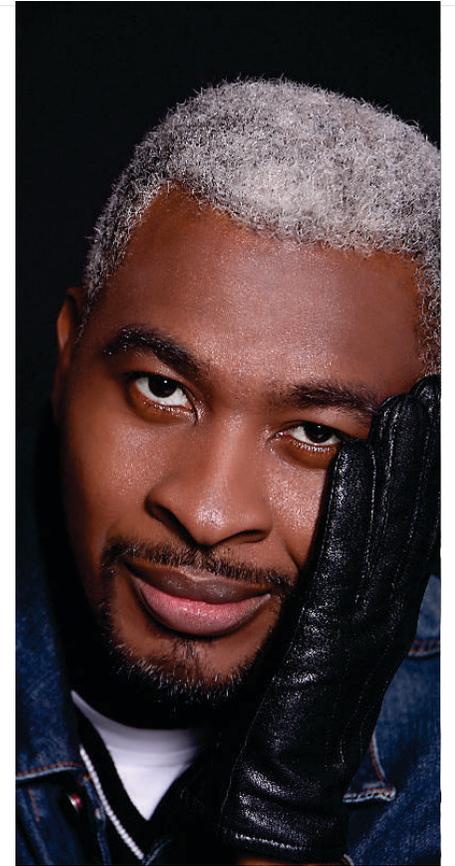
The human body in itself is the ultimate and purest fusion of art and science, form and functionality, machinery and robotics, strength and weakness, defense and vulnerability, and so, no other way better encapsulates all of these and expresses it than nude art. If clothed, the body loses its purity and then becomes a hybrid. Art is meant to provoke thought, invoke emotions and revoke barriers.

CREATIVE DIRECTION

The inspiration for these works are principles from my architectural background like structure and strength, form and function, light and shade, perspective etc. These characteristics usually resonate in the works.

PROFILE

Reze Bonna, is a multi award winning international brand operating between Nigeria, South Africa and the United



States of America. With formal training in Architecture and Photography, and also operating in other fields like music, videography, design and construction, the works that are produced are a fusion of these different fields, culminating in unique photographs, each telling a story. Reze Bonna works have been featured in Vogue Italia, GQ, pride magazine, Architectural Digest, CNN and a host of other local and international news outlets. Having worked and shot with Dignitaries like president Clinton, Designers like Roberto Cavalli, International Supermodels like Janice Dickinson, Artistes like Mariah Carey, Clergy like Morris Cerrullo, and Structures like The White House and Buckingham Palace, the widespread reach of the works speak for themselves.



Reze Bonna
Bend Over Backwards, 2014
Print on Canvas
22 x 33 inches



Reze Bonna
Interdependence of a Spine, 2014
Print on Canvas
22 x 33 inches



Reze Bonna
Emotions in Motion, 2014
Print on Canvas
33 x 22 inches



Reze Bonna
Heightened Emotions, 2014
Print on Canvas
33 x 22 inches



Reze Bonna
Human Support Systems, 2014
Print on Canvas
33 x 22 inches

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rele is a lovechild, conceived by burning passions.

A passion for the arts across various artistic mediums, platforms and for creating a habitat for the individuals behind the art, the artists: to thrive, to create and to grow. **rele** is an unconventional, contemporary art space that marries two symbiotic purposes: to offer first-rate art for public consumption and nurture the creators of the art, bringing the world to their work. With **rele**, every artist who is encountered and nurtured is the STAR. The artist exudes qualities that need to be seen and felt, because of what use is a gift if it is not shared?

Located in Onikan, the cultural capital of Lagos, **rele** eases seamlessly into the landscape, surrounded by history, art and culture. Within walking distance are the National Museum; The Muson Centre; the storied Tafawa Balewa Square and the City Mall.

rele hopes to be a glittering addition to this cultural nerve centre especially as it seeks to create some history of its own. It will also be an educational incubator of the arts: prying minds open to deepen their knowledge and appreciate the sector; training budding curators and facilitating social change through art that speaks to society.