

# AMARACHI OKAFOR (Orie)

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Born, 1977, Umuahia, Nigeria  
Lives and works in Abuja, Nig.  
[amara@oriestudio.art](mailto:amara@oriestudio.art)

## EXPERIENCE

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- 2002 – present Studio art practice
- 2009 – 2013 Institutional curatorial positions. Curatorial Studies.  
Institutional Exhibitions and art projects (non-profit and alternative spaces)

## EDUCATION

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- 2011 – 2012 **MA CURATORIAL PRACTICE** (Curating Contemporary Art)  
**Falmouth University, Cornwall, UK**
- 2004 – 2006 **MFA SCULPTURE** (with El Anatsui)  
**University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN)**
- 1998 – 2002 **BA HONS.** (Painting, Major)  
**University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN)**
- 2017 **KLEIN ARTIST WORKS (KAW 20, SPRING 2017)**  
Professional development

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 Special Solo Feature at the Abuja Art Fair, 1.0, The Exhibition Pavilion, Abuja  
Theme *Amarachi Okafor: She Laughs at the Future*
- 2022 *Announcing Beauty, Mercy, Kindness, and Love*, Red Door Gallery, Lagos
- 2021 *The Colour of Our Hearts is the Colour of Our City*, Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos

- 2020 *The Colour of Our Heats is the Colour of Our City*, Thought Pyramid Art Centre, Abuja
- 2019 *I Am the Light*, a multi-dimensional public art project (taking art to new audiences) carried out in collaboration with children and teens of Catholic Church of the Assumption, at an 'alternative space' (Divine Mercy School), Asokoro-Abuja
- 2015 *I Learnt This*, A Public Art Intervention in 3 public locations (schools) in Jogjakarta, Indonesia. A collaborative and interactive art with the public
- 2014 *Ask Yourself*, A Public Art Intervention in 4 public locations in Abuja. A collaborative interactive art with the public and with other artists
- 2009 *Seven Days Live Art*, Presentation of art pieces daily, at multiple variant locations, in Dalsasen, Dale I Sunnfjord, Norway
- Open Studio to work in Progress*, Nkd Dalsasen, Dale I Sunnfjord, Norway
- 2008 *Africa West*, Oriel Mostyn Gallery Llandudno Wales, UK
- 2007 Europe at Financial Times, Babel Art Gallery, Trondheim. Norway
- Open Studio*, Lademoen Kunstnerverksteder, Norway

## **GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

- 2026 *International Sculpture Centre /Artsy Exhibition*  
Online
- Just Because the Lizard Nods His Head Doesn't Mean He is 2025*, Abuja Open House in Agreement, curated by Ifesinachi Comedy Nwanyanwu, Kolanut Gallery, 2 Ajayi Crowther Street, Asokoro, Abuja
- 2025 *Abuja Art Fair, 1.0*, The Exhibition Pavilion, Abuja
- In Between* an 'Abuja Open House' exhibition, The Nordic, Abuja
- Westbund Art & Design (Fair), 2025* with ShanghART Gallery, Booth No. 1C03, West Bund International Convention & Exhibition Centre, Shanghai, China

- International Sculpture Centre Exhibition/Artsy Artist Exhibition Online*
- 2024 *All The Images Will Disappear, co-curated by Philippe Pirotte and ShanghART Gallery, ShanghART WB Central, Shanghai, China*
- Slant: Perspectives on Sculpture, a Juried exhibition of Artsy and the ISC, Gallery 14C, Jersey City, NJ, USA*
- International Sculpture Centre Exhibition/Artsy Exhibition Online*
- 2023 *Stones Last A Wee Bit Longer (Dusk Art Festival, 2023, The CERA Project), a touring project –Portugal, Spain, Alba-Scotland, Iceland, Nigeria*
- Krisis (Art Theorema #3), Gallerie delle Prigioni, Treviso, Italy*
- 2021 *The Invincible Hands, Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art, Pan-Atlantic University, Lagos*
- My Super Power, Blue Door Art Center, Yonkers, NY, USA*
- Off The Wall, Blue Door Art Center, Yonkers, NY, USA*
- 13th Annual Juried Member Exhibition and Contest, Blue Door Art Center, Yonkers, NY, USA*
- 2020 *Summer Blues, Blue Door Art Center, Yonkers, NY, USA*
- 2018 *LineGuage: Textual Imagery/Linear Allegory, Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos*
- 2017 *Colourful Africa, MOESHEN contemporary art gallery, Penthouse Floor, Zen Building, Life Camp, Abuja*
- Nkoli Ka (Nsukka School after 5 years) - a touring exhibition-UNN, Nsukka; Abuja; Lagos*
- 2015 *Hacking Conflict (Equator #3), Biennale Jogjakarta, Jogjakarta, Indonesia*
- Anya Fulu Ugo, Exhibition in honour of El Anatsui & Obiora Udechukwu, University of Nigeria, Nsukka*
- 2014 *Nigeria / Roots, Contemporary Artists from Nigeria, Gallerie delle Prigioni, Treviso, Italy*

- National Art Competition*, An African Artists Foundation exhibition. Lagos
- Together Again*, An exhibition of the National Gallery of Art, Nigeria, Kaduna
- Playing With Chance*, Showing El Anatsui archives and the works of his female mentees, CCA Lagos
- 2013 *From Within*, An Art Fair of the National Gallery of Art, Kaduna
- 2012 *We Face Forward: Art from West Africa Today*, a cultural Olympiad exhibition of the London 2012 Olympic, Manchester Art Gallery, UK
- 2010 *I am Bahamian. I eat Conch Salad*, an art experience/intervention with visual artists and fashion designers-The Hub Gallery, Nassau, The Bahamas
- RAVY (Rencontres D'arts Visuels De Yaoundé)*, Festival. Yaoundé-Cameroun
- 2009 *FIAC Alger 2009*, The 1st International Festival of Contemporary Art of Algiers, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Algiers
- International Art Expo Nigeria 2009* [with Joe Musa Gallery], National Museum, Onikan, Lagos
- 2008 *ARESUVA 2008*, International Conference Centre, Abuja, Nigeria
- Experimental frontiers: Society Through the Eyes of South African and Nigerian Artists*, Vansa Western Cape Space, South Africa, curated by Okechukwu Nwafor
- Art 4*: Channel Four Television Corporation, London, UK
- 2007 *Guest Artists' Open Studio*, Lademoen Kunstnerverksteder Trondheim, Norway
- MFA Graduation Exhibition*, Department of Fine & Applied Arts, University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN)
- Make-Op/Zombification (Performing Anthropology)*  
*Interdisciplinary Theatre Performance*, practical workshop, and presentation. Goethe-Institut Lagos, Nigeria
- 2006 *20th Century Art: a Story from Nigeria*, an 'Off Show' at Dak'Art 2006, Cheikh Anta Diop University, Dakar-Senegal

- 2004                    *Afrika Heritage 2004*, a Pan African Circle of Artists (PACA),  
Exhibition, French Cultural Centre, Enugu
- Visual Orchestra*, French Cultural Centre, Enugu
- 2003                    *Heritage*, an FCT Council for Arts and Culture exhibition, FCT,  
Abuja
- 2002                    *Women in Art Exhibition*, A National Gallery of Modern Art  
Exhibition, National Gallery of Modern Art, Lagos
- Exhibition organized by Chinze Art Place Abuja Sheraton Hotel,  
Abuja
- Heritage*, FCT Council for Arts and Culture, FCT Abuja
- BA Hons. Award Exhibition, Department of Fine & Applied Arts,  
University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN)
- Artytude*, an association of Fine Arts Students exhibition, Art  
Theatre, UNN
- 2001                    *Women in Art exhibition*, FCT Council for Arts and Culture, Abuja
- Footprints*, Ana Gallery, UNN

## **GRANTS, AWARDS AND OTHER DISTINCTIONS**

- 2017                    Scholarship from *Klein Artist Works*, Chicago, USA  
-to attend KAW for professional artistic development
- 2015                    Grant from the Yayasan Biennale Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2014                    (Jury Prize), African Artists Foundation *National Art Competition*  
- To challenge artists and encourage professional art practice
- 2012                    Grant Award to graduating MA Art student, *Falmouth University*,  
*UK*  
- supported my internship/Work experience at October Gallery  
London
- 2009                    *Commonwealth Connections 2009* – A Commonwealth Foundation  
Award for artistic excellence  
-To enhance professional development, motivate/build networks  
and explore art in another Commonwealth country

- 2008                    *ARESUVA*, an exhibition and Grant award from the National Gallery of Art (Nigeria), for the first 'African Regional Summit and Exhibition on Visual Arts' (*ARESUVA*) '08, Abuja-Nigeria  
-To facilitate the commission/participation in the exhibition as an artist
- 2007                    *UNESCO Aschberg* artists award for artistic excellence in Art

## **RESIDENCIES**

- 2015                    Residency from the Yayasan Biennale Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2010                    Popopstudios Centre for the Visual Arts, Nassau, Bahamas, funded by the Commonwealth Foundation, London
- 2009                    Nkd (Nordisk Kunstnarsenter Dalsåsen), Norway, Grant and Residency from Nkd
- 2007                    Lademoen Kunstnerverksteder Trondheim, Norway, Residency by Grant from the United Nations and the Trondheim Kommune
- 2004                    Aina Onabolu Studios, National Gallery of Art Lagos, Nigeria, funded by the National Gallery of Art, Lagos

## **SELECTED PRESS**

## **PUBLICATIONS**

- 2022                    *The Colour of our Hearts is the Colour of our City- Lagos City*, a book documenting the same exhibition. Published in the UK by Orie Studio
- 2021                    *Ask Yourself*, a book based on the 2014 project *Ask Yourself* [see Independent Curatorial Projects]. Published in Nigeria by Orie Studio
- 2020                    *The Colour of our Hearts is the Colour of our City- Abuja City*, a book documenting the same exhibition. Published in Nigeria by Orie Studio

- 2019 *I Learnt This Film*, a documentary based on the 2015 project *I Learnt This* [see Individual Exhibitions]. Produced in Nigeria by Ori Studio
- Ask Yourself Film*, a documentary based on the 2014 project *Ask Yourself* [see Independent Curatorial Projects]. Produced in Nigeria by Ori Studio
- 2012 *I am Bahamian. I eat Conch Salad*, a book documenting the exhibition/art intervention (featuring an essay [*Questioning the Canon: Art and the Museum's Social Responsibility*] by Frank Ugiomoh) Published in the UK by Ori Studio

## **SELECTED COLLECTIONS**

## **SELECTED CURATORIAL EXPERIENCE**

- 2024 *Appointment, Curator, Life In My City Art Festival (LIMCAF), Humanism*
- Art handling/Installation team support & Deinstallation team support [El Anatsui's] *Logoligi Logarithm* at the Diriya Biennale, Diriya, Saudi Arabia
- 2023 Art handling/Installation Manager, [Bright Eke's] *Heavy Clouds* at the 'Net Zero' Exhibition, King Abdulhaziz Centre for World Culture (Ithra), Aramco, Saudi Arabia
- 2024 *Appointment, Curator, Life In My City Art Festival (LIMCAF), Humanism*
- Art handling/Installation team support & Deinstallation team support [El Anatsui's] *Logoligi Logarithm* at the Diriya Biennale, Diriya, Saudi Arabia
- 2023 Art handling/Installation Manager, [Bright Eke's] *Heavy Clouds* at the 'Net Zero' Exhibition, King Abdulhaziz Centre for World Culture (Ithra), Aramco, Saudi Arabia
- Appointment, Curator, Life In My City Art Festival (LIMCAF), Fix It*
- 2021 *Appointment, International Commissioner (for Africa), Gangwon Triennial, 2021, Revitalization 1 «Tanyak» (Ammunition maintenance plant)*, Gangwon Art & Culture Foundation, Republic of Korea

- 2017 – 2020 Appointment, to support the exhibition project (preparation to Installation/Deinstallation) *El Anatsui: Triumphant Scale*, Curated by Okwui Enwezor and Chika Okeke-Agulu, curatorial assistant Damian Lentini [Haus der Kunst]
- 2019 Curated *I Am the Light*, a multidisciplinary public art intervention that took place with children and teens, in collaboration with the Catholic Church of Assumption Asokoro, Abuja. (self-initiative)
- 2018 Organised *Orie Studio hand paper-making workshop* (self-initiative)
- 2014 Curated *Ask Yourself*, a multidisciplinary public art intervention that took place through eight weeks in four public locations in the city of Abuja. *Ask Yourself* at its' first exposition worked actively with approximately 400 people as collaborators, assistants, volunteers and participants of the intervention. (self-initiative)
- 2012 Co-curator *Scattered Plots & Routes We Take*, A solo exhibition by international artist Katja Davar, Newlyn Art Gallery and The Exchange, Cornwall
- Gallery Assistant, October Gallery London (Internship)
- Project assistant to the organizing team of the *Penzance Convention*, 2012
- Jerwood Drawing Prize 2012* by Parker Harris contemporary visual art specialists (Falmouth University Submission Center)
- 2012 - 2015 Senior Curator, at *National Gallery of Art (NGA), Nigeria* (Full time)
- 2008 - 2012 Curatorial Assistant, at *National Gallery of Art (NGA), Nigeria* (Full time)
- 2010 Artist-Curator *I am Bahamian. I eat Conch Salad* An experimental intervention in collaboration with [eight] fashion designers and visual artists, The Hub Gallery, Nassau, The Bahamas [self-initiative]
- On the documentation team responsible for providing information on the National Collection [NGA HQ, Abuja]; worked with a curatorial team to produce gallery projects [NGA HQ, Abuja]. Some of my projects include:
- Curatorial Assistant, '*The March of History; Evolution of the Nigerian Nation: Trials and Triumphs*, Nigeria's 50th Independence Anniversary photo exhibition 1960-2010' (National Gallery of Art, Abuja)  
[Coordinated final phase of all research work and documentation, co-prepared interpretation texts, co-curated exhibition space]

- 2008 Curatorial Assistant, first African Regional Summit and Exhibition on Visual Arts (*ARESUVA*) 2008, Abuja-Nigeria [Coordinated documentation for the project, co-curated the exhibition installation at the space]
- Collaborative Anthropological Field Project *Shared Perspectives*, a cross-cultural research study of 'Mbari Owerri' (with British artist Kate Parsons), Imo State Nigeria [self-initiative]
- Organised Artist Talks during the period at Council for Arts and Culture Abuja; University of Nigeria Nsukka for Dr. Kate Parsons (British artist and collaborator in *Shared Perspectives*) [self-initiative]

### **OTHER ADMIN/CURATORIAL. EXPERIENCE**

- 2023 Jury member, 7<sup>th</sup> National Visual Art Competition (Abuja, Cyprain Ekwensi Cultural Centre)
- 2022 Jury member, Life In My City Art Festival (LIMCAF) 2022, Nigeria [Abuja Zone]
- 2017 Jury member, LIMCAF 2017, Abuja Zonal Jury
- Jury member, LIMCAF 2017, National Jury Board
- 2016 Jury member, LIMCAF 2016, Abuja Zonal Jury
- 2015 Jury member, Spanish Art Competition, Abuja
- Jury member, Children Art Competition, Korean Cultural Centre, Abuja
- 2011 - 2015 Committee member, National Gallery of Art Grants Committee
- Committee member, National Gallery of Art, Art Magazine (*Artivity*)
- 2014 Jury member, National Gallery of Art - Abuja, National Art Competition
- 2008 *ARESUVA 2008* - a project of National Gallery of Art, Nigeria. I was the registrar for this exhibition, by appointment, and a curatorial assistant on the exhibition team
- 2002 Co-Ordinator, Platoon Theatre Group, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Orientation Camp, Bauchi
- Involved in theatre programs/acting, broadening my artistic sensibilities
- 2002 - 2003 Art Teacher, Command Day Secondary School, 33 FAB Shadawanka Barracks, Bauchi (an NYSC primary assignment)

- 1999 - 2000 Studio Assistant, El Anatsui Studio, Nsukka, Nigeria
- 1999 Intern, El Anatsui Studio, Nsukka, Nigeria  
- Assisted to facilitate work in the artist's studio, adapting to professional studio art practice

## **ARTIST TALKS, LECTURES & WORKSHOPS**

- 2025 *Holding the Centre: Art, Belonging, and the Power to Stay*, part of a series of events for Artistier Art Week, Amarachi Okafor, Obi Nwaegbe and Obinna Makata, three leading contemporary painters, whose practices are deeply rooted in Nigeria, in conversation to explore art as a centripetal force in the face of "Japa", the growing desire for migration among young Nigerians.
- Surviving Your Originality: Staying True as an Installation Artist*, part of the 'Mentoring Moments' program organised as part of the Abuja Art Fair, 1.0, 2025
- From Vision to Creation: Structuring Your Artistic Workflow*, 'The Artist's Path' Masterclass organised by Artistier, Abuja
- 2023 *The Professional Value of Good Art Presentation*, 'Made in Nigeria Masterclass', a program of lectures, workshops and exchanges facilitated by Artistier, Abuja and the Nigerian-German Centre for jobs, migration and reintegration
- 2021 *The Colour of Lagos*, in conversation (over zoom) with Amarachi Okafor, Uche Okpa Iroha, Gerald Chukwuma and Oyindamola Fakeye, by CCA, Lagos and moderated by Emmanuel Ndefo
- 2018 *Orie Studio hand paper-making workshop, 2018, a hands-on art project of making art paper with indigenous materials, in collaboration with visiting artists from New Jersey, USA; Art Teachers Association, Nigeria (AVATIN), JSS Guduwa, Abuja; GSS Garki, Abuja*
- 2017 *The Power of Cultural Diplomacy: Cross cultural engagements - 'Identities of a female African Artist'*, a Society of Nigerian Artists Abuja & Embassy of USA in Nig., city-wide-exhibition project and panel discussion [ 'Abuja Unlocked....Discovering Art Spaces' ], Abuja
- 2015 *I Learnt This*, a multi-dimensional art intervention, discussion, teaching and workshop series, at 4 venues in Jogjakarta Indonesia

- Workshop and Discussion with women artists working in craft and with 'sewing' as a process, Kedai Kebun Forum (KKF), Jogjakarta, Indonesia
- 2014 *Ask Yourself*, a multi-dimensional art intervention, discussions, teaching and workshop series, at 4 venues in Abuja Nigeria
- 2013 *WORKSHOP WITH AMARACHI OKAFOR. Thinking About Exhibitions: on art exhibitions and the curatorial role*, A 5-day capacity building training/workshop, to curatorial Department staff, NGA, Abuja
- 2012 *In Conversation* (with Lucy Azubuike, Amarachi Okafor, Victorian Udondian, and Curator Gabriella Salgado), Tiwani Contemporary London
- 2011 *The Artist-Curator*, an artist-curator Talk presented by Amarachi Okafor, to the Curatorial Dept., National Gallery of Art, Abuja
- Development Dialogue for Capacity Enhancement*, A Capacity Building Training Workshop, organized by NGA Abuja
- 2010 *Schooner Bay Art Symposium*, Schooner Bay, Abaco, The Bahamas
- Artist Talk*, Popopstudios centre for the Visual Arts, Nassau, The Bahamas
- Art Workshop for Children, with Antonius Roberts and Amarachi Okafor, in collaboration with Aids Foundation, Nassau, The Bahamas
- 2007 *Performing Anthropology Workshop*- Interdisciplinary Theatre practice workshop, Goethe-Institut Lagos, Nigeria
- Artist Talk, Spike Island Studios, Bristol, UK
- Artist Talk, Weston College/Bath Spa University, W-S-M, UK
- Artist Talk, Kuumba project, St.Paul's, Bristol, UK

### **SELECT (KEY) CONFERENCES ATTENDED**

- 2015 *Anya Fulu Ugo*, Faculty of Arts, UNN, Nigeria
- 2012 *The Penzance Convention, Penzance, Cornwall* (Theme: *Extraction*)
- 2011 Finale Symposium for British Art Show 7: *In the Days of the Comet* (Theme: *Precarious Times*- Symposium and PhD Workshop)
- 2009 *First International Festival of Contemporary Art* at Musee d'art Moderne et Contemporain, Alger, Algeria. Themes discussed:
- l'art au cœur des conflits idéologiques.
  - l'art Contemporain, environnement et flux migratoires.

- le marché de l'art entre le nord et le sud

- 2007 *Why Sculpture, Why Here: exploring global contexts of contemporary sculpture*, INIVA (Institute of International Visual Artists) London
- Think with the Senses, Feel with the Mind: Art in the Present Tense* Venice Biennial 2007, a press preview and critique
- 2005 *AHAN (Association of Art Historians of Nigeria) Conference*, UNN, Nigeria

## PROFILE

Institutionally-oriented artist making quirky innovative artworks investigating human actions in society. Using diverse materials, I am examining the concept of use and the history in(used) things through Painting Sculpture and Installation

## SKILLS

- Organizing and caring for objects and spaces
- Tenacity and care
- Attention to detail
- Critical thinking/Critical Context
- Research, Writing

## EXPERTISE

- Curatorial: Exhibitions Management
- Advisory: Studio Management
- Advisory: Collections Management
- Advisory: Documentation and Archiving
- Art Handling – Institutional