

Nigerian artist brings local perceptions to international stage

Drawing from area culture and communities, Amarachi Okafor's work embodies the Nigerian spirit while showcasing a global talent



Abuja Federal Capital Territor, Nigeria Jul 26, 2022 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - From local to international, artist Amarachi Okafor has a knack for using the culture that surrounds her to create powerful messages that reflect the human condition. Now, after 20 years of accolades and achievements, Okafor reflects on the global culture while continuing to draw inspiration from what is happening around her, in Nigeria and all of Africa, and the experience of the people that live there as she prepares for a solo exhibition in October at the Red Door Gallery in Lagos.

"I weave the issues of the day into my work as they are reflected locally, nationally, and globally," Okafor said as she prepared for her latest exhibition. "Through my travels, I have seen a connective tissue that runs through all people. With my work, I want to share that connection while at the same time exploring the inspiration that seeps in from the local culture."

Okafor trained in her home country of Nigeria and the U.K. and now lives and works in Abuja. From there, she creates paintings, sculptures, and participatory public art projects focusing on people, culture, and society. "My work is the expansion and extension of my reflection of the community, how we work, and how we play and relate with one another," she said. "I like to dwell on understanding what drives people as we interact and relate in small and large ways in the world."

She said she wants to know how we think and act and why and she continues to hone her craft, even after two decades of experience. Through a genuinely unique worldview, she has experienced various and diverse cultures from across the globe through her education and work. Okafor received a Bachelor

of Arts degree and Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Nigeria-Nsukka. She also received a Master of Arts in Curatorial Practice from Falmouth University in the U.K.

Since graduation in 2002, she has worked in locations across Nigeria, sharing space at Universal Studios and the Aina Onabolu Studio in Lagos. She also worked with El Anatsui at different points in her formative years in Nsukka. And her work has been seen across the globe. “I have been honored to have been recognized and exhibited in the U.K., Norway, Wales, Indonesia, the Bahamas, Algeria, and other places,” Okafor said. “Having the ability to work, share and exchange art, life, and ideas with other people around the world is always a rewarding experience for me.”

Along with her work as an artist, she has been a tireless ally for others as she moved through the ranks to take on the role of senior curator at the National Gallery of Art from 2008 to 2015. After that, she began to work in a more personal capacity to support accomplished artists from Africa like El Anatsui with archiving and documentation, liaising with institutions around the world on their behalf to help deepen and widen knowledge about art from Africa.

But at the core of her work is the desire to understand and discuss the human condition. “I question, follow and try to make some meaning out of the actions of humans in society through history,” Okafor said. “Even more so today, I question my own impact – and by extension, through my work – the impact of our societal and individual choices.”

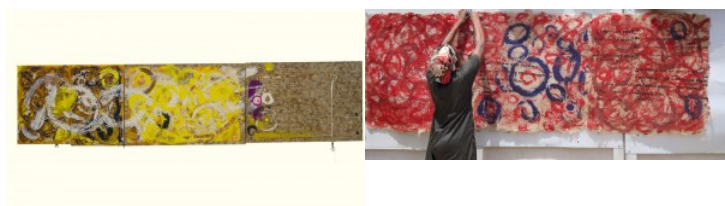
“The questions are about everything around us,” she continued. “Focusing on the human being and how we relate, I want to understand our choices and what drives us to make those choices. For example, how come we are not choosing differently? Are we aware and attentive to the coming consequences of every action? I believe sometimes we are, but often we are not.”

“I often dwell on these questions – which afflict my peace of mind and go on to get translated into my work.” She said she wants to understand relationships and actively works to remain grounded by interacting with those around her. And so, she hopes to find an even larger following and to share local perspectives with an even larger audience.

“While embracing the community around me, I want to bring those perspectives to even more audiences in the U.S. and Europe. It would be an amazing opportunity and a way for me to continue strengthening global cultural relationships,” Okafor said. “That is the goal of my work, and every opportunity to understand those locals physically near me and those around the world is an essential piece of that work.”

For more about Amarachi Okafor, visit her website, amarachiokafor.art.

She also maintains a presence on social media, including [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Instagram](#).





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