



Matters of Essence II

June 15-July 27, 2024

Mimi Adu-Serwaah

Sika Amakye

Elfreda Dali

Nwakuso Edozien

Christopher Samuel Idowu

Omolade Ogundimu

Kó is pleased to present ***Matters of Essence II***, a group exhibition that explores the significance of materiality and the tangibility of creative expression. Through a cross-disciplinary approach, these artists address the conceptual symbolism of their respective mediums to navigate evolving notions of identity, perception, and belonging through a diffusion of cultures. This exhibition features works by **Mimi Adu-Serwaah, Sika Amakye, Elfreda Dali, Nwakuso Edozien, Christopher, Samuel Idowu, and Omolade Ogundimu.**

Mimi Adu-Serwaah (b. 1994, Ghana) incorporates ephemeral materials into her mixed-media practice, merging elements of abstraction and realism with vibrant kaleidoscopic colors and figurative compositions. Her recent sculptural installations draw on the symbolism of rags to examine the complexities of identity and immigrant experiences. Inspired by her Ghanaian heritage and recent migration to the United States, Adu-Serwaah's canvases combine nylon lace, Egyptian mosaic tile cells, and pigmented acrylic, reflecting on themes of belonging, displacement, and cultural assimilation. A trained pharmacist, Adu-Serwaah completed her doctorate at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in 2019 and is now pursuing an additional master's degree in health informatics at George Mason University in Virginia, USA. She has held solo exhibitions at Allouche Gallery in Los Angeles, California, and the Institute Museum of Ghana in Accra. Recent group exhibitions include the Luanda Biennale, Angola; the Ghana Trade Exhibition, Accra; and Chili Art Projects, London. She has completed artist residencies at ARD in Cairo, Egypt, and Nolder Residency in Ghana.

Sika Amakye (b. 1995, Ghana) is a multidisciplinary artist who explores the parallel relationship between human experience and the unseen world. Drawing from West African ancestry, folklore, and spirituality, her paintings depict bold female silhouettes that represent mythical narratives of otherworldly beings in dream-like form. In her series *Like a Memory of Night*, Amakye creates acrylic paintings on wooden panels alongside beaded sculptures. The shapes of the wooden panels are inspired by Japanese wall partitions

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called *Shoji*, meaning healing. Amakye's work is deeply influenced by her family's tradition of artisanal beading, creating tapestry-like forms that reference a sense of heritage and continuity. As a journey through ancestral portals, her work is a meditation on mystery, power, and shared memories through her wandering imagination. Amakye a self-taught artist who began her career as an illustrator, She participated in the emerging artist program at the Judith-Ellen Foundation (2020). Her exhibition, *Like a Memory of Night*, was held at Nubuke Foundation, Accra (2023). Her solo exhibition, *The Crackle Enigma*, was held at Gallery Elle Lokko, Accra (2022). Amakye is based in Accra, Ghana.

Elfreda Dali (b. 1995. U.K.) explores figurative textile art rooted in the fusion of diasporic cultures. Dali combines textiles, repurposed clothing, acrylic, and wood that are collaged together to depict a "topographic aesthetic" that reflects her experience of the human condition in contrast to our geographical locations and cultures. She uses intricate lines, shapes, and patterns that resemble the physical features of a map to reflect on the physical and mental journeys across the diasporic spectrum. Her recent work serves as a conduit for exploring the connections and contrasts within multiple cultural frameworks, weaving narratives around themes of family, labour, self-exploration, and migration. Dali's creative journey began with a foundation in wearable art and fashion, which has since evolved into a wider approach to textile storytelling. She studied fashion design at Ravensbourne University and Fashion Retail Academy, London. Recent exhibitions include *Somerset House BBR*, London (2024); *PU Exhibition*, Cromwell Place, London (2024); *Rele Los Angeles* (2024); *Transcending Border by Gensler*, London (2023); *Soho House X IKENGA*, London (2023); *Level Gallery*, New York (2023); *Rele Lagos* (2023); *Victoria & Albert Museum Sustainability Spotlight*, London (2022); and *Alliance Française Gallery*, Lagos (2021). Dali is based in London.

Nwakuso Edozien (b. 1996, Nigeria) a visual abstract artist and designer who explores the concept and creation of identity through the layering of experiences and cultural influences. Drawing inspiration from her Nigerian cultural roots and her multicultural upbringing spanning Nigeria, Germany, England, Wales, and the United States, Nwakuso's work offers insights into her own intricate psychology, societal narratives, and cultural belonging. Her use of colors, particularly indigo blue, fluid shapes, and abstract imagery, reflects this fusion of influences while challenging and studying her evolving environment and thought process. Edozien earned her Bachelor of Architecture Degree from Cornell University in 2020 with a concentration in Architecture, Culture, and Society. Recent exhibitions include *At Once, Then Again* at Rele Gallery (2023), *Unravel* at Alliance Francaise, Mike Adenuga Centre (2023), and *Neo Custodian* at SMO Contemporary Art (2020). She was also included in the inaugural +234 Art Fair in Lagos, Nigeria; and the RESIST! exhibition, *It's Yours*, curated by Professor Peju Layiwola at The Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum in Cologne, Germany. Edozien is based in Lagos, Nigeria.

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Christopher Samuel Idowu (b. 1995, Nigeria) often uses photography as the starting point to his mixed media paintings, his palette drawing from the patina of deteriorating photographs and earth colours. His work explores themes of time, history, personal experiences, memory, human connection and spirituality, primarily explored through the lens of portraiture. His visual documentation captures both earthly and ethereal moments, incorporating conte crayon, charcoal, pastel, watercolour, acrylics, oils, and silkscreen printing. Idowu studied at the Yaba College of Technology and majored in painting. Recent exhibitions include *Art X Lagos (2023)*; *My Benue Diary*, Tyowanye, Buruku, Benue state, Nigeria (2023); *Crossroads*, SMO Contemporary (2022); *Fragments*, Subtitle Labs and Omer Tiroche Gallery, London (2022); *Wielding Power: On Display*, Gallery at the Landmark, Lagos (2021); and *Silent screams: an exhibition on mental health*, Art in Medicine Fellowship, Lagos (2021). Idowu is based in Badagry, Lagos, Nigeria.

Omolade Ogundimu (b. 2000, Nigeria) is a textile artist who experiments with rug-making using the modern method of tufting. She transforms strands of yarn into fibre fluffs to form different images that reflect her mental state at the time of creation. Her works are often influenced by personal experiences, and natural phenomena depicted through abstract visualisations. She embraces the metaphoric connection between the human experience and the very fibres she works with, as a meditation on the nurturing nature the tufting process requires, its bonding experience, and its reflection of her persona. With concurrent experience in interior design, Ogundimu received certification in interior design from MAVENS, Lagos, Nigeria. She received an LLB from University of Reading, UK and Babcock University, Nigeria. Recent exhibitions include *Seconds before Happiness*, Art Roost Gallery at DIDI Museum, Lagos (2023); *Homegrown*, Alara, Lagos (2022); *Design Intersect*, Design Week Lagos (2022); and *The Artist's Commune*, Lagos (2021). Ogundimu is based in Lagos, Nigeria.

ABOUT kó

kó is an art gallery based in Lagos, Nigeria, that is dedicated to promoting modern and contemporary art. kó has a dual focus in championing Nigeria's leading artists from the modern period and celebrating emerging and established contemporary artists across Africa and the Diaspora.