



# AFRO-INFUSION EXHIBITION

ABIGAIL NNAJI

8th-9th February 2020

British Village Inn, Abuja, Nigeria



### **Our Purpose**

Our intention is to represent artists through exhibitions, events, talks, etc. and to create books, e-Books and catalogues that enhance and promote the huge African art talent in order to bring them to all audiences.

We want to use art as a social weapon to bring awareness about difficult topics. We want to discuss and explore themes such as child abuse, war, slavery, drugs, rape, misogyny, etc. We want to capture people's attention with these subjects, stories and ideas that have a massive impact on their lives and dreams. It is essential to listen carefully to how human beings today interpret their voices, especially through art.

We want to publish books, e-Books and catalogues about the current established artists who we work with and the new ones that we have trained and encouraged.

Our purpose is also to celebrate and publish young and long established African artists who have never been recognised in order to create an art legacy.

### **Our Culture**

We believe in these artists and their ideas and therefore we think that what we do matters.

It takes a lot of hard work and research to represent artists and publish these books, e-Books and catalogues, and we care about these artists, their ideas and talent. We are committed to make a difference and work with these artists in order to achieve this.

We work in collaboration with Female Artists Association of Nigeria (FEAAN) and other art organisations. We work together, among other things, to find new talent, encourage established talent, record young and established artists, set up exhibitions and provide workshops, seminars and talks to underprivileged and disadvantaged female artists who want to start or continue their art career.

**Susa Rodriguez-Garrido**

Art Representative and Founder of Agama Art Publishing & Agency



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A Catalogue of Exhibition  
Agama Art Publishing & Agency

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Susa Rodriguez-Garrido

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## FOREWORD



**Susa Rodriguez-Garrido,  
Art Representative, Curator and  
Founder of Agama Art Publishing & Agency**

Abigail Nnaji is a force of nature, strong and bubbly which in a way is reflected in her colourful and energetic style.

The exhibition features 34 pieces of artwork with *Afro-Infusion* as a theme that explores African culture through a range of series such as Ankara, Afro, Gele, Fashion and Abstracts.

Abigail conceives abstract, semi abstract and exaggerated realist styles of painting combined with lines and bold colours as well as traditional motifs such as Uli symbols.

In her pieces, the use of paper cutting is prevalent, an intricate technique that gives her work a unique style.

The use of exaggerated features in her work is noticeable, from the afro hairstyle to long dresses that also provides an individual approach to her art.

The *Afro-Infusion* exhibition opens on 8th February and finishes on 9th February at the exclusive British Village Inn in Abuja, Nigeria.

This is the opening solo exhibition of 2020 and follows the first solo exhibition held in November 2019. We also organised a collective exhibition of Nigerian women artists in March 2019.

The British Village and I are working in collaboration to bring you a series of solo exhibitions throughout the year, with a selection of incredible Nigerian artists and artists who work and live in Nigeria. The artists that we will be exhibiting will include painters, photographers, sculptors and performance artists who will work in different mediums.

Please join us to celebrate our passion for art!

**Susa Rodriguez-Garrido**

Art Representative and Founder of Agama Art Publishing & Agency  
<https://agamapublishing.wordpress.com/>

## ABOUT



**Agama Art Publishing and Agency Ltd.** was founded by Susa Rodriguez-Garrido, in 2018, to promote African artists and to encourage them to express their enormous talent and creativity.

Agama Art Publishing and Agency Ltd. is an independent publisher and agency that promotes African Artists through books, e-Books and catalogues about African art, photography, architecture, sculpture, design and fashion that radiate creativity, imagination, thoughts and education.

We also represent artists endorsing them through exhibitions, events, seminars, talks, etc. We select and publish the most brilliant African artists, bringing them to life in dynamic ways in print and digital, for readers all around the world.

## ABOUT



**The British Village Inn** provides a social hub for its Members, who are primarily those employed within the British High Commission. It is run on a not-for-profit basis and is led by a volunteer committee, who guide the direction of the Club and ensure lively events for its members.

The British Village Inn is very excited to host the second solo exhibition and the first one of this year with the theme *Afro-Infusion* that will take place on 8th-9th February 2020.

We are working in partnership with art curator and publisher Susa Rodriguez-Garrido to provide an interesting selection of artists with a series of solo exhibitions.

### AFRO-INFUSION

***Afro-Infusion*** comes across as a third sequel to Abigail's earlier solo offerings *City People I & II*. The continuity in formalism and allegory as well as theme, make such a summary conducive. Of course it is not in my place to establish the character of the new body of work, or its theme, instead I make allusions to a continuity on the basis of personal observation, even as it is clear from the chosen title, that the artist intends to steer the observer away from repetitive titling without necessarily deviating from the message.

Abigail has broken down the structures in this expose to include four series of work, the Afro Series, the Gele Series, the Ankara Series and the pure Abstractions. With this structuring she deviates from the first two exhibitions, which did not allude to these categories. It is an improvement on the past in the sense of specialisation, and the strategy of categorisation in order to deconstruct the argument for more specific understanding of the values projected. Ankara, Gele, and Afro are all predominant features in the Nigerian fashion context, and an honest and constant review of their status in the society is therefore a veritable endeavor in creative documentation. These are the features that give life to the essence of African womanhood at the surface, also as a kind of garnishment of the powers and prospects within.

Uli lines play a dominant role in the symbolism of the works on display and cuts across all the series as a unifying factor, this is unsurprising because Abigail's educational background infused the Igbo line design in her art from her days in the ivory tower. It is indeed a continuation of legacy that the modern female artist of Igbo extraction taps from an ancient practice propagated by women before the foray of the first group of intellectuals into the philosophy of this noble practice. The dominance of the female form continues unabated, and rightly so, because the message remains unapologetically feminine. The female here is depicted as graceful, reserved and elegant, quite often a feature that is experienced in conjugal events as well as religious ones. Within the mix some canvases are populated by geometric forms, and mostly in line with Uli hieroglyphics and fused together with faded human contraptions in a wedding-setting like composition. Perhaps this is the artist's way of presenting the broader picture about the purpose of the presented regalia, a ceremonial prerequisite for events of the nature.

It is in the light of the following tangential treatise that *Afro-Infusion* can be analysed, amongst others. It is the hope of enthusiasts of the artist's work that they are well received and magnanimously judged, for the world-view that they propose, which is essentially about being comfortable in one's skin.

#### **Obi Nwaegbe**

Writer, Analyst, Resident Artist



## ARTIST

### ABIGAIL NNAJI



**Abigail Nnaji** is a graduate of University of Nigeria-Nsukka with a BA in Fine and Applied Arts majoring in painting.

Her style is not only influenced by the academy but by her constant exposure through cultural interactions.

Based on her experiments with paper she has been able to find a new and unconventional application in her art by fusing it into her paintings through the use of paper cutting technique.

In 2018, she was selected as the first African to be presented as the Invited International Artist for the Great Gulfcoast Arts Festival in Pensacola, Florida USA, based on her paper cutting technique.

Abigail has participated in several group exhibitions and some of her works are in private collections at home and abroad, of which one work adorns the Mayor's office in the city of Pensacola Florida.

Her pieces feature themes in serenity, beauty, identity and love, especially as she tries to capture activities that often explore social perceptions in new light.

Currently, she is a member of the Female Artists Association of Nigeria (FEAAN), Association of Professional Creative Artists and Designers in Nigeria (APCAD) and FERRUM-The Art House, Switzerland.

# ARTIST

## **Artist Statement**

*As an artist, I am inspired by lines and fascinated by colours.*

*My paintings depict everyday life as I try to capture nature and beauty, while highlighting human struggles. In order to achieve this, I employ both abstract and semi abstract styles of painting to create an alluring mix using lines and colours as well as traditional motifs.*

*Apart from the use of oil and acrylic colours, I recently began to experiment with paper which I fuse with my paintings through the use of paper cutting technique. However, I have experimented with the use of paper in another style in the past.*

*Using the paper cutting technique has helped me create a more unique style for my works and has given me the opportunity to push boundaries. I am able to express myself effortlessly despite the intricacies involved in producing the pieces. In addition, each work I create gives me a new drive to further create a more interesting piece for the next one.*

## **Competitions**

2019: 3rd Prize winner of 13th Edition of Spanish Visual Arts Competition, Spanish Embassy of Nigeria

2017: Top100 finalists in Union Bank Centenary Challenge

2016: 2nd Prize Winner, Chinese Ambassador's Residence Image Drawing Cup Competition

## **Solo Exhibitions**

2017: City People - Using Paper Cutting Technique, Coco Café, Abuja

2019: City People II, NSIBIDI.The Gallery, Abuja

## **Group Exhibitions**

2019: Arkane Africa, Expiration Internationale D'Art Contemporaine D'Afrique, Casablanca, Morocco

2019: Gift of Blood, Kulture Kode Art Gallery, Abuja

2019: Audacious, NSIBIDI.The Gallery, Abuja

2019: Uncovered Female Nigerian Artists, British Village Inn, Abuja

2019: Balance for Better, Women Unite, Nike Art Gallery, Lagos

2018: Invited International Artists, Great Gulfcoast Arts Festival, Pensacola, Florida, USA

2018: ICAF Exhibition, Radisson Blu Anchorage Hotel, Lagos

2018: Press for Progress, Women Move On, Nike Art Gallery, Lagos

2018: UNWOMEN Int'l Women's Day Exhibition, Nikon Luxury, Abuja

2017: Abuja Unlocked, United States Embassy in Abuja, Café De Vie, Abuja

2017: Orange the World, German Embassy Ambassador's Residence

2017: China Through The Eyes of Nigerians, China Cultural Centre, Abuja

2017: Nkoli Ka, Nsukka School After 50 years, Exhibition Pavilion, Abuja

2017: Be Bold For Change, Women Arise, Nike Art Gallery, Lagos

## ANKARA SERIES



*The Violinist*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*Day Dream*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*Sisi II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*African Queen II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 60.96cm x 60.96cm, 2020

## AFRO SERIES



*Friends*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 121.92cm x 121.92cm, 2019



*White Rose*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 121.92cm x 121.92cm, 2019



*IF II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



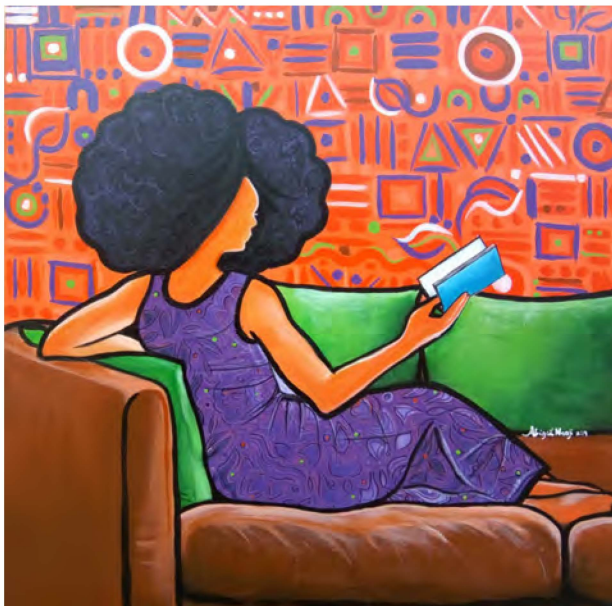
*Reflection II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*Hope II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 60.96cm x 60.96cm, 2020



*Sisi I*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*Blue Book*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019

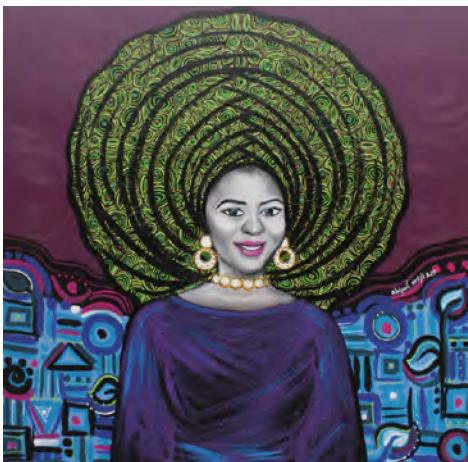
## GELE SERIES



*Asoebi III*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*Owambe II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*Owambe III*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*Owambe IV*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 60.96cm x 60.96cm, 2020

## ABSTRACT SERIES



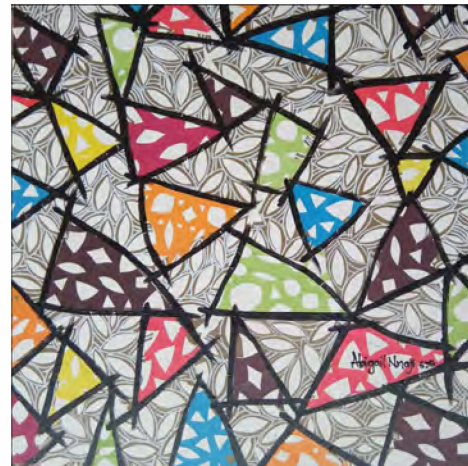
*Blooming Green*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 50.8cm x 50.8cm, 2019



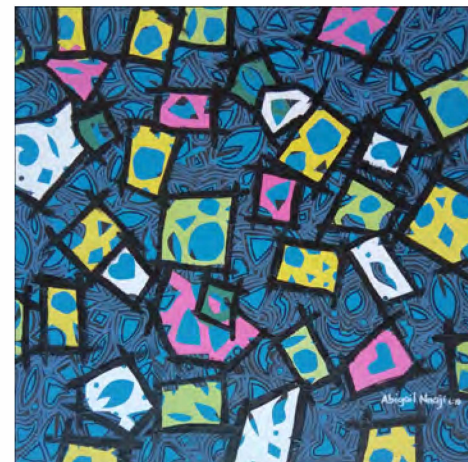
*Blooming II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 121.92cm x 121.92cm, 2019



*Different Strokes II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*Evolution I*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 60.96cm x 60.96cm, 2019



*Evolution II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 50.8cm x 50.8cm, 2019



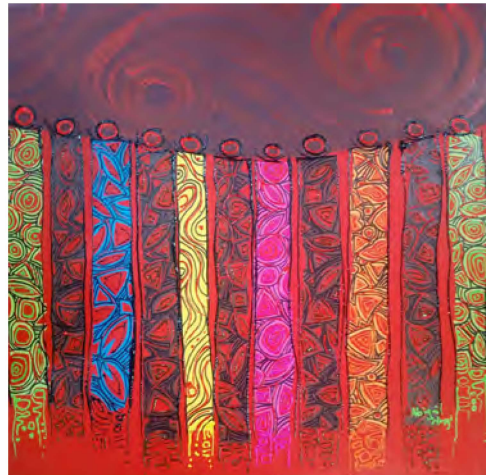
*Rebirth*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*Generation II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*MyRoots VI*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2020



*My Roots II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 60.96cm x 60.96cm, 2019



*To the Promised Land III*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 50.8cm x 50.8cm, 2020





*Untitled I*, Acrylic and paper on canvas,  
50.8cm x 50.8cm, 2020



*Untitled III*, Acrylic and paper on canvas,  
50.8cm x 50.8cm, 2020



*Untitled II*, Acrylic and paper on canvas,  
50.8cm x 50.8cm, 2020

## FASHION SERIES



*Standing Out*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*Standing Tall*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 121.92cm x 121.92cm, 2019



*Contemplation*, Acrylic and paper on canvas,  
91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019



*Lost in Thought*, Acrylic and paper on canvas,  
91.44cm x 121.92cm, 2019



*Lily in the Fields*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2017



*My Dream*, Acrylic and paper on canvas, 91.44cm x 91.44cm, 2019

# CONTACT

## If you would like to:

- set up an exhibition or art event,
- hire one of the artists for a seminar, talk, presentation or party,
- have your artwork assessed and valued,
- purchase artwork.

Please contact me:

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