Size Matters

A Solo Exhibition Of Paintings By

Orlu Prince Ozangeobuoma

4TH DECEMBER 2021

Signature-beyond
Art Gallery

107, AWOLOWO ROAD, IKOYI, LAGSO, NIGERIA

EHIXIBITION RUNS TILL 12TH DECEMBER 2021

INTRODUCTION

Size!

The relative extent of something in other words the overall dimension or magnitude of a thing.

The Earth is richly blessed with shapes and forms that come in all types of sizes, small, big, massive and all alike.

It is what adds colours and balance to our very existence, a little big here and very small there, it is what distinguishes the ant from the giant.

In proper context, we all exist in sizes very much like the rest of nature, it is not a coincidental design so there's no room for shame for we are all the same, humans with a different quality and quantity, what is lacked here is gained there.

My name is Orlu Prince Ozangeobuoma and you are welcome to size matters

FOREWORD



The Busty Woman

Orlu, paints. Orlu Paints the big busty women; with fat bodies. The design of the surfaces and the spread of colors is alluring. He is generous with the shapes, curves and colors.

These paintings are beginning to have his mark. Orlu has started to pour himself into his own cups.

This is Orlu, he has almost drained himself of others.

Artistic influence is desirable. The artist is learning and acknowledging the influence. Copying is terrible.
Copying is like undressing oneself in public. Orlu, has created these paintings and drawings from mainly states of emotion.

The artist paints, draws, sculpts at all times. Some art is created where the artist is falling in love or falling out of love.

Some art is created when the artist is super excited and when the artist is annoyed. Different emotions flood the mind of the artist. Art is created both in ignorance, pain, peace, war and in joy.

Orlu and his buildings
The paintings are like buildings. The lady has been forced to sit in a small chair. The women and the different spaces.

The ambulance has flat tyres. The ambulance is supposed to be going somewhere. Africa, has been run by greedy eight year olds who steal everything in sight.

Eight year olds who want to own everything in their countries and in other countries.

The rulers love to acquire everything at the detriment of the masses.

Where are we going? The artist has a lot of work to do. We must keep informing and creating art. Look, look, look. We should see more if we look deliberately.

Duke Asidere
November 25, 2021

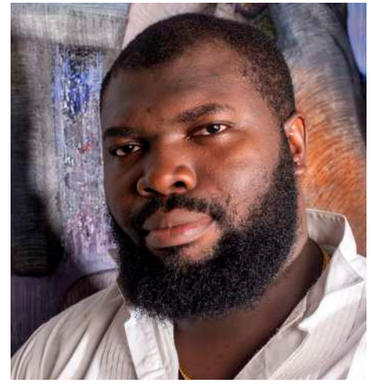
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My profound gratitude and immense appreciation goes out to Mr Rahman Akar-CEO Signature Gallery, for his relentless encouragements, constant support and positive criticism over the years that has spurred me to excellence.

Special thanks to some very important people in my life, Mr Duke Asidere for his fatherly contribution and support in all ramification. Mr George Edozie, thank you for looking out for me at all time. Mrs Adeolu Tahouf, CEO Ogirikan, many thanks for all your timely words of advice that have shaped my opinions. My friend Udemma Chukwuma, Author of 'Left with Shadows', thank you for being a part of this journey.To my Mum and siblings, a million thanks for all your support and prayers.

To all who have seen that this exhibition is a success, through scholarly contributions and professional input, Prof. Frank Ugiomoh and Primrose Okechi Ochuba. Luciano Uzuegbu, Mr Lateef Aremu and the members of staff of Signature Gallery, my friends and well wishers, I cannot thank you enough for staying the course with me. God bless you all abundantly, Amen.
All thanks to God Almighty for making all these possible.

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Ozangeobuoma Prince Orlu (b. 1990) is a contemporary Nigerian artist, he was born and raised in Enugu State, and an indigene of Isiokpo, Ikwerre Local Government, Rivers State. He attended the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Fine and Applied Arts from 2010 to 2015.

Orlu is a versatile artist with an extensive composition, which cut across diverse themes. In 2017, after participating in a group show titled First Page Three Chapters, his style of painting and subject changed drastically. In 2018, he came out with even a bolder style in a group exhibition titled The Future is Now, where he introduced fat figures in his painting.

Today, painting fat subjects have become dominant in his works; a source of inspiration to him, and sometimes he uses himself as a reference. "I enjoy those forms in I see when I study the big size men and women." His composition and use of colours have also evolved. Painting nude figures has become his favourite theme of expression. He is now audacious, expressive and explorative with his work, which are elusive, paradoxical and carefully balanced between representation and abstraction, and thought-provoking titles such as Morden Maidens, Size Matters, the Future Beckons, Lost in Thought, Spare the Rod.

He paints with warm and cool colours, but sometimes with dark colours. He paints mainly with oil and acrylic paint as his choice of media.

Everything around his nativity and happenings in society inspires him. "It affects my style of painting, colours, drawings and more." His philosophy of art and life is to create an appreciation of continuous and spontaneous works in the same way that expresses his inner self, create social emancipation.

He had his early informal training with Kpodoh Michael, a Port Harcourt, Rivers State based artist, before going to the higher institution to study art. He did his internship under renowned painter, Duke Asidere, who greatly influenced him.

Orlu has participated in several group exhibitions, seminars, workshops and art competitions, with an outstanding performance. He is a member of the Society of Nigerian Artists (SNA), Rivers State Chapter, and the Pan African Circle of Artists (PACA). He lives and works as a full-time studio artist in Lagos, Nigeria.

EXHIBITIONS
LIFE IN MY CITY, 2011 (ENUGU)
LIFE IN MY CITY, 2013 (ENUGU)
SOCIETY OF NIGERIAN ARTISTS, RIVERS CHAPTER EXHIBITION, 2015
OREZE IV, 2016 (OBI OF ONITSHA'S PALACE)
FIRST PAGE THREE CHAPTERS, 2017 (MYDRIM GALLERY)
OREZE V, 2017 (OBI OF ONITSHA'S PALACE)
NAM ART FAIR, 2018 (NAIROBI, KENYA)
THE FUTURE IS NOW, 2018 (THOUGHT PYRAMID ART GALLERY)
SOCIETY OF NIGERIAN ARTISTS, RIVERS CHAPTER EXHIBITION (SNA), 2018
OREZE VI, 2018 (OBI OF ONITSHA'S PALACE)
IMAGINATIVENESS, 2019 (ALEXIS GALLERY)
OREZE VII, 2019 (OBI OF ONITSHA'S PALACE)
IMPACT ARTIST FAIR, 2019 (LASMARA)
MINIATURE ART FAIR, 2019 (OGRIKAN GALLERY)
PHASES OF REFECTION, 2020 (ALEXIS GALLERY)
SIZE MATTERS, 2021 (SIGNATURE GALLERY)

ARTIST STATEMENT

I feel like people see fat people, especially women, as off-balance, off shape, off modern, or what society call 'beautiful'. Everybody is beautiful in their own way: whether big, small, tall, fat, slim, short; any way you see yourself, you are beautiful. This beauty is what I portray in this body of work.

Big size women are my fantastic models, and I want everybody to appreciate them. Size Matters is my way of expressing this; a privilege to acknowledge the strength of women; to appreciate their beauty and their natural endowment. And painting nude and fat figures for this exhibition was an exciting experience for me. The inspiration for the theme came from a series of works I did some years back: Modern Models.

Aside from this, my work has endless experiences and expressions; the more you look at it, the more you want to dig into it, the more you begin to ask yourself: what, why, when or how? I have been able to manipulate this subject properly to the best of my ability because the works are not erotic. I hope those coming to view them will see the beauty in the works and not nudity. I hope they will see the embedded messages, appreciate the works, as well as get inspired.

The concept of nudity evokes different emotions in different groups. Purity, pride, lack of morality, embarrassment and transparency are some of the concepts that foreground discussions surrounding a person's desire to show skin. Italian philosopher- Mario Perniola, on the duality of nudity, describes nakedness as a sign of sin and degradation as well as a sign of truth, innocence, audacity and authenticity. In contemporary times, however, it has become unclear what counts as nudity. While in the arts, nudity is valorised, in the real world, however, it is received with varied sentiments. Nonetheless, we can agree that the duality between vulnerability and power are persuasive tools that nudity wields.

Discussions around size are also sensitive to humans. Many people obsess about their bodies – too fat, slim, tall or short) and we are tempted to inquire - does the size of one's body really matter? How does size influence perception? Ozangeobuoma Orlu in his recent body of work meanders through the concept of nudity and size to engage with some of these teeming issues. His choice of plump female images perhaps would contend with the imagery of the slim physique as perfect beauty identifiers.

Looking through the works that make up this exhibition titled Size Matters, we see that the mood, positions and body language in this body of work are a metaphoric depiction of current societal trends. My Comfort Zone I and II, The Future Beckons, Her Favourite Obsession, Love and Fate, Lost in Thought and Reconstructing Wrong Lines I, II and III are some of the works that address these issues.

Orlu's exploration of colours allow for a play in contrast. He makes the images duller than the background drawing the viewer's attention first to the circumstances surrounding the mood of the image(s) in the work of art. The Future Beckons, for instance, is a depiction of an expectant mother looking forlorn, unsure of what the future holds for her unborn child and herself. The background is the aartist's interpretation of her hopes and aspirations for the future but the conditions around her make those dreams far-fetched. Her exaggerated headgear is perhaps a reflection of the weight of her thoughts.

These thoughts are also reflected in My Comfort Zone I and II. The images seem to inquire - What are we waiting for? What are we expecting? These questions draw us to imagine what was obtainable before now. The rays on My Comfort Zone I seem to give a glimmer of hope, but her body language does not offer any sign of expectation because she has experienced this glimmer of hope once before, and her hopes were dashed, therefore she is not in a hurry for celebrations.

Reconstructing Wrong Lines shows us that our past mistakes do not define us. Orlu uses this piece to remind us that we must always strive for perfection. We may not get it but will be very close to the perfect mark. He relates this piece to the current struggles between the Nigerian citizens, its government and the policies that we deal with daily. With the election year fast approaching, all hands must be on deck to blur out wrong lines and replace them with improved policies that provide healthier living conditions for the average Nigerian.

The totality of the works that make up Size Matters speak to the similarity in the experiences that have shaped us as humans, irrespective of size, tribe or gender. Our histories, stories, cultural affiliations and daily experiences ultimately reveal our deepest thoughts and emotions. Orlu's choice of nude female figures is only a metaphorical language that speaks to both genders, young or old.

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Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art 2019 Grant Award Recipient.
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ORLUOZANGE OBUOMA'S ART

Orlu Prince Ozangeobuoma is one of Nigeria's remarkable contemporary artists ,and his works essentially draw from social consciousness, thus seeking to highlight issues of societal concerns.

Ozange often projects his thoughts and ideas from personalized subjects, but with a propensity to engage several thematic concerns offering more than the face value of his subjects. In his forthcoming exhibitions, he joins proponents of 'the body positive and fat acceptance movements' to share his own perspective noto nly onself-love,but to reach out to the fabric of the society as a whole.

There are earlier proponents of Fat Nude Art including Columbianartist, Fernando Botero who would rather call them Big-Nude. Botero himself was inspired by Rueben whose works depict shapely subjects including 17th-century religious and mythological paintings with the fleshy, curvaceous bodies of goddesses and cherubs projected as paragons of beauty and virtue.

Perhaps, it is in the above sense that Ozange first received the Fat women eulogy, but his experience may have been also harassed by the continued societal depiction of slim women (and men) as perfect models and beauty pageants than the fat ones who are considered the opposite of beauty and elegance (and masculinity). It is the artist's submission that everywoman (and man)has certain beauty and natural endowment to be appreciated. Infact, Ozange sets out to change the narrative about fat people
through his art,which highlights the beauty and appeal of the fat;but more fundamentally, using their case to mirror other societal issues.

The collection of 20 Acrylic/Oil paintings for his forthcomingexhibition captures aplethora of nude fat female subjects standing not only as icons of infectiousse lf-love,but also are appropriated as metaphoric contemplations of societal discourses.

In all, Ozange's subject are firm and bold; and his palettes are richly composed to give a solid feel with firm harsh strokes.

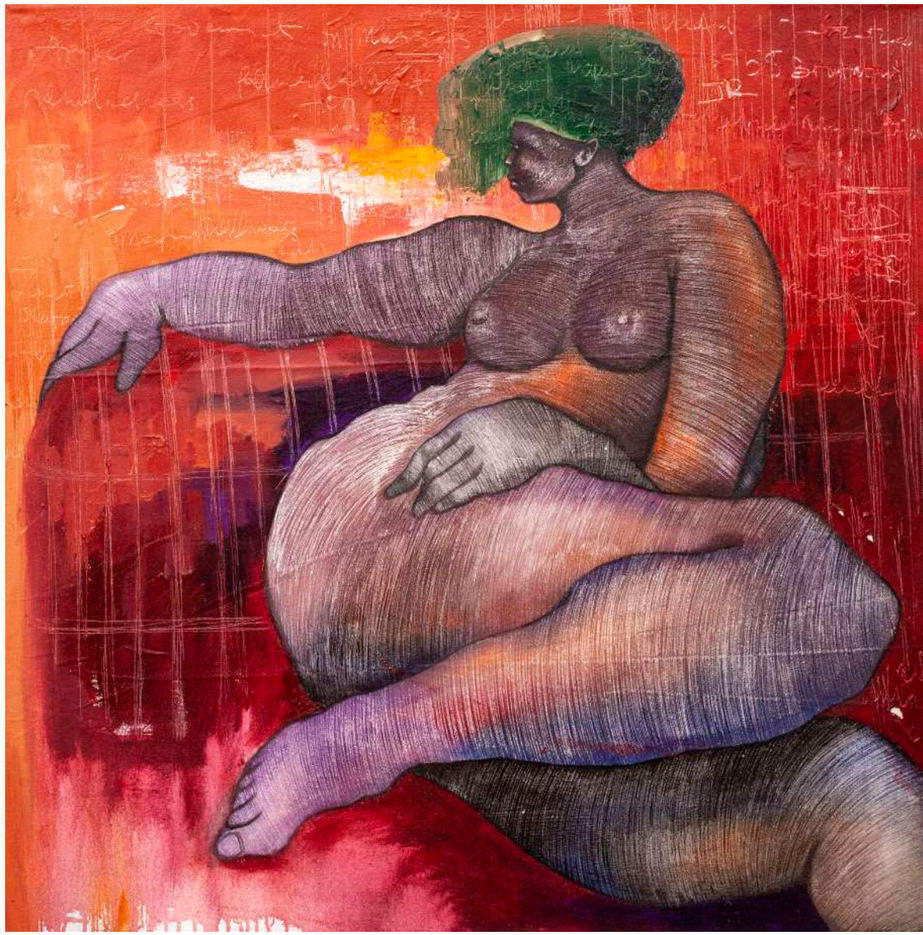
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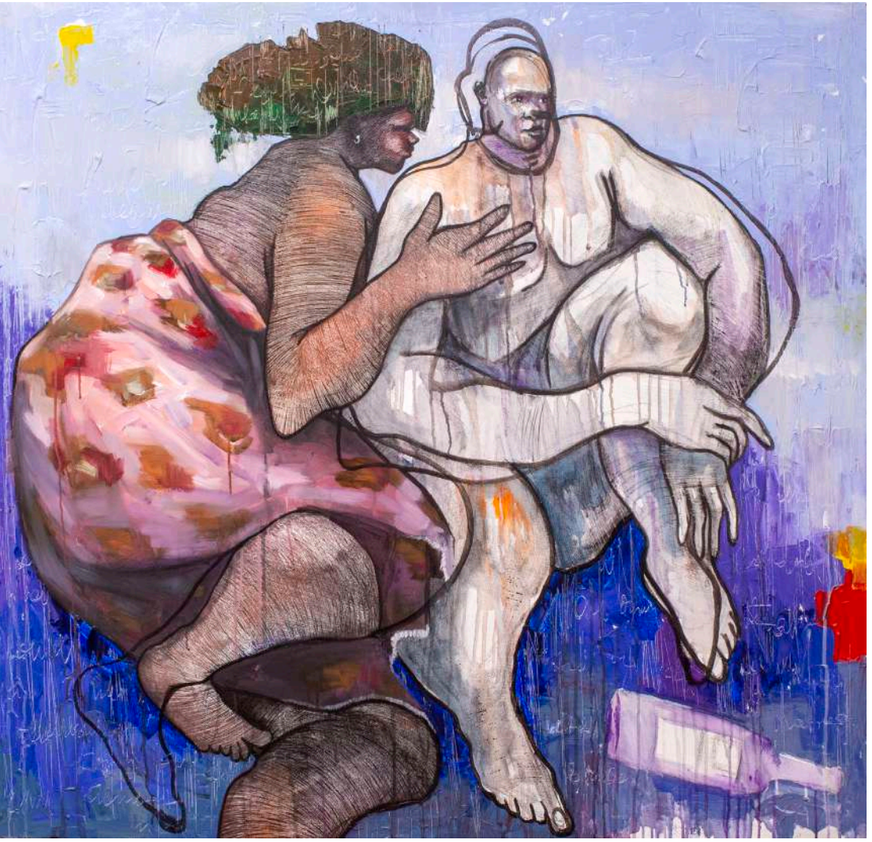
SIZE MATTERS - 1 - 20



"Modern Maiden"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
120cm x 130cm
2021



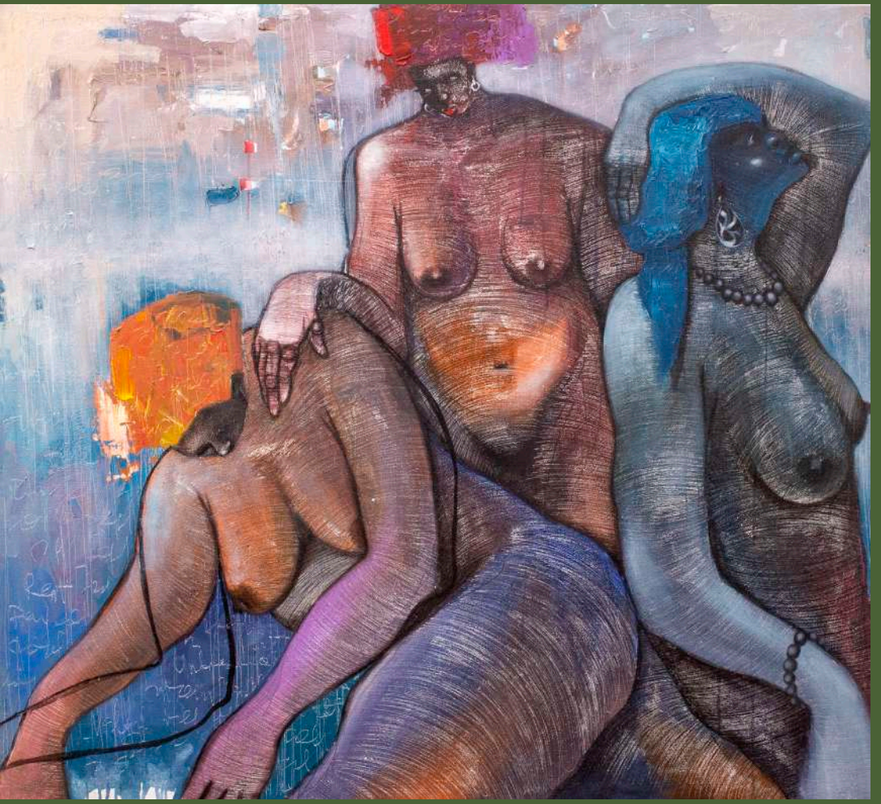
"My Confort Zone II"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
104cm x 107cm
2021



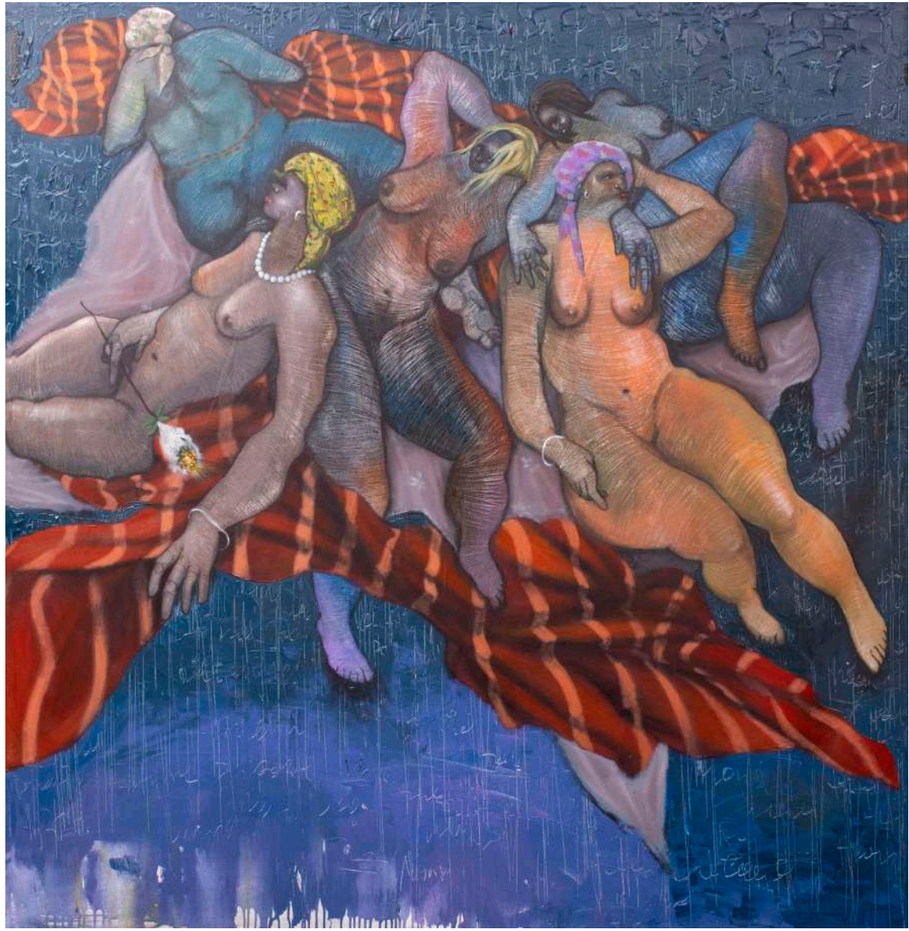
"Reconstructing Wrong Line II"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
120cm x 130cm
2021



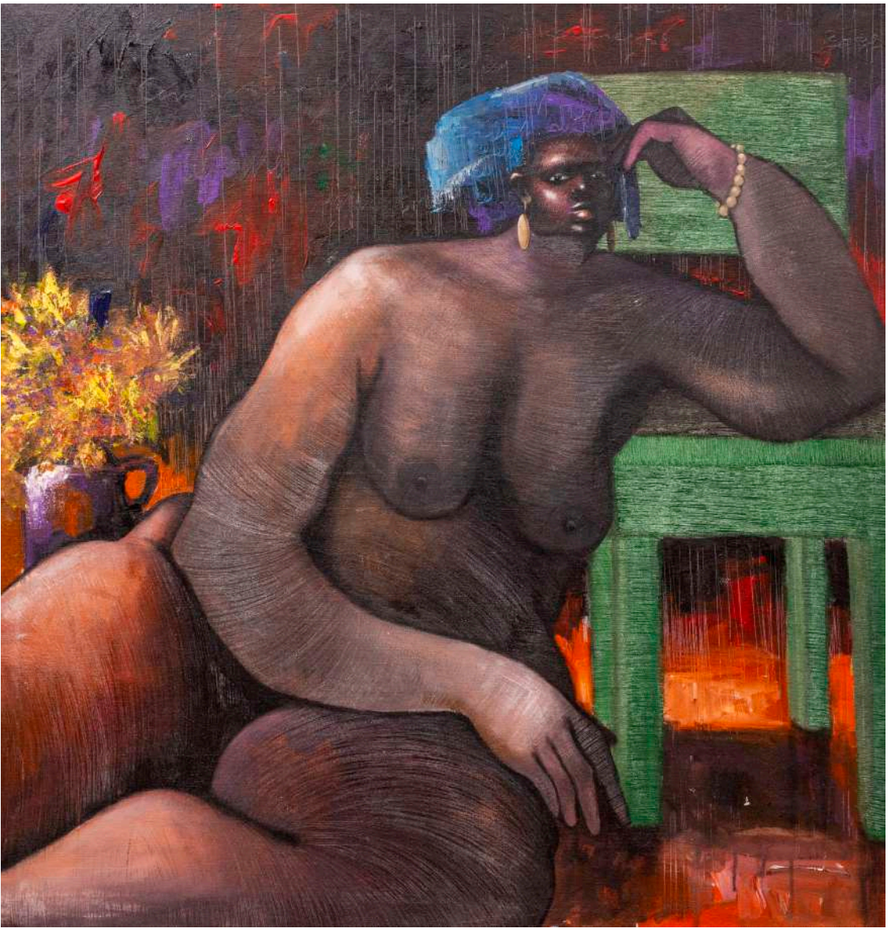
"Lost in Thought"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
104cm x 107cm
2021



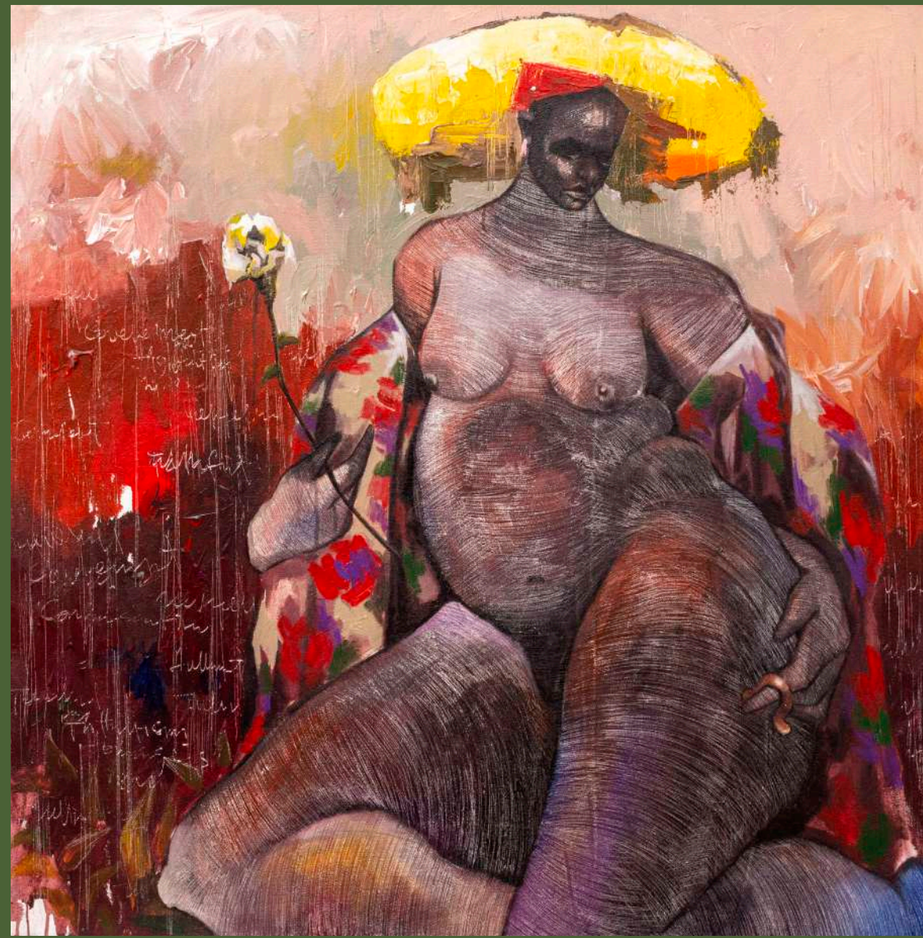
"Reconstructing Wrong Line III"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
120cm x 130cm
2021



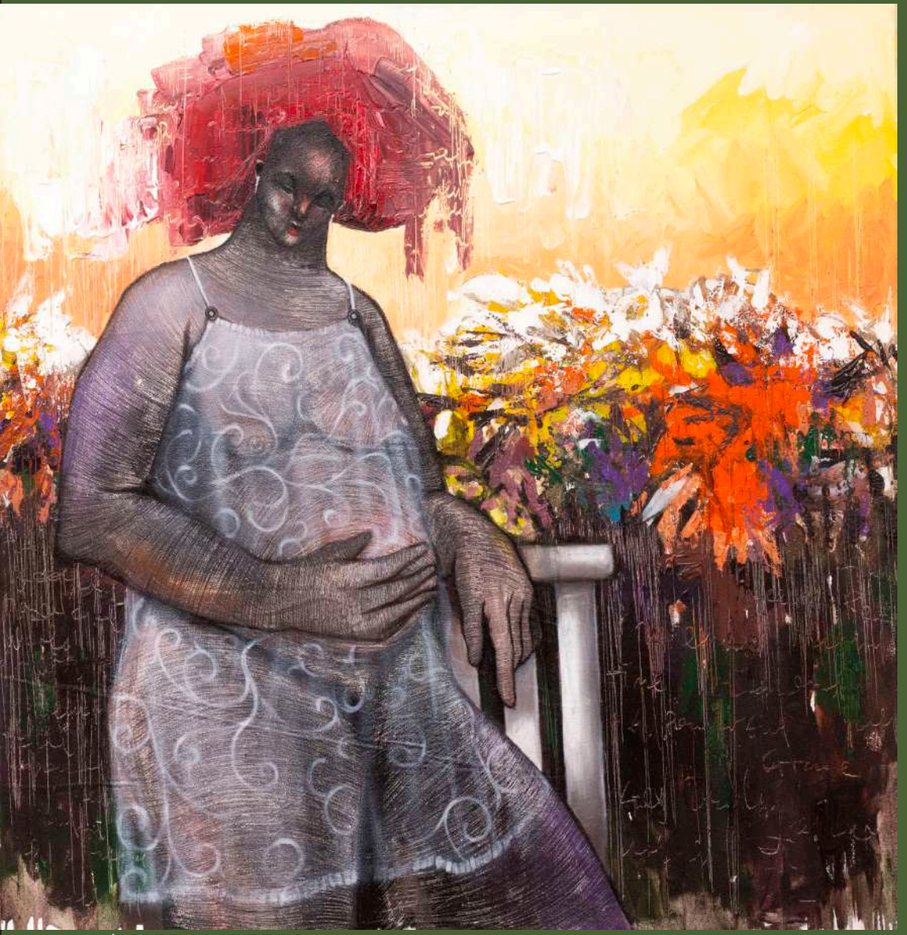
"Modern Maiden I"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
153cm x 153cm
2021



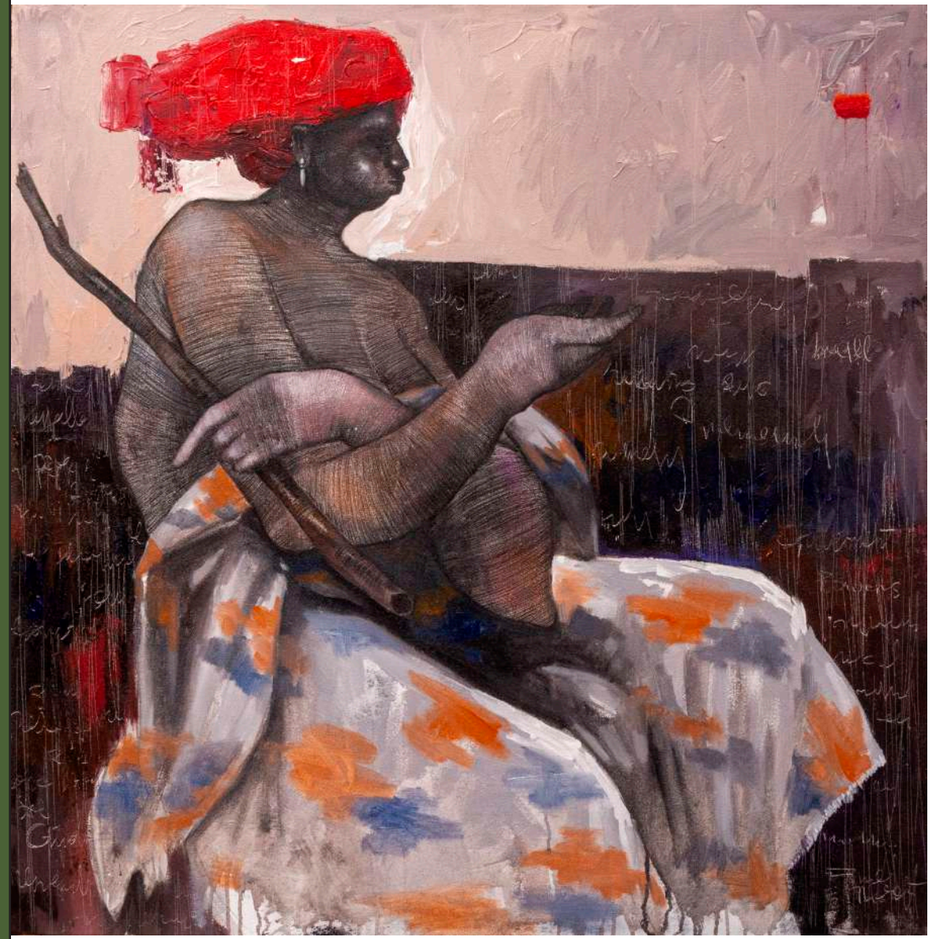
"Nma-Ugo"
Acrylic/Oil on Canvas
104cm x 107cm
2021



"Love and Fate"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
104cm x 107cm
2021



"A Future Beckons"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
104cm x 107cm
2021



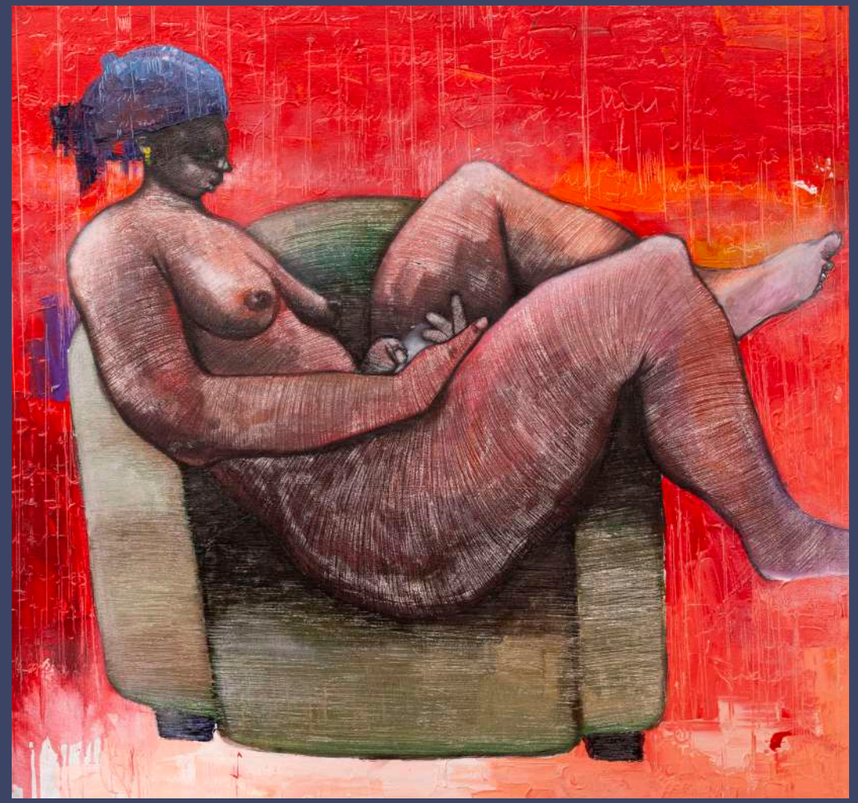
"Spare the Rod"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
104cm x 107cm
2021



"Inner Room I"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
120cm x 130cm
2021



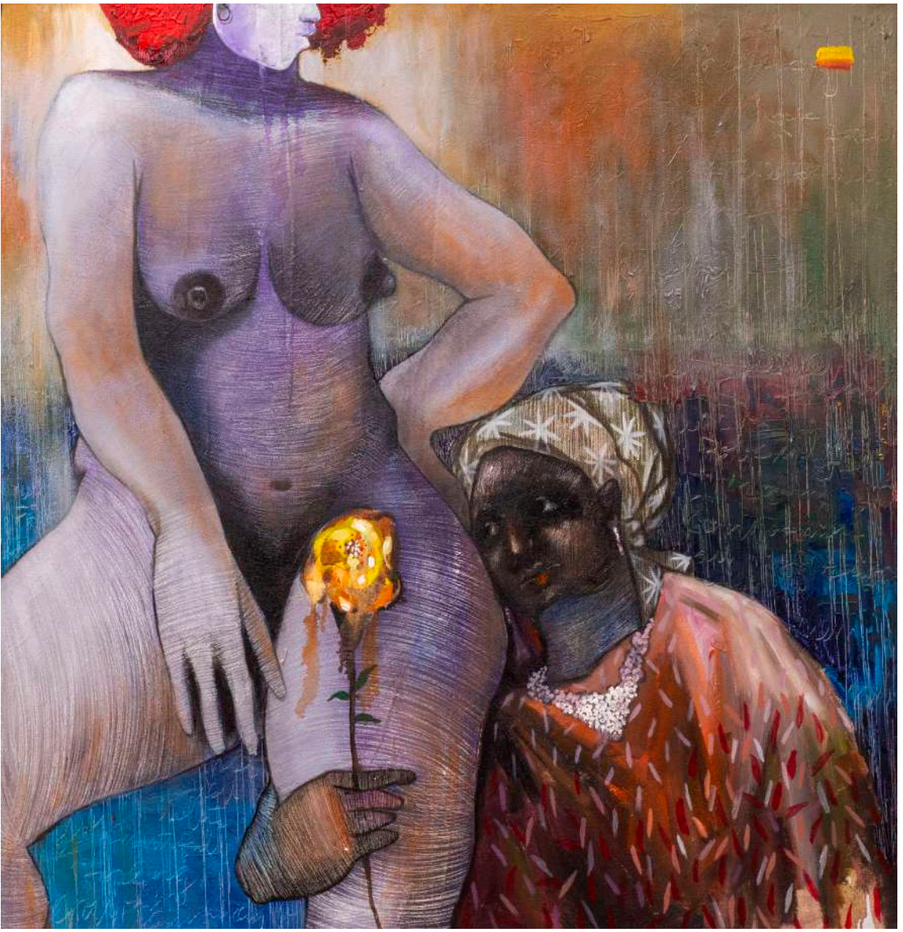
"Inner Room II"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
120cm x 130cm
2021



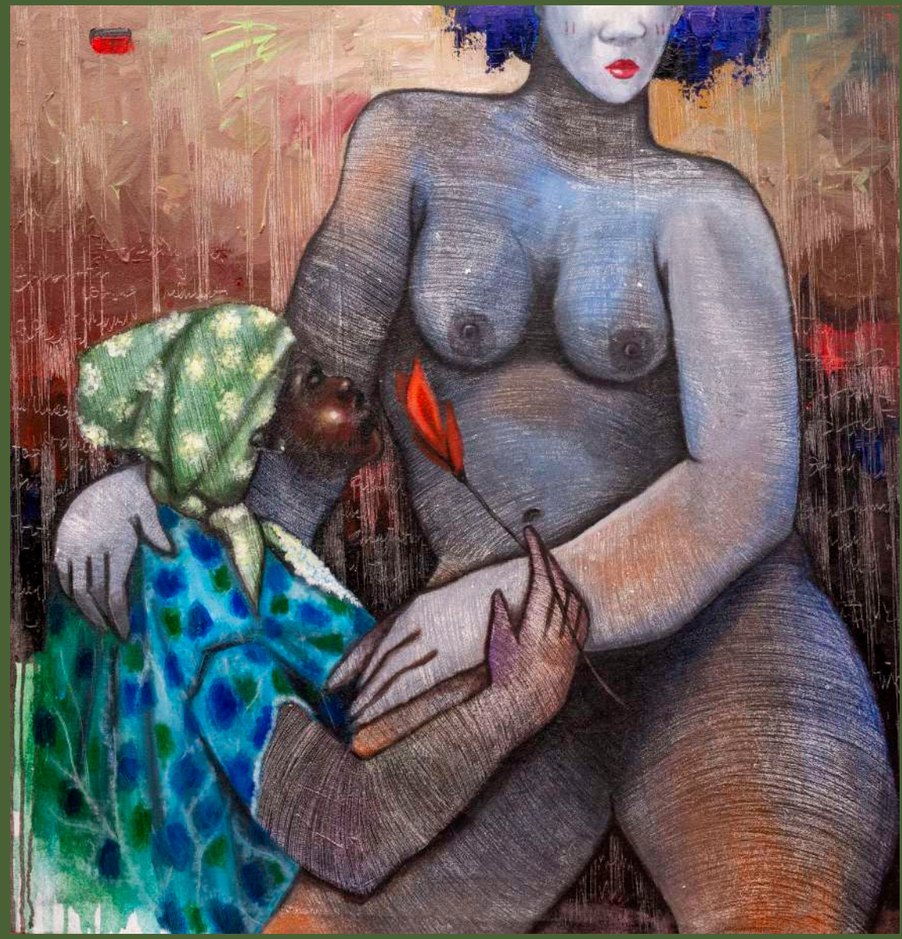
"Her Favorite Obsession"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
104cm x 107cm
2021



"Entanglement"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
120cm x 130cm
2021



"Untitled I"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
104cm x 107cm
2021



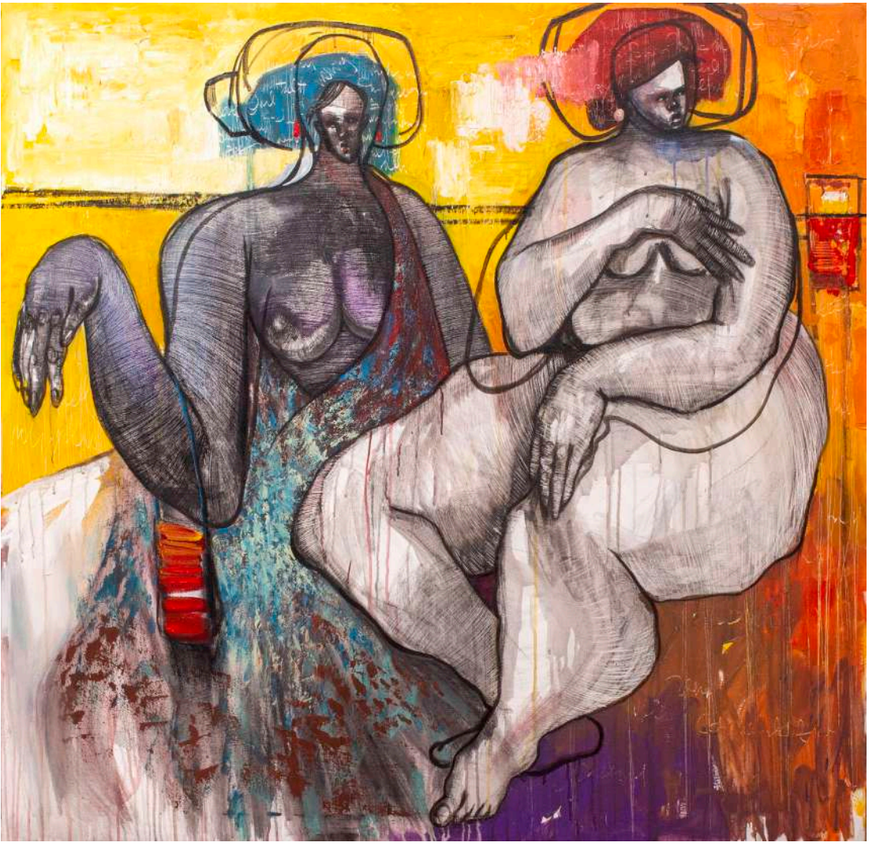
"Untitled II"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
104cm x 107cm
2021



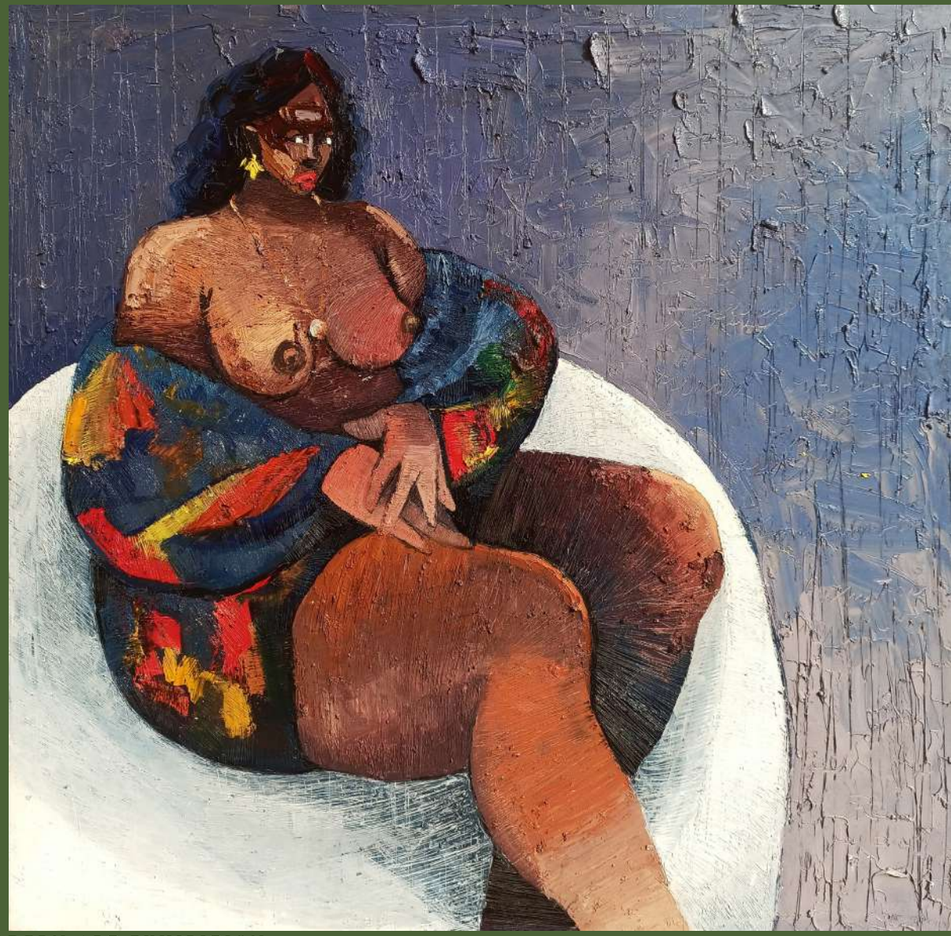
"Size Matters"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
153cm x 153cm
2021



"My Confort Zone I"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
104cm x 107cm
2021



"Reconstructing Wrong Line I"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
120cm x 130cm
2021



"Afoma nne oha"
Acrylic/Oil on canvas
122cm x 122cm
2021



20

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Size Matters

A Solo Exhibition Of Paintings By

Orlu Prince Ozangeobuoma



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