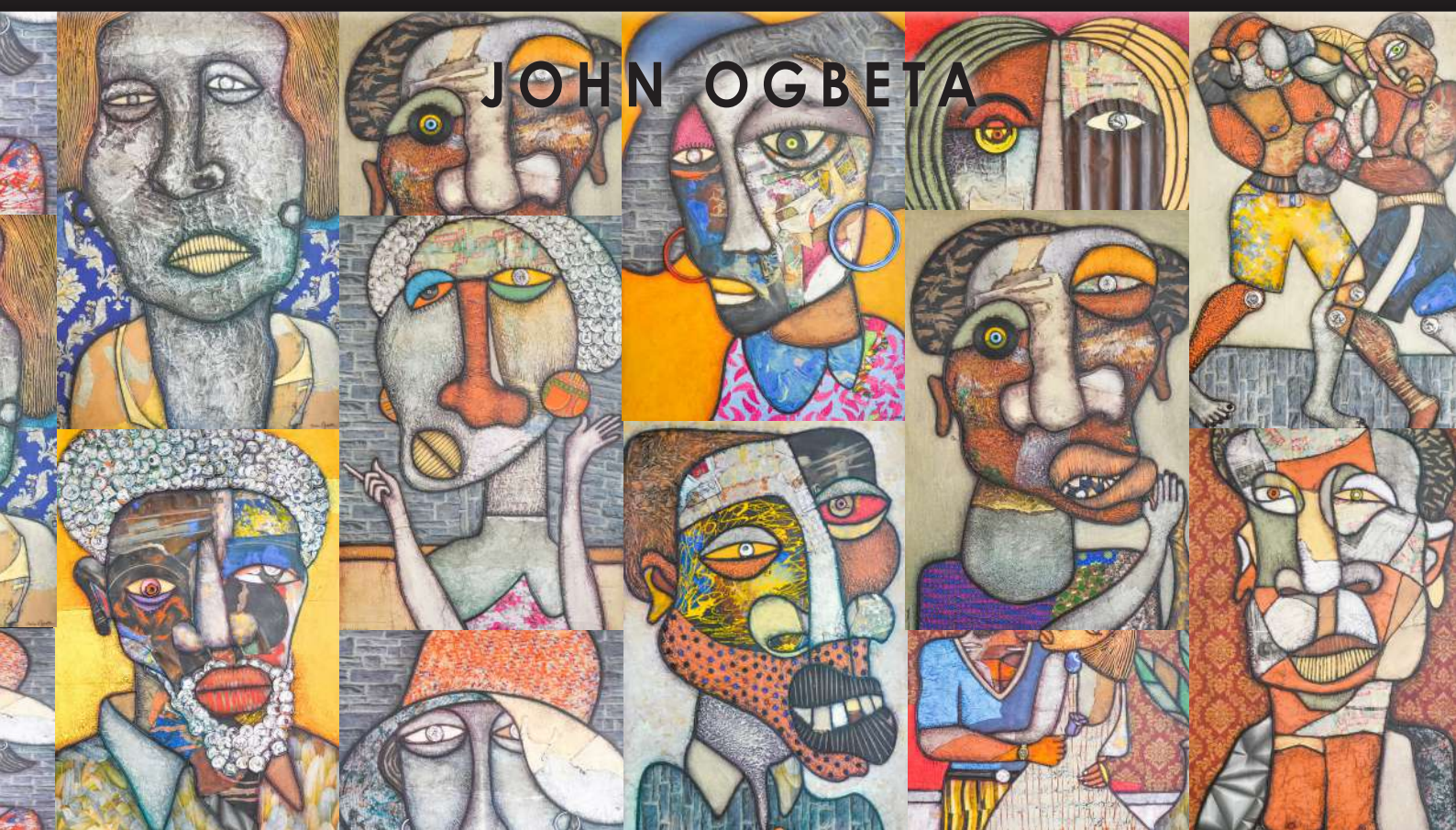


HYSTERIA



JOHN OGBETA

SIGNATURE BEYOND ART GALLERY

Present

HYSTERIA

BY

JOHN OGBETA

11th of September - 25th of September 2021

Time : 09:00am - 05:00PM

FOREWORD

Once a collector said to me, "Hey, I am tired of seeing too many heads and faces in exhibitions" and I replied "wait till you see John Ogbeta's renditions of heads" , his use of bold lines, bright colours, found objects as collage and textures to depict the facial expressions, in a way to remind us that every face tells a story, hidden in this stories are various kinds of emotions which are results of how we respond to the challenges of life.

Our identities as humans are boldly represented in most of the featured works in this exhibition which I suppose is John Ogbeta's third Solo exhibition. Our identity is shaped by how we respond to events in our environment. In Ogbeta's works, you can agree with me that he was able to do justice to the paintings by playing with our feelings. The facial expressions on the faces, the interplay of colours with imposing textures formed with objects attest to the full understanding of his craft. As the theme of the exhibition goes – "Hysteria" one can deduce that the artist has a good knowledge of what is art, the major role of the artist in society which is to use his paintings to better the world, to create feelings and to remind us of the need to be mindful of our emotions plus our mental health.

Hysteria brings to mind the recent campaign on mental health, this campaign has gained so much mileage, no thanks to bad governance across the globe, the pandemic and the lackadaisical attitude of the political class most especially in our dear country Nigeria, if we still have a country. The titles suggests all the actions that originates from the after effects of mental challenges which are caused by the socio-economic and socio-political imbalance in our country today, such titles as "Red Eye" is an expression of the rise in domestic violence, "The Big Bout" and "Scared as Hell" reminds us of Police brutality and insecurity.

John Ogbeta has evolved from the year of my Youth Service days in 1991 at the Federal Polytechnic Auchi, Edo state. I met him as a student in my Sculpture class then in Lagos as an active member of ArtZero Group, he participated in all our signature exhibitions "ART ON THE MAINLAND". Artzero as a platform was instrumental to the success of lots of artist in his generation. Every artist has a story to tell from their early struggling years to their mid-career toughest years, to when they can now relax as established artists. John Ogbeta has paid his dues and his life experience is common with the average Nigerian citizens as highly reflected on all the works in this exhibition.

Having a style and being original is a big challenge to lots of artists in this clime, the great artist of blessed memory Ben Osaghae, who was Ogbeta's lecturer once wrote an acticle that was published in Position Magazine many years ago on the subject of lack of creativity and originality among artist in Nigeria. That paper was titled "Creative Drought in Nigerian Arts", there is no gain saying that Ogbeta with some other artist who are influenced by Ben Osaghae's ideology and approach to art practice that changed the narrative, as evident in the featured works.

As we all say a big congratulations to John Ogbeta for his resilient Nigerian spirit and for keeping up the spirit of creativity in his life, I humbly welcome you all to enjoy the exhibition.

Ato Arinze
Sculptor/Patter
August, 2021.

INTRODUCTION

To write on artwork is a complex undertaking that requires more skills than just being an art lover or an artist. This is because Art elicits myriad interpretations and reactions from each individual. I am not yet in that class of persons, renowned in the criticism of art, what I am, however, is a creator, observer, admirer, and as well a continuous student of the arts. It is with honour and a sense of trepidation that I embark on the task bestowed on me by my good friend John Ogbeta.

For better appreciation and understanding of his thoughts, while conceiving and creating these works of art, I sought to uncover his motivation. According to the artist, he strives to express via the use of repurposed materials and colours, basically to express the socio-economic existence of the Nigerian - reflecting the resilient strength and hope in their attitudes even in the face of grinding poverty and hardships.

"Hysteria", his chosen title for the exhibition, points to the state of the Nigerian existence cum the leadership processes where a small group of people have seized the mantle to rule over several years without noticeable improvements in the standard of living of the citizenry. It is however not his intention to dwell on the political but his purpose is to highlight the pervading mood of a troubled hope which is prevalent in the psyche of most Nigerians by his use and manipulation of found materials and colours, not forgetting the fact that he's a graduate of the renowned colourists school of Auchi polytechnic.

In his paintings, his palette is refreshing, ranging from cool to warm, and bright where appropriate. There is a feeling of tranquil submission in some of the postures of the forms and figures depicting submission to forces that can't be fought but with a prevailing sense of angst in the air. John has succeeded in elevating simple domestic circumstances into beautiful works of art by the use of colours and found objects to create timeless artworks here, which will succeed in tilting our senses, eyes, and imagination. In my opinion, the artist is making a statement that art can be simplistic, uncomplicated, and on-point. Art is for Art's sake. The artist has a deep understanding of the colour spectrum and his ability to manipulate this knowledge is echoed in his works. Apart from the paintings in mixed media, the artist also exhibits drawing as an indicative sound foundation as the most important weapon in the artist's arsenal! There is no art without drawing and John Ogbeta has grasped the importance of the fact.

Joe Essien

(Painter, Art consultant)
- August 2021.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My profound gratitude and immense appreciation goes out to Mr. Rahman Akar of Signature Gallery for his unrelenting encouragements, constant steadfastness, unwavering fierceness and positive criticisms of my crafts towards making sure I turn out a better artist.
He is the man that opened my eyes to realising the fact that "less is more and more is less" and I agree, absolutely.

Special thanks to His Royal Majesty Kabiyesi Jacob Babadiya Oyebola Esan III (The Oba Gbegbaaje III of Ijinmo-jesa) The Onijinmo of Ijinmoland for his allround support and interest in my art journey.

Thanks to Mr. Lateef Aremu and other staff of Signature Gallery for their support and love. It would be incomplete not to mention Mr. Ato Arinze and Mr. Joe Essien for their massive contributions towards making this exhibition a success.

All thanks to God Almighty for making all these possible. God bless you all abundantly.

ABOUT THE ARTIST



JOHN Ogbeta (Mixed Media Artist and Painter). Born on the 25th of September 1971 in Lagos. Attended Auchi Polytechnic where he obtained (O.N.D.) Ordinary National Diploma and (H.N.D.) Higher National Diploma respectively and majored in painting - 1992/98.

John has featured in a number of Group Exhibitions and international shows. John's works can be found in major collections in West Africa, Europe, Australia and North America. He currently lives and works in Lagos, Nigeria as a full time Studio artist.

John's style is known for its expressive quality and decorative patterns. His works elevates the formal status of painting by combining various elements like jute, rope, plastic, coloured fabrics, foil and other found objects. The result is hard edge relief base that defines carefully his subjects. His particular use of mixed media has set him aside and created a path that is uniquely his.
He is also a member of Society of Nigerian Artists (SNA), Lagos Chapter.

EXHIBITIONS

1. An Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by John Ogbeta. Esseff Clothiers, Awolowo Road, Ikoyi, Lagos. April, 2000.
2. Strings of Love by John Ogbeta. Henrimoweta gallery, Anthony Village, Lagos. 8th-15th December, 2007.
3. Art/Photo Exhibition. Kebana Consults and Heart of Gold Hospices, Lagos. 24th-1st April, 2007.
4. Cultures Art exhibition. Henrimoweta gallery, Anthony Village, Lagos. 22nd-29th June, 2007.
5. Art on the Mainland - An exhibition of paintings, sculptures, drawings and prints. Artzero Group. National Council for Arts & Crafts, Red Brick Building. National Theatre, Iganmu, Lagos. 30th March, 2008.
6. Generational Statement. An exhibition of Modern Nigerian art. Thought Pyramid Abuja. 23rd June, 2010.
7. New Conversations. Modern and contemporary art. Thought Pyramid. Abuja 2014.
8. An Exhibition of 21 finest works by John Ogbeta. Henrimoweta gallery. 17th-24th December, 2015.
9. Experience Nigeria Art show. African Resource Centre. December 2015.
10. Two Feathers. Nike Art Gallery, Lekki, Lagos. 8th October, 2016
11. Art Vancouver Art Fair. Vancouver Convention Centre East, Exhibition Hall B 999 Canada place, Vancouver BC. 26th-29th May, 2016.
12. 16th Annual Pastel Exhibition, Mydrim Gallery, Ikoyi, Lagos. 2nd-16th December, 2016.
13. October Rain Art Exhibition (Society of Nigerian Artists), Nike Art Gallery, Lekki, Lagos. 2016.
14. October Rain Art Exhibition (Society of Nigerian Artists), National Museum, Onikan, Lagos. 2017.
15. Affordable Art Fair. Mydrim Gallery, Ikoyi, Lagos. 12th April, 2017.
16. Art Vancouver Art Fair. Vancouver Convention Centre East, Exhibition Hall B 999 Canada place. 25th-28th May, 2017.
17. Fusion Art & Wine - An Exhibition of Paintings and Sculptures, Lacour Hotels. 3, Cooper Road, Ikoyi, Lagos. 17th February, 2018.
18. Engaging Expressions. Weave & Co. Gallery. Moorhouse Hotel, Ikoyi, Lagos. 23rd June, 2018.
19. October Rain Art Exhibition (Society of Nigerian Artists), Thought Pyramid Art Gallery, Ikoyi, Lagos. 2018
20. October Rain Art Exhibition (Society of Nigerian Artists), Freedom Park, Lagos. 2019
21. Eko ART EXPO, EKO HOTEL, LAGOS. 27th-29th January, 2017.
22. Art X Fair Lagos - 2018.

AUCTIONS

- SOGAL Art Auction, Lagos, Nigeria. 2020.
- SOGAL Art Auction, Lagos, Nigeria. 2019.
- SOGAL Art Auction, Lagos, Nigeria. March 2016.
- TKMG Lagos art auction. July 2018.
- TKMG Lagos art auction. April 2016.
- TKMG Lagos art auction. May 2015.

PUBLICATIONS

- CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN ART in Lagos private collections. (New trees in an old forest) edited by Jess Castellote.
- Global Excellence Magazine. May, 2000.

"Art is my life" - John Ogbeta.

- Daily Sun Newspaper, January 3, 2007.

"Each Paintings I make is like a baby safely delivered" - John Ogbeta.
Interviewed by Lukmon Busari.

- Daily Sun Newspaper. January 2, 2008.

Lure of Womanhood in "Strings of love"
Interviewed by Ola Balogun.

- EliteGen SingTao Magazine,

Vancouver, Canada May/June, 2017.

- Thisday, The Sunday Newspaper,

"Converging Perspectives at The Moorhouse". June 24, 2018.

- The Nation Newspaper,

"Engaging Expressions holds at Moorhouse, Ikoyi, Lagos. 4th July, 2018

- Leadership Newspaper, August 8, 2018.

John Ogbeta, Prof. Bruce Onobrakpeya, Mufu Onifade, others showcase Designs at Art Auction event.

AWARDS

- Distinguished artists award.

December 23, 2017
By SNA, Lagos Chapter (Society of Nigerian Artists)

- Certificate of Recognition

(Mentorship Program) Art Arise, August, 2017
Organised by Homes & Landscapes, Lagos.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Re-creation is the essence of my existence.

GALLERY STATEMENT

We are very excited to invite you to our upcoming exhibition “Hysteria” by John Ogbeta. John is a mixed media artist that uses recycled objects (jute, rope, fabric) for his works on board. He is an internationally renowned artist and has featured in a number of group exhibitions.

Hysteria focuses on mental health and the effect of mental challenges caused by socio-economic and socio-political imbalances with each work depicting the power of art.

We look forward to seeing you all!

POEM:
Tyranny
Reign of terror upon my people
Yet we mope and stare
In full glare of day light
As though nothing is amiss

Stripes of whip
adorn our bare backsides
like decorations on terra-cotta
Humiliating!

We startle and tremble at the mere
mention of the emperor’s name
Yet again we keep our mouths closed
and weep in our hearts instead

Brawls and big bouts consistently occur
between the people and the leaders
but my people are always dispersed by
soldiers with heavy weapons of mass destruction
Alas, we have been tamed again in the usual manner

We are left to starve and suffer
While the upper class rejoice with the tyrant in power
Horrifying!

Our virgin daughters and wives
are raped in front of us
Devastating!

In the face of grinding poverty and adversities
Fear grips us like we are about to be consumed by a python
While they frolic in affluence to our detriment

Our farms and yam barns have become desolate
Where is the Purple rose they promised us before
we opened our doors for them to come in?
Some have fled their homes while other have been killed

We have been ordered to evacuate
our places of birth and that of our ancestors
Now my people are scared as hell
We thought our resilient spirits are unbroken
Why are we pleading for mercy while hope
stare at us in the face

The dictator turns a blind eye
Where do we go from there?
How do we rectify this unforeseen calamity?
How do we find fulfillment again?
Alas, there is a glimpse of hope at the end of the tunnel as long as we have life in us

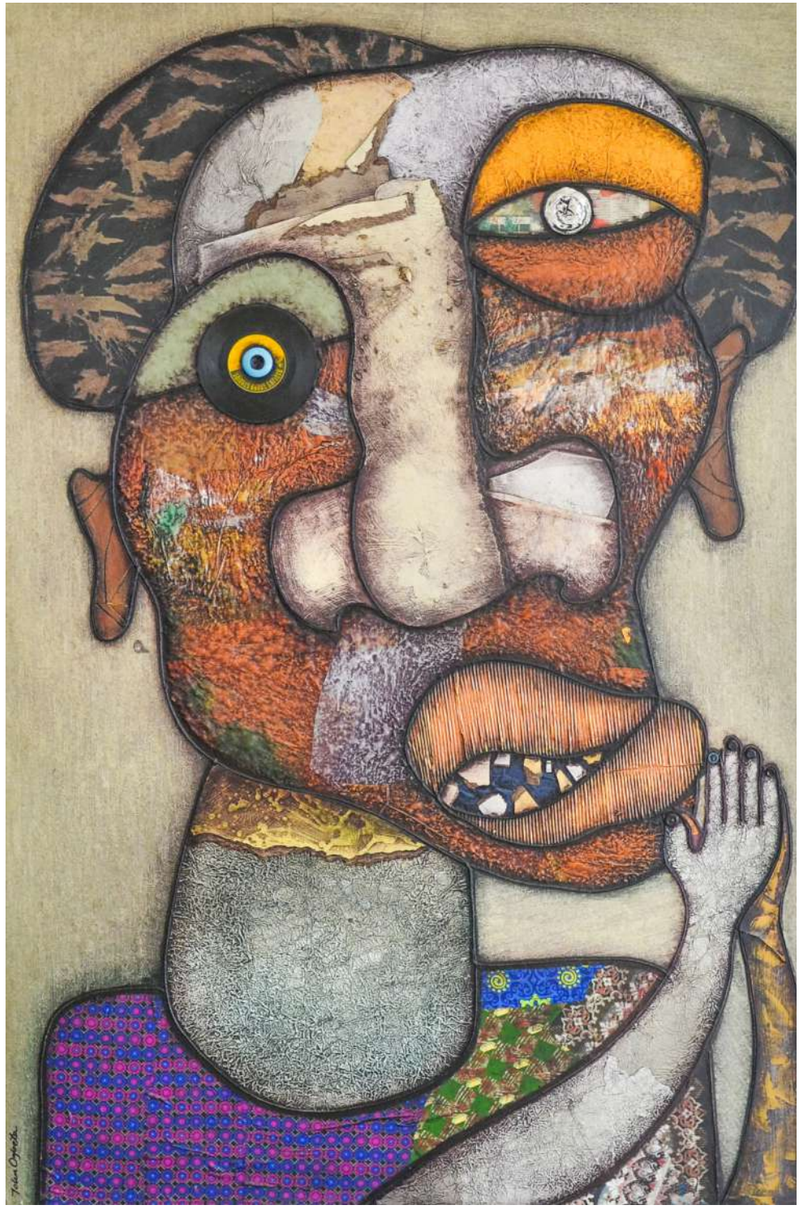
We demand equity and fairness
We demand freedom and unity
Tyranny must end.

JOHN OGBETA
August, 2021.

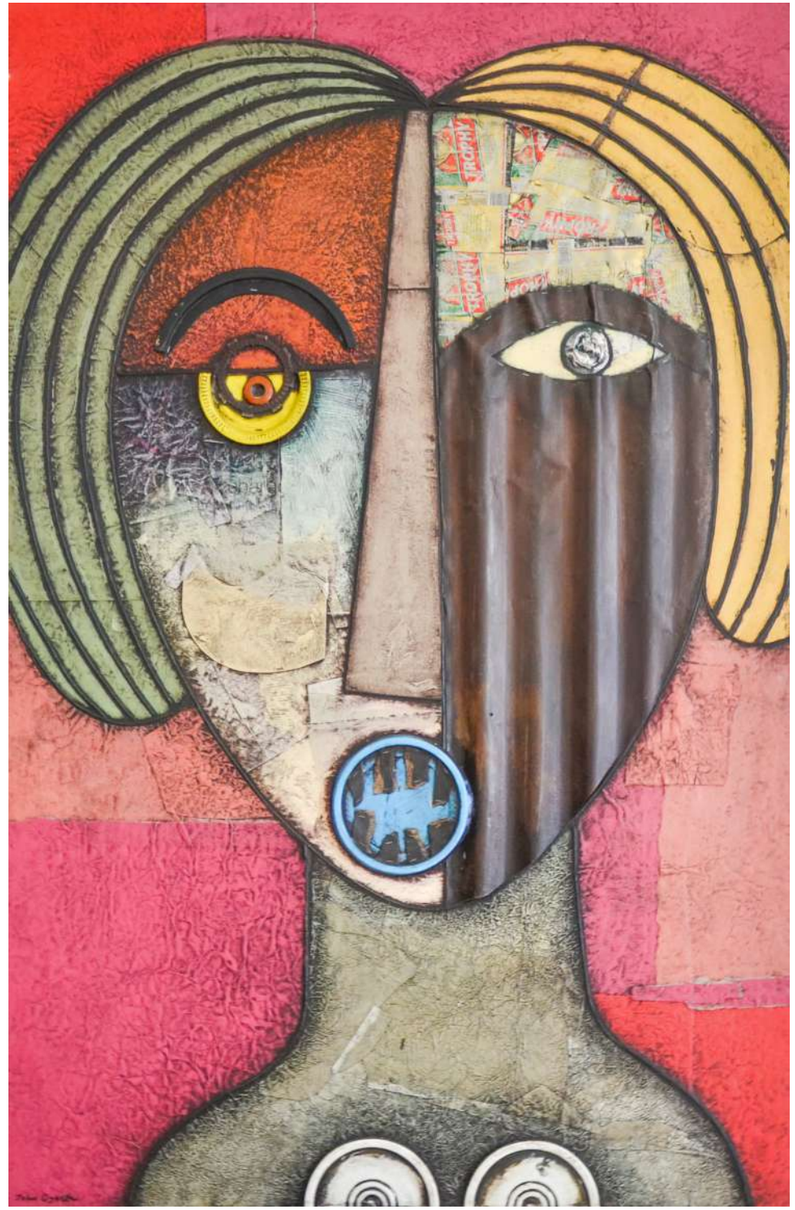
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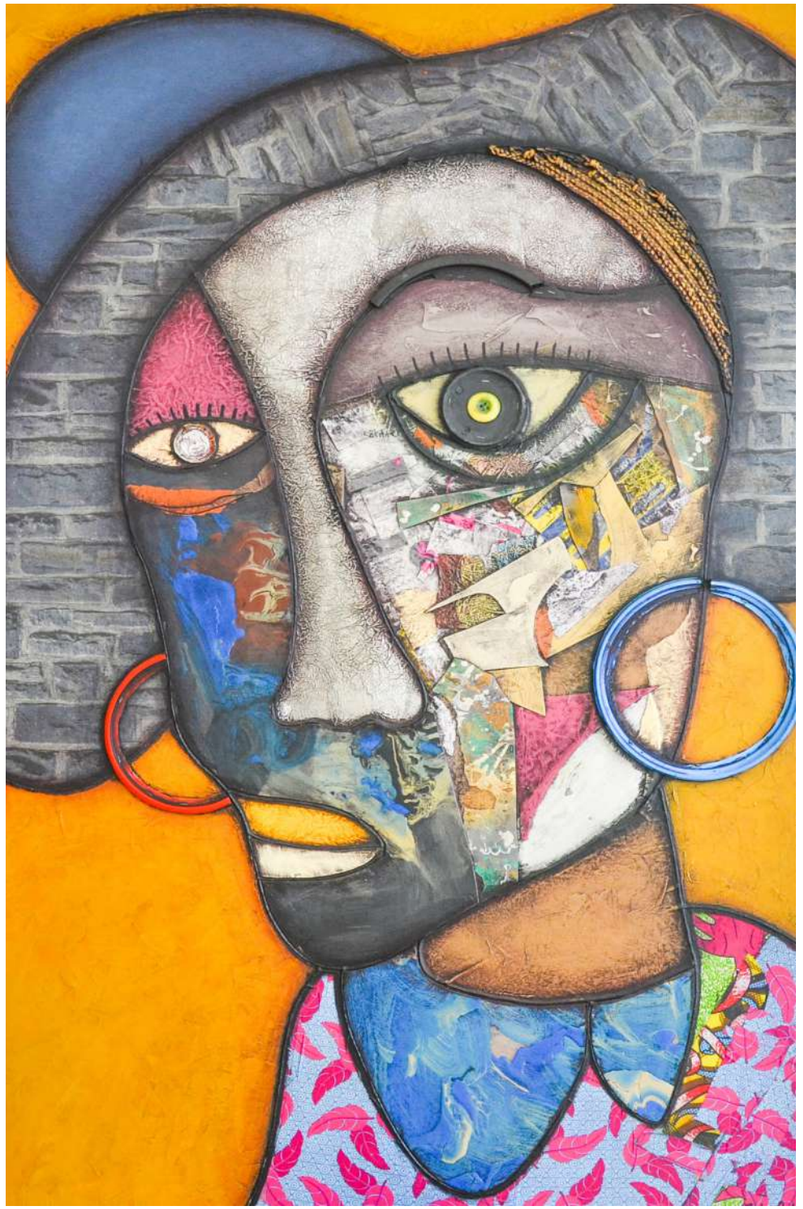
VIEW EXHIBITIONS



TAMED MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2020



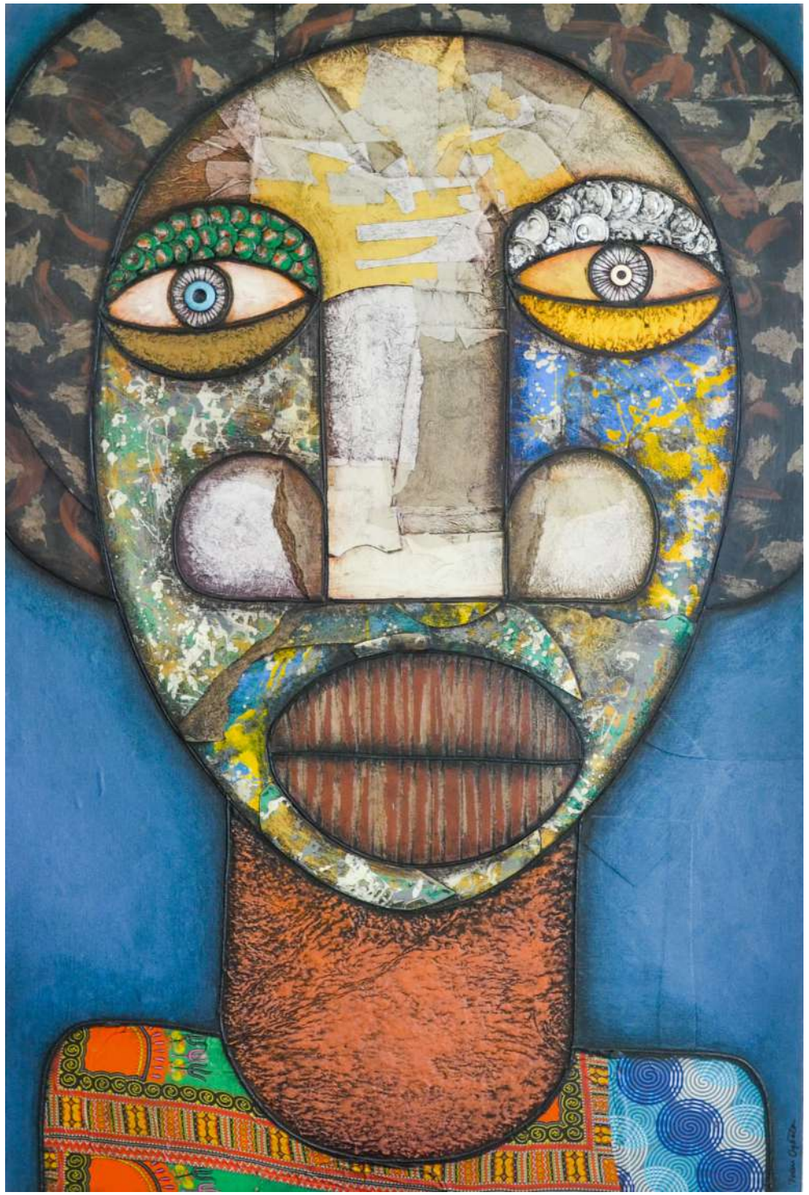
THE UNTAPPED MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2020



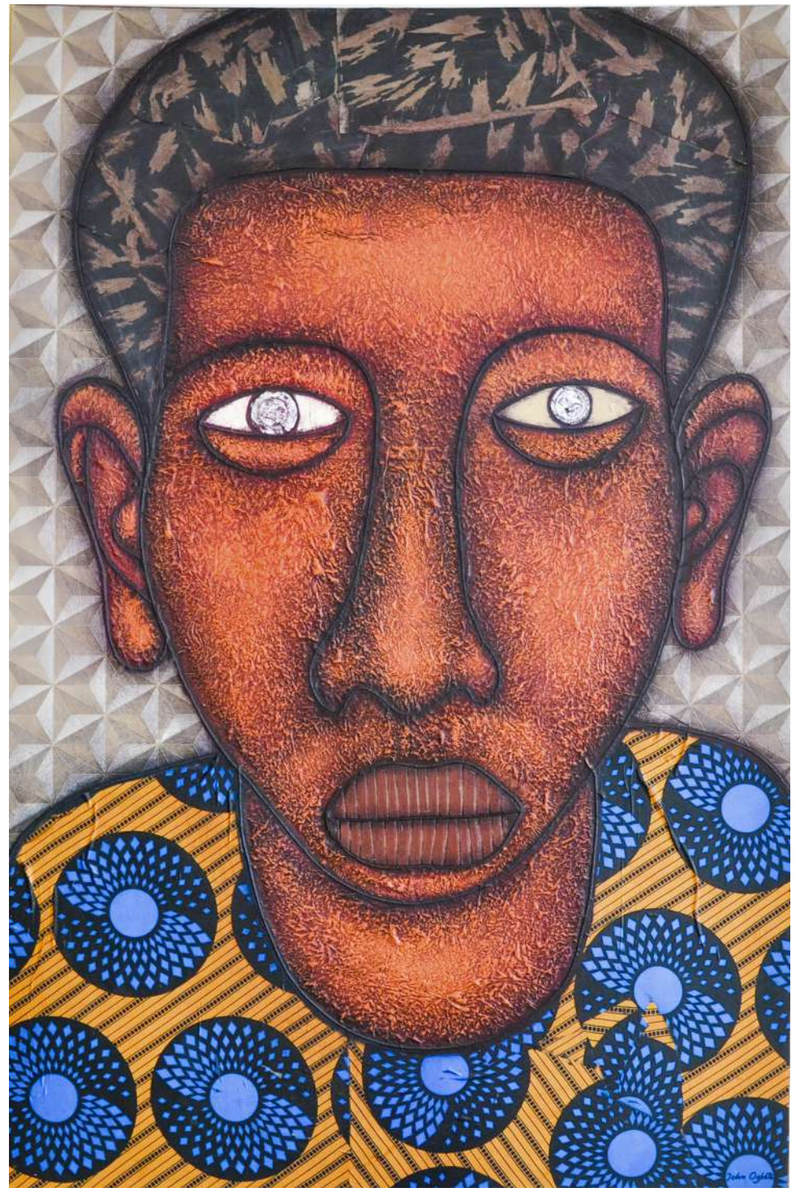
SUBTLE GENDER MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2020



BEFORE MY EYES MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2021



IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITIES MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2020



FOCUSED YOUTH MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2021



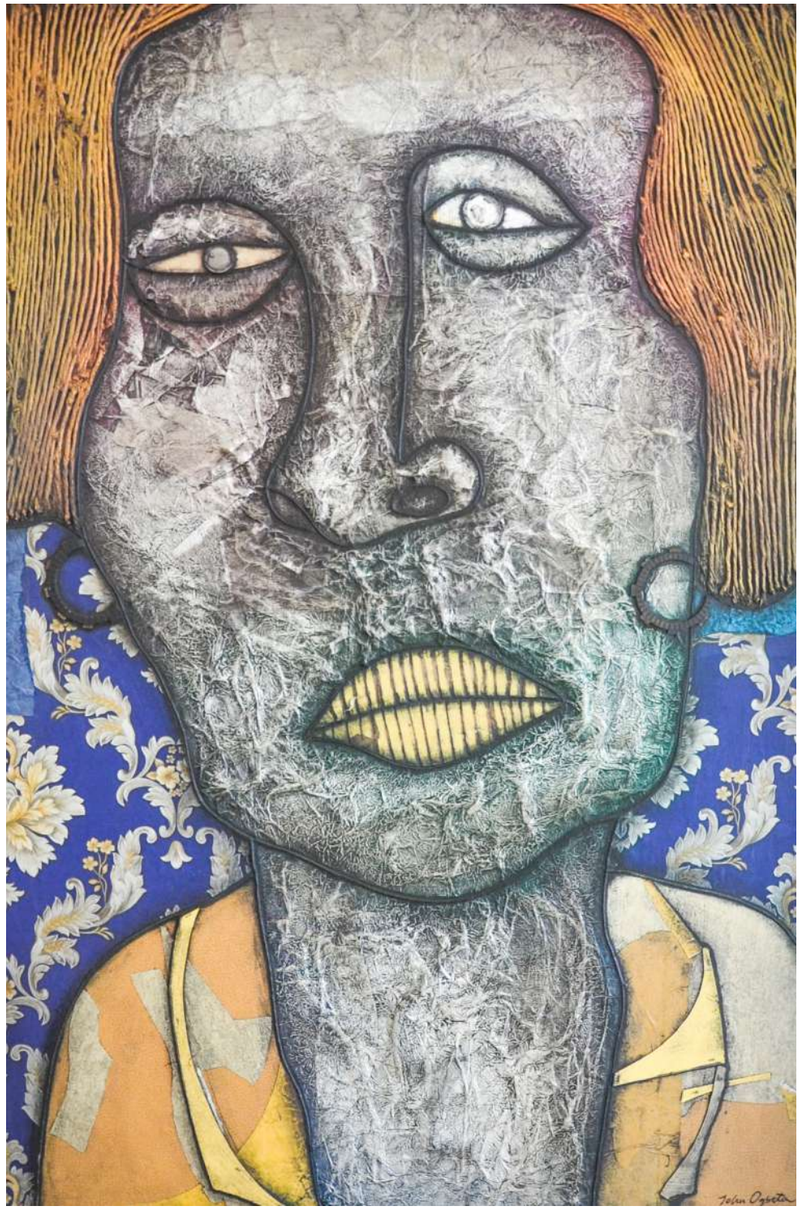
RED EYES II MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2020



THE DICTATOR MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2020



HOPEFUL II MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2021



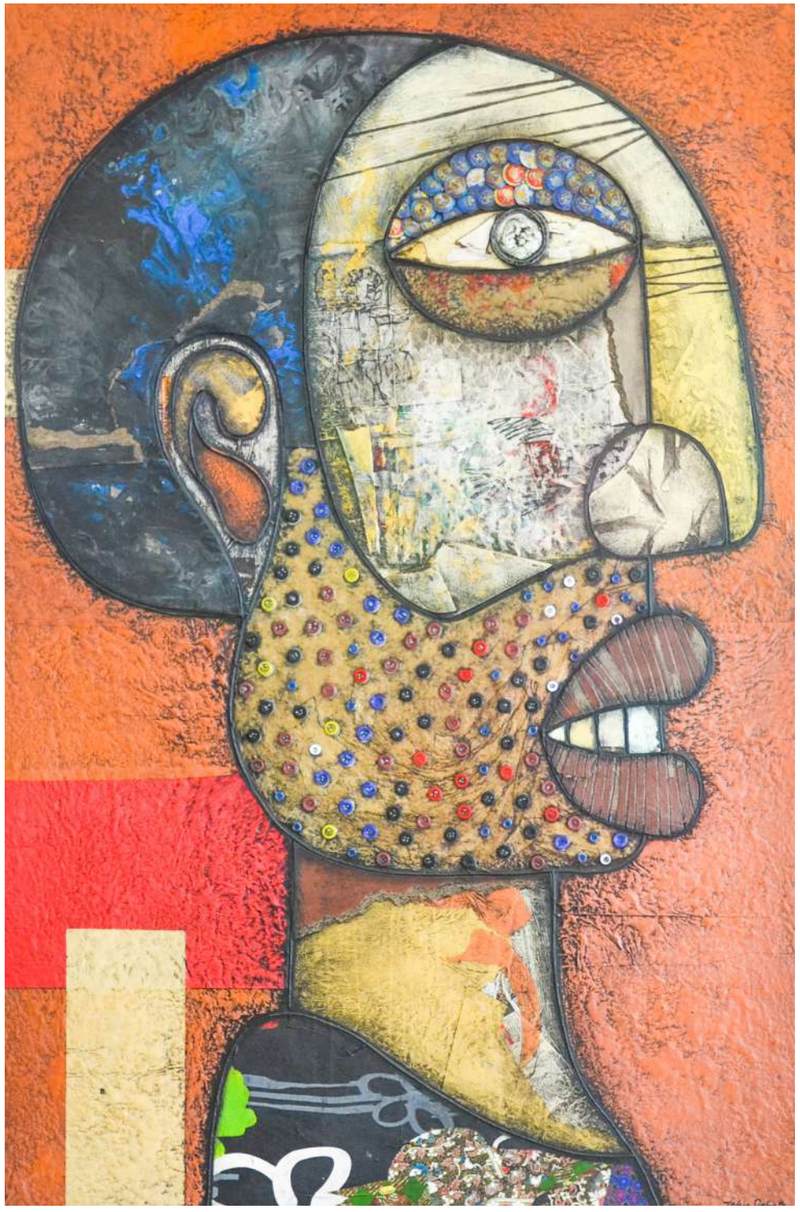
HOPEFUL I MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2021



UNBROKEN MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 120 X 183CM 2020



FULFILMENT MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2020



RESILIENCE MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2020



THE GAZE MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2020



BLACK EYE MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2020



ORANGE HAT MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2021



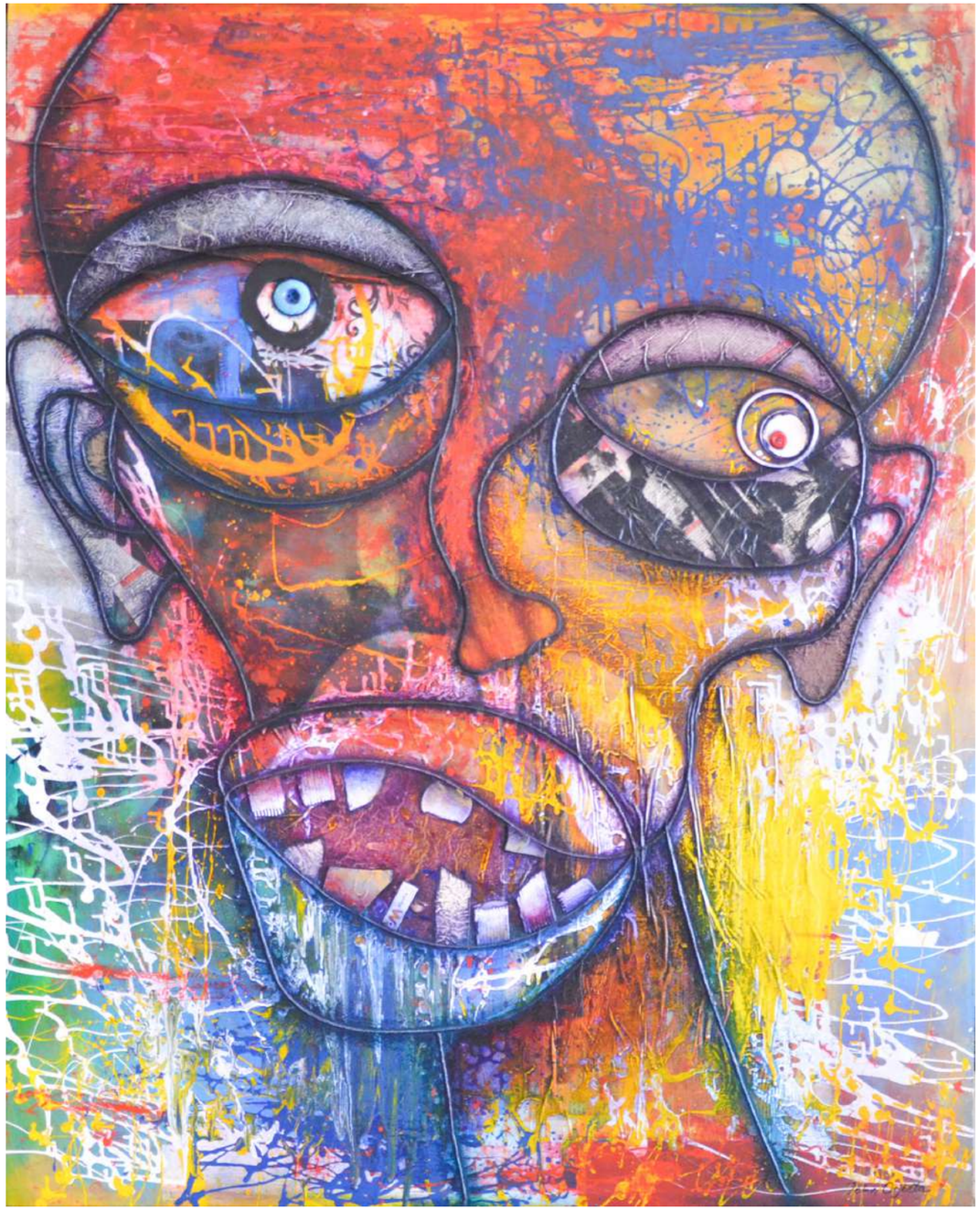
THE BIG BOUT MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2020



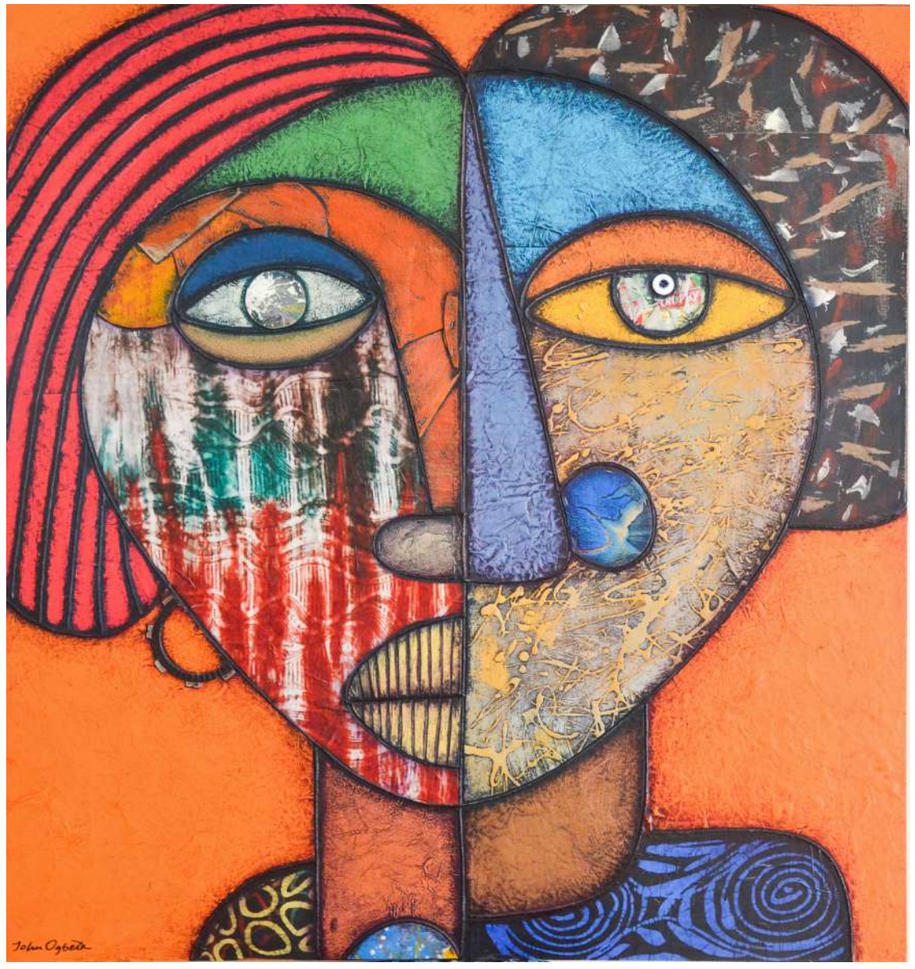
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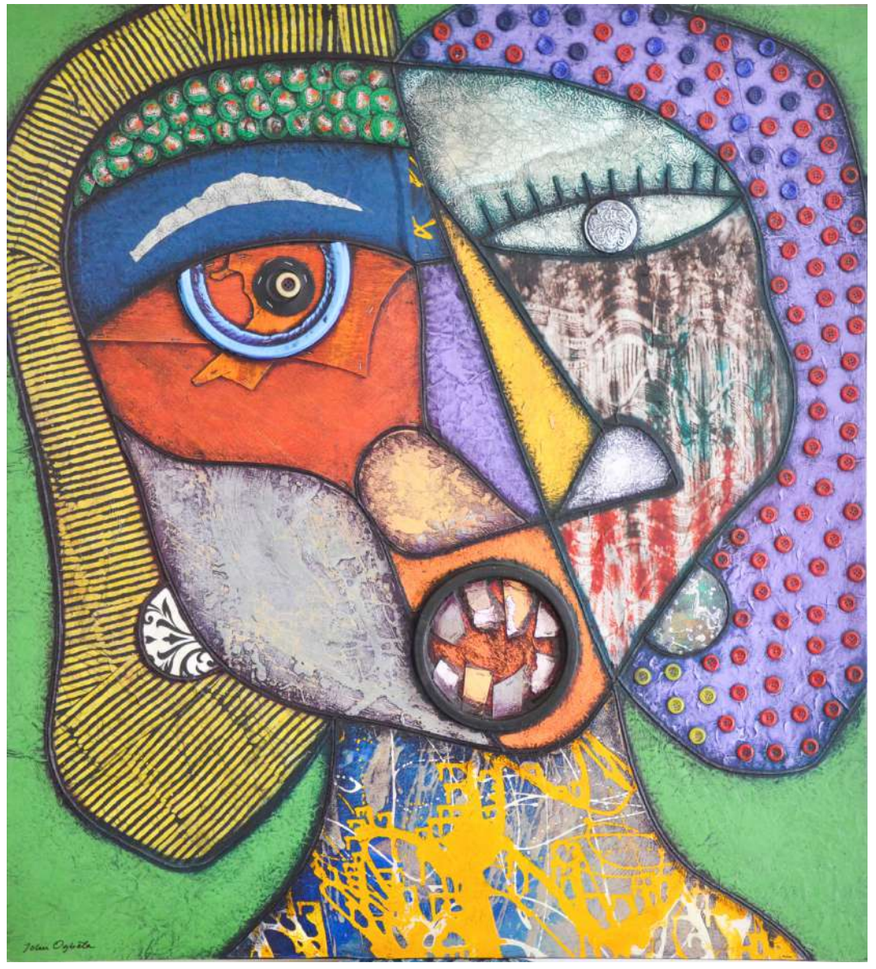
PURPLE ROSE MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 116 X 178CM 2021



SCARED AS HELL MIXEDMEDIA ON CANVAS 120 X 155CM 2021



TRANQUILITY MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 107 X 117CM 2021



THE RADICAL MIXEDMEDIA ON PLYWOOD 107 X 117CM 2021



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