

TIWANI CONTEMPORARY

Samuel Nnorom: *Emotional Catch*

24 November 2023 – 13 January 2024



Samuel Nnorom 'Holding on a little longer', 2023 (detail shot) Courtesy of the Artist and Tiwani Contemporary

Tiwani Contemporary Lagos is pleased to present the solo exhibition, Samuel Nnorom: *Emotional Catch*, featuring a series of variable scaled sculptures that are visual metaphors exploring and speaking texturally to a multitude of social conditions that are topically shaping our lived experiences.

Inherent to Nnorom's practice and discernible in his usage of salvaged fabric, are critical observations around artisanal provenance and history, the geopolitical and economic conditions raising consumer aspirations and demand, and the environmental impact and management of post-consumer waste.

Ankara, the offcuts of waxed cloth that Nnorom's sculptures are largely composed from, has historically become synonymous with African textiles, of which the methodology and its production had originated in Indonesia as a technique and handwoven practice, which was co-opted commercially by the Dutch and British during the 19th century, and found popular markets and appreciation in West and Central Africa. Since the mid noughties, the market has been undercut by Chinese manufacturers, which has systematically undermined the provenance and production of continent based textile production.

Nnorom's wall, floor-based and suspended sculptures are forms inspired by the shape and proliferation of globules; bubbles that emerge capturing gas momentarily and held until bursting apart. He is interested in the rapid expansion and movement of bubble formations and how these characteristics speaks to different life situations that arise; the suspended moments arrived at to take certain decisions and actions, and the adaption to the consequences of those decisions, shaping a new experiential terrain and pathway. Nnorom's studio weaves, rolls, assembles, stiches and sews together constellations of bubbles, bindles, and ribboned strips; daily activities industriously performed as a metaphor for survival, connection, and aspiration to manifest transformations.

Works in the exhibition such as *Holding On A Little Longer*, and *Path Within*, 2023 materially render and connect a varied bundle of topics regarding life, the Covid-19 pandemic, introspection, migration, trade, identity formation, and sovereignty.

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About the artist

Born in Nigeria in 1990, Samuel Nnorom is a multi-award-winning artist whose work poetically crosses tapestry-like sculpture and pre-loved Ankara wax fabric. Since early childhood, elements that now shape his contemporary practice have surrounded him: sketching portraits of customers who visited his father's shoe shop and playing with colorful scraps from his mother's tailoring workshop crystallized his artistic vocation.

The self-proclaimed "custodian of material culture", Nnorom draws upon materiality in a unique way, dedicating his art to textile reutilizing and a sociological reflection on the human condition. Through sewing, tying and cutting, the rising artist creates intricate constellations of fabric-covered foam balls meticulously stitched together, evoking a metaphor for a "fabric of society" composed of closed social structures forming the bubbles in which our daily lives are wrapped in. Using Ankara textiles – whose origins are complex in the history of the continent, Nnorom explores its protean symbolism and reappropriates a contemporary fabric omnipresent in his community.

Currently living and working in Nsukka, Samuel Nnorom holds an MFA in sculpture from the University of Nigeria, UNN Nsuka. He runs numerous workshops and residencies in England, South Africa, Burkina Faso, Senegal and Nigeria. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Truth and Conspiracy*, Primo Marella Gallery, Milano, Italy, 2023; *Points of Departure*, Galerie Art Mûr 5826, rue St-Hubert Montréal, Canada, 2023; *Politics of Clothes*, The Mitochondria Gallery, Houston TX, USA, 2023; *Politics of Fabrics, an Expository solo exhibition*, The Guest Artist Space G.A.S., Yinka Shonibare Foundation, Lagos, Nigeria, 2023; *Immigration and Integration*, The Art House, Wakefield, UK. Nnorom is also the global prize winner of the "Art for Change Award 2022" organized by M&C Saatchi and Saatchi Group.

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