

Visions of Home: Lagos to Accra - Omenai Gallery Makes its Mark in Chicago with Lively Group Show



Cornelius Annor (b. 1990, Accra), *Ma wo nsa so di asa (Raise your leg and dance)*, (2023).

Courtesy of the Gallery and Artist.

Chicago, August 2024 - Following a successful inaugural show, Omenai Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of group exhibition *Visions of Home: Lagos to Accra* - on view from 30 August till 11 October 2024, at 1716 W Grand Ave.

Visions of Home: Lagos to Accra brings together works from Cornelius Annor, Orry Shenjobi, Olamide Ogunade and Nana Bruce with different interpretations of their view of home. Focusing on contemporary

portraiture, these artists are observers of their immediate surroundings, each imbuing their canvases with a deep sense of place.

Nigerian artists Olamide Ogunade and Orry Shenjobi lean into nostalgia and memory in their practice. As Shenjobi centralizes the subjects in her series, *Hawking Heroes*, with her significant use of textured negative space, Ogunade seeks to examine temporal moments in human life through his bold use of charcoal and acrylic.

For Ogunade, home is a space for contemplation and the hope of resolution. In his work, *Nostalgia Rhythm* (2024), the viewer is invited into the subject's stillness; drawn in by the cohesive colour palette of the domestic space, the presence of familiar fabric and household items, and the subject's attentive pose, we are forced to consider the complexity of feelings that might be filling the space.



Orry Shenjobi (b. 1997, Lagos), *Saratu*, (2024). Courtesy of the Gallery and Artist.

Inspired by her childhood memories of living in Lagos, the 'Hawking Heroes' series is Shenjobi's tribute to the women who hawk in Lagos traffic. With a selection of works currently on view at the Venice Biennale, entitled *A wà òbè : A Celebration of Community and Culture*, her multimedia practice draws attention to the quotidian, the negative space leaving room for the subject's own thoughts, feelings and musings to be transferred. A rare moment of silence in the otherwise visually-saturated, populous Lagos. By foregrounding details of the everyday, Shenjobi speaks to the active experiences of individuals living on the African continent and ignites dormant memories for those in the diaspora.

Often depicting domestic settings, Accra-based artists Cornelius Annor and Nana Bruce investigate contemporary ideas of love, whereby both artists' use of visual layering emphasises the gradual formation of relationships. Staging the home as a contemporary arena, Bruce portrays his observations of the beginnings of love, oftentimes drawing from both online and offline experiences of present-day Ghanaian society. Contrasted by his signature, densely-layered acrylic to canvas application, Bruce's subjects are cast in an intimate and tender light, suggesting that the real representation of home is found within the individual.

In a nod to Bruce's introspective approach, Annor, known for his portrayal of familial scenes, focuses on dance as a natural expression of love. Using colorful, traditional textiles and the depiction of uniform, Afro-hairstyles, Annor's illumination of culture, industry and craftsmanship in his work, *Ma wo nsa so di asa (Raise your leg and dance)* (2023), subtly reveals the significance of visual, regional symbols in producing a sense of familiarity within a community.

In tandem, these artists, who are situated in two of the most vibrant art capitals in West Africa, present a multifaceted vision of home, weaving together personal narratives and blurring the line between private space and public discourse.

Omenai Gallery invites viewers to be a part of the dialogue **with an exclusive artist talk with exhibiting artist, Orry Shenjobi**, taking place in the gallery's space on **5 October, 2pm - 4pm (CST)**. **The exhibition coincides with Chicago Exhibition Weekend, October 3-6**, marking the gallery's first participation in the city's burgeoning arts programme.

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For any media enquiries, please contact press@omenaigallery.com

Press kit found [here](#)

Notes to Editors

About Omenai Gallery Omenai Gallery launched in 2024, directed by OMENAI Founder and CEO Gbenro Adeyemo. Omenai Gallery is committed to forwarding the OMENAI brand's overall mission by platforming contemporary African art into the physical, cultural landscape - engaging in thoughtful partnerships and collaborations to continue serving artists from the African continent and diaspora by presenting their works to new audiences.

OMENAI was first launched in 2021 as a social media and digital editorial platform, aimed at democratizing global access to the contemporary African art market. Providing transnational industry news and insights, OMENAI quickly carved its identity as an active support system for budding artists, galleries, collectors, and enthusiasts and continues to serve as a nexus of activity in the sector.

About Cornelius Annor Inspired by key artistic figures such as Samuel Fosso, Malick Sidibé, and Yinka Shonibare, who were active during the 20th Century, **Cornelius Annor (b. 1990)** plays with history and temporality in his compositions, incorporating objects and clothes from different periods of time. Born and based in Accra, Ghana to a family of artists, Cornelius Annor started painting at a very young age, largely influenced by his sculptor father.

He completed his studies in fine art at the Ghanatta Art and Design Institute, along with fellow alumni Amoako Boafo, and Otis Quiacoe and Kwesi Botchway, who collectively represent a vanguard of West African artists. Annor established 'C. Annor studio' in his hometown, a space dedicated to encouraging and supporting young talents and emerging artists. His work has been extensively exhibited throughout West

Africa and in the United States, and recently was acquired by the Norton Museum of Art, Florida and the Brooklyn Museum, New York.

About Orry Shenjobi Orry Shenjobi (b.1997) , a multi-disciplinary artist and the Creative Director of Studio ORRY, creates art that transcends the boundaries of conventional artistic expression. Her work is an immersive journey into the intricacies of individualistic identity, masterfully crafted using a diverse range of materials and techniques.

With a degree in Product Design from the University of Leeds and an MA in Social Innovation and Sustainable Futures from UAL, Shenjobi brings a unique blend of creativity and social consciousness to her art. Her specialties encompass the realms of mixed media paintings and product design, forming the foundation upon which her artistic vision thrives. Shenjobi's work delves into individualistic identity and community dynamics, capturing everyday life within diverse communities. Her body of work *A wà ñbè : A Celebration of Community and Culture* is currently being exhibited at the Venice Biennale, on view at Palazzo Mora as part of the European Cultural Centre's 'Personal Structures' presentation.

About Olamide Ogunade Olamide Ogunade Olisco (b. 1996, Ogun State, Nigeria) studied Fine Art at Yaba College of Technology in Lagos, Nigeria. He has exhibited in several group exhibitions in Lagos and Ogun state as well as internationally. Fusing bold colours and prints to convey a uniquely West African identity, Ogunade uses the canvas to open discourses around individualism, beauty and race.

His works have been exhibited across galleries in Cape Town, Barcelona, Sweden and Luxembourg, major art fairs such as Frieze London, and belong to private collections in Burkina Faso, Austria, USA, Germany, France and Sweden.

About Nana Bruce Nana Bruce (b. 1988) currently lives and works in Accra, Ghana, where he grew up. Majoring in Painting as a student at the Ghanatta College of Art and Design, he graduated in 2012 and has developed his focus on recording, documenting and discussing the sociocultural and economical landscape of Accra, and other parts of Ghana. Through interactions in spirited markets, public transport and the large crowds, as well as his experiences sur ng through social media, he unearths the contemporary and cosmopolitan trends in his homeland that form the philosophy of his painted scenes in a style he calls Contemporary Impressionism.

The artist recently completed a residency at the Accra-located Gallery 1957, where he later presented recent works in a solo exhibition.