

PORTFOLIO · 2026

REWA

Igbo Vernacular Art.

Visual artist
World Economic Forum Young Global Leader, Class of 2026
Aliko Dangote Foundation Fellow, 2026

November 2026
artbyrewa.com · @artbyrewa

At a glance

TEN YEARS OF PRACTICE · 2016 TO 2026

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Eight solo, five institutional, four duo and twelve group shows

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INTERNATIONAL ART FAIRS
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NOTABLE COLLECTIONS
Head of state, corporate, museum and private

THE WORK

Bold figurative portraits rooted in Igbo culture, painted in acrylic and ink on canvas. REWA calls the practice Igbo Vernacular Art: a visual language built from Uli line, masquerade regalia and the cultural vocabulary of Onitsha, rather than borrowed from the Western canon.

MUSEUMS AND INSTITUTIONS SHOWN IN

The Africa Centre
London, 2024

Museum of Ethnology and Cultures of the World (MuEC)
Barcelona, 2024

Casa del Carnaval, the Carnival Museum
Santa Cruz de Tenerife, permanent collection, 2025

Zeitz MOCAA
Cape Town, 2019

Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans
2019

Nigerian National Museum
Lagos, 2020

Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA)
New York, 2017

RECOGNITION

2026 **World Economic Forum Young Global Leader**

2026 **Aliko Dangote Foundation Fellow**

2026 **Meet the Leader speaker, WEF Annual Meeting of Global Future Leaders**
Dubai

2026 **100 African Women of Impact**
Arise News and ThisDay

2024 **Veuve Clicquot Bold Woman Award, Nigeria**

2024 **Official poster, Carnival of Santa Cruz de Tenerife**
First African artist in the Carnival's history



The artist

REWA (Rewa Udoji) is a Nigerian artist whose portraits sit at the meeting point of Igbo cultural heritage and the contemporary African experience.

Born in Onitsha and raised in England, she returned to Nigeria in 2014. She paints the people and institutions of Onitsha: titled women, deities, elders, children, and now the masquerades in which spirit is worn and danced. Alongside the studio she is the founder of Cranstoun, an investment business through which African and diaspora capital participates in global markets. One argument runs through both: Africa should be a participant in the global economy of culture and of capital, not only a destination for what others decide to send.

WHAT THE WORK OFFERS

A living case for culture as an asset class. The practice joins contemporary painting to performance and to the economics of heritage, and it has already been staged alongside the masquerades themselves. It travels: the paintings, the living tradition, and the argument that binds them.

She has shown at The Africa Centre London, Zeitz MOCAA in Cape Town, the Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans the Museum of Ethnology and Cultures of the World in Barcelona and the Casa del Carnaval in Tenerife, which holds her work in its permanent collection, with eight solo exhibitions in Africa, Europe and the United States, and work shown on four continents. She is represented by Ferrara Showman Gallery in New Orleans and Out of Africa Gallery in Barcelona and Madrid.

In 2026 she was named a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader and an Aliko Dangote Foundation Fellow, and spoke on culture as an economic force at the Forum's inaugural Annual Meeting of Global Future Leaders in Dubai.

"How a culture survives depends on its people's capacity to learn and transmit it to future generations."

REWA

Bodies of work

The series form one arc. It opens with women as deities in *The Pantheon*. It moves to the titled women of Onitsha, painted at life scale. It arrives at the masquerades, where the spirit is not depicted but embodied.

2026	**Embodied Spirits: Masquerades of Igboland**	Gaia Africa Club, Lagos · with the Aliko Dangote Foundation and the Forum of Young Global Leaders
2025	**ngala kwesili: Pride Within**	Out of Africa Gallery, Madrid
2025	**onye isi okanga: Proud Beings**	Ferrara Showman Gallery, New Orleans
2024	**ndi otu odu: Women of the Elephant Tusk**	The Africa Centre, London
2024	**Agbogho Mmuo · Secrets of Africa**	Official poster, Carnival of Santa Cruz de Tenerife
2021	**i'je awel'le: A Beautiful Journey, A Safe Journey**	Ferrara Showman Gallery, New Orleans
2019	**nwa agbo: Entering Adolescence**	Ferrara Showman Gallery, New Orleans
2016	**The Pantheon**	The female deities of West Africa, where the work began



Girl with R Earring
2025 · onye isi okanga: Proud Beings · 122 × 91 cm



nchekwube | Poise
2025 · ngala kwesili: Pride Within · 120 × 90 cm



Ijele · Eze Mmuo, the King of Masquerades · 2026 · Acrylic and ink on canvas · 274 × 274 cm (9 × 9 ft)

CHAPTER ONE · 2026

Embodied Spirits

Masquerades of Igboland

Six paintings drawn from the living masquerade traditions of Onitsha, in south-eastern Nigeria: Ijele, Otu Iche, Izaga, Mmuo Ogonogo and two of Agbogho Mmuo. Where a museum shows a mask behind glass, the masquerade is a body the spirit can wear and dance, and it still walks the streets of Onitsha.

The animating idea is that culture is not a relic. An Ijele takes about a hundred makers six months to build and is performed for a single afternoon before it is dismantled. Nothing about it is made to last, and yet it has outlasted empires because it lives in skill rather than in stone. UNESCO inscribed the Ijele on its list of intangible cultural heritage in 2009.

The series opened in Lagos in September 2026 within *From Promise to Powerhouse: Building Africa's Next Era*, hosted by the Aliko Dangote Foundation in partnership with the World Economic Forum's Forum of Young Global Leaders. It is accompanied by a forty-page book of the same name.

READ THE CATALOGUE

Embodied Spirits

ACRYLIC AND INK ON CANVAS · 2025 TO 2026



Agbogho Mmuo I
The Dancing Maiden Spirit · 2026 · 183 × 122 cm (6 × 4 ft)



Otu Iche
The Stone-Thrower · 2026 · 183 × 183 cm (6 × 6 ft)



Izaga
The Stilt Masquerade · 2025 · 274 × 122 cm (9 × 4 ft)



Mmuo Ogonogo
The Tall Ghost · 2026 · 274 × 183 cm (9 × 6 ft)



Agbogho Mmuo II
The Dancing Maiden Spirit · 2026 · 183 × 122 cm (6 × 4 ft)

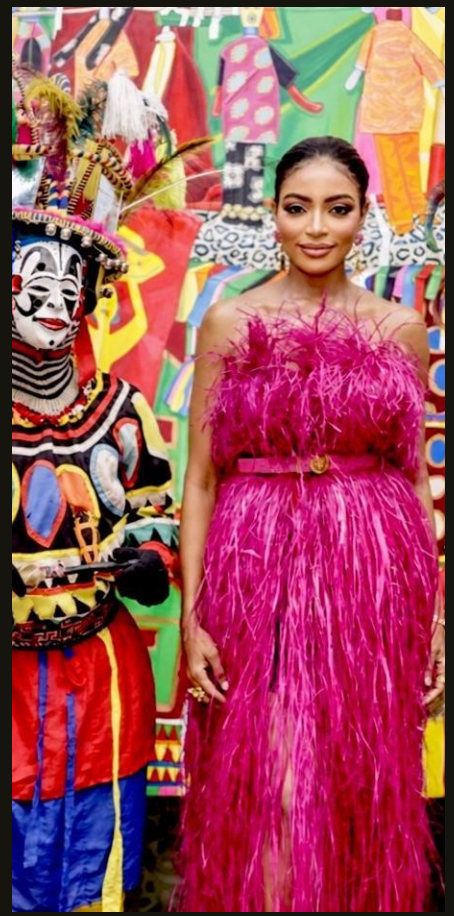
The staging

GAIA AFRICA CLUB, LAGOS · 11 SEPTEMBER 2026

For the opening REWA brought the masquerades themselves from Onitsha: the Ijele carrier, drummers, a flutist, an orator, the Agbogho Mmuo maiden masquerades and their assistants. The living tradition danced in front of the paintings, in the room, to an audience of Young Global Leaders and Lagos collectors. She paid the performers herself, as the practical form of her argument that the makers who sustain living heritage too often go unfunded.

The evening carried a discussion, *From Behind Glass to Asset Class: the business of keeping culture alive*, led by REWA with Femi Akinsanya, Sandra Mbanefo Obiago and Karabo Morule.

Tatler Africa covered the show under the headline *Nigerian artist REWA's Embodied Spirits takes centre stage at the Dangote and WEF summit in Lagos*.



The Agbogho Mmuo beside the painting



REWA before the Ijele at night



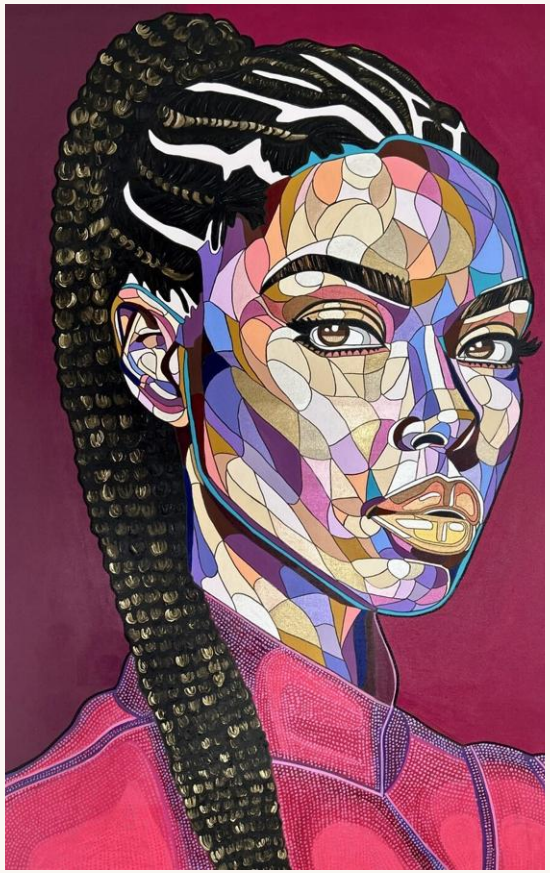
The Ijele in the street · Photographs © Chris Okedavis

ngala kwesili *Pride Within*

OUT OF AFRICA GALLERY, MADRID · NOVEMBER TO DECEMBER 2025 · ACRYLIC AND INK ON CANVAS

A solo exhibition on dignity, self-possession and African identity. The sitters are painted as they hold themselves: the quiet crown, the mother's charge, the lineage, the first harvest. The palette is REWA's own, the faces built from patterned planes of colour, the Uli line carrying the form.

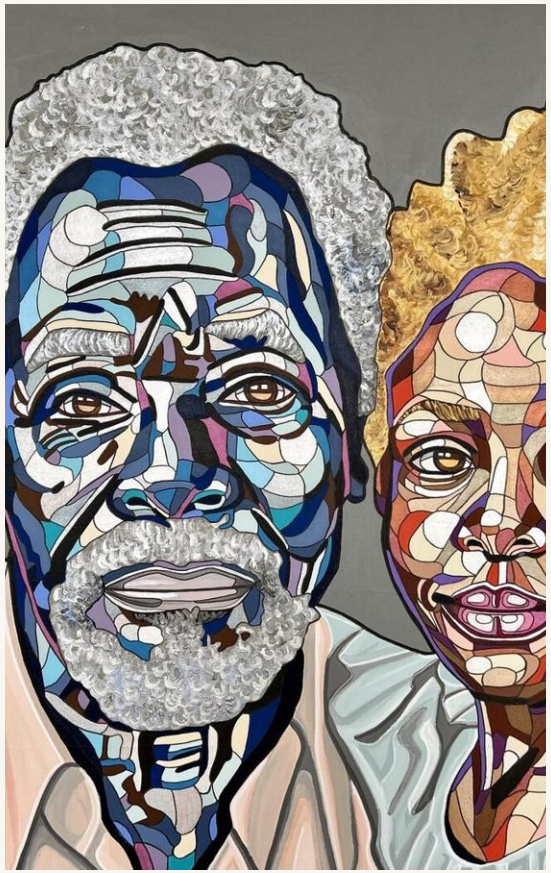
The show was REWA's second solo exhibition in Spain and her first in Madrid, with coverage in Shangay, El Confidencial Digital and Africa Art News.



Okpu Udo | The Quiet Crown
2025 · 120 × 90 cm



Iwu Nne | The Mother's Charge
2025 · 120 × 90 cm



Umunna | The Lineage
2025 · 90 × 120 cm

onye isi okanga *Proud Beings*

FERRARA SHOWMAN GALLERY, NEW ORLEANS · APRIL TO MAY 2025 · ACRYLIC AND INK ON CANVAS



amadi | A Free Man
2024 · 91 × 122 cm



afamefuna | My Name Will Not Be Forgotten
2025 · 122 × 91 cm



anyanwu II | Eye of the Sun
2025 · 122 × 91 cm



lebechi | Look Unto God
2025 · 122 × 91 cm



nnamdi | My Father is Here
2025 · 91 × 122 cm

Where spirit, power and pride converge. The fourth solo exhibition with Ferrara Showman Gallery, the gallery that has represented REWA in the United States since her United States debut there in 2018 with *inu nwunye: Bride Price*.

A sister work, *anyanwu | Sunshine* (2024), had first been exhibited at the Museum of Ethnology and Cultures of the World in Barcelona. It went on to the Summer 2025 cover of The Southern Review, the literary journal of Louisiana State University, which carried ten works across its cover and interior.



ndi otu odu: Titled Women of Onicha (I, II, III) · Acrylic and ink on canvas · 274 × 274 cm (9 × 9 ft)

CHAPTER TWO · 2024

ndi otu odu

Women of the Elephant Tusk

Eight large-scale paintings tracing initiation into the Otu Odu female chieftaincy society of Onitsha, one of the most prestigious socio-political groups in Igbo culture. Its members, adorned with elephant tusk insignia, hold influence, wealth and social responsibility.

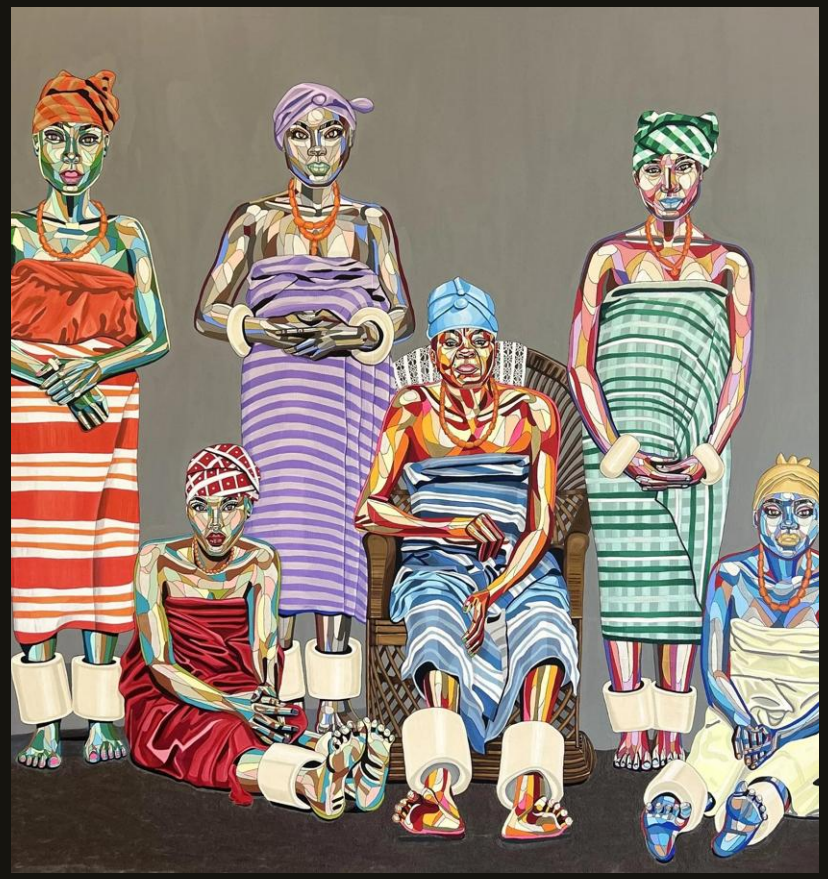
Built over two years of family history and archival research, the series paints these women as custodians of Igbo heritage and places their authority within a contemporary visual language. It is both celebration and reclamation: a narrative of women's political and cultural agency largely absent from mainstream accounts of African history.

The exhibition at The Africa Centre, London, was ratified by the Obi of Onitsha and coincided with the Centre's sixtieth anniversary and Black History Month in the UK. Curated by SMO Contemporary Art.

READ THE CATALOGUE

ndi otu odu

THE AFRICA CENTRE, LONDON · SEPTEMBER TO OCTOBER 2024 · ACRYLIC AND INK ON CANVAS



ndi otu odu: Titled Women of Onicha (Pre-colonial)
2024 · 274 × 274 cm



Taking of the Oath
2024 · 183 × 122 cm



The Elder and The Chaperone I
2024 · 183 × 122 cm



Installation view, The Africa Centre



Opening night, 8 September 2024 · REWA with attending members of the Otu Odu Society

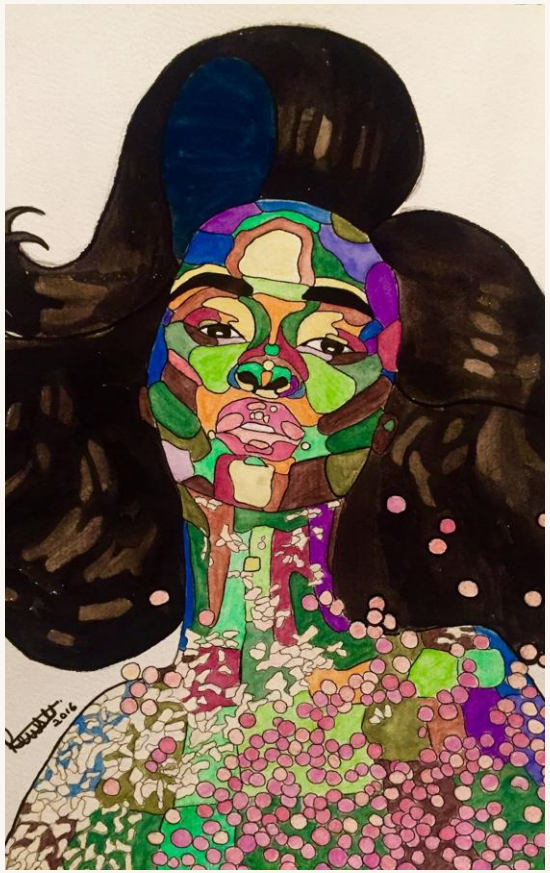
The Pantheon

WHERE THE WORK BEGAN · 2016 · WATERCOLOUR AND INK ON PAPER

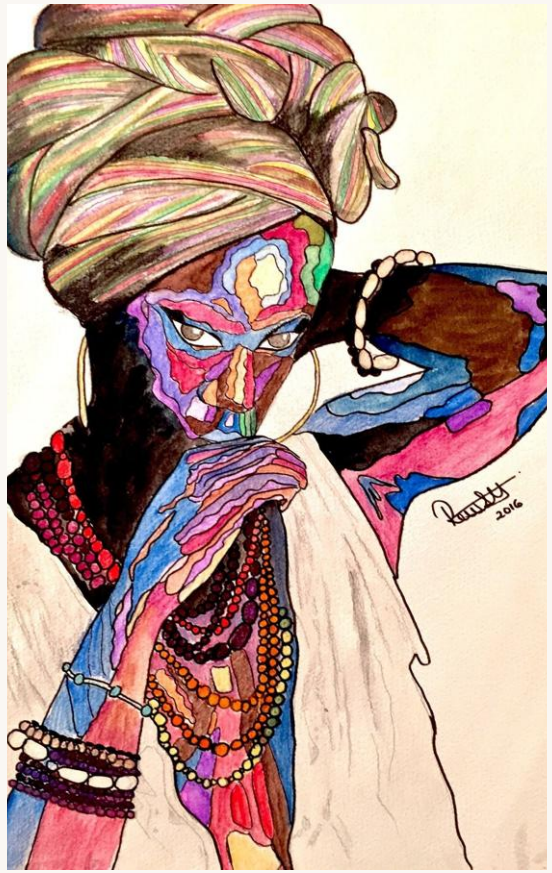
REWA did not begin with masquerades. She began with women: the West African deities of The Pantheon, first painted in 2016, imagined as the source of power and of story. Ala, Oshun, Oya, Mawu, Olokun, Agbala, Anyanwu.

These are the paintings in which Igbo Vernacular Art is first articulated: stylised figurative forms built from intricate patterning, a visual language taken from the cultural vocabulary of her heritage.

The practice started with a twenty-dollar set of watercolour pencils in Johannesburg; these first deities are small works on paper, each no larger than a hand. Within a year the work was in ReLe Gallery's Young Contemporaries in Lagos; within two years it had a show in New Orleans.



Oshun
Rivers, beauty and love · 2016 · 16.5 × 11.6 cm



Mawu
The moon, night and rest · 2016 · 16.5 × 11.6 cm



Olokun
The deep sea and its wealth · 2016 · 16.5 × 11.6 cm

Commissions, covers and screen

TENERIFE · LOUISIANA · LOS ANGELES · NEW YORK

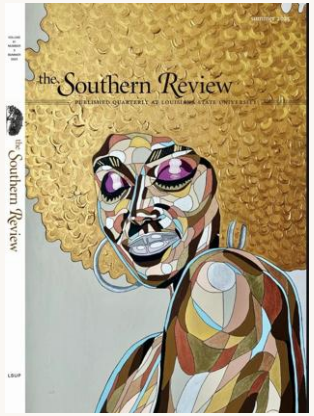


CARNAVAL DE SANTA CRUZ DE TENERIFE

Agbogho Mmuo · Secrets of Africa

Official poster, 2025 edition · 183 × 122 cm

The first African artist in the Carnival's history to design its official poster, and only the seventh woman, joining a roster that includes César Manrique, Mel Ramos and Jiří 'Georg' Dokoupil. The poster carries Agbogho Mmuo, the dancing maiden spirit, with Uli patterning and Nsibidi script interwoven with the sun and colours of Tenerife and of Spain. The work entered the collection of the Casa del Carnaval.



THE SOUTHERN REVIEW

Louisiana State University · Summer 2025. Cover and ten works inside, alongside new writing by Pulitzer Prize winner Tracy K. Smith. Founded 1935; past contributors include T. S. Eliot.

Cover work: *anyanwu | Sunshine.*

ON SCREEN



Usher, Ruin · Six works on set in the music video, directed by Grammy winner Dave Meyers · 2024



NBC, Law & Order: Organized Crime · Paintings on set. Also seen in ABC's Black-ish and Oprah Winfrey's All the Single Ladies on OWN

Recognition

WITH THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

Oct 2026 — **Meet the Leader: The Power of Culture to Connect**
Main speaker, inaugural Annual Meeting of Global Future Leaders, Dubai, with Angelle Siyang-Le, Director of Art Basel Hong Kong

Sep 2026 — **Young Global Leaders learning journey, Lagos**
Proposed and led the culture segment, Embodied Spirits, with the Aliko Dangote Foundation

Jul 2026 — **Contributor, World Economic Forum Agenda**
What a Nigerian masquerade can teach the creative economy about keeping culture alive

2026 — **Young Global Leader, Class of 2026**
and Aliko Dangote Foundation Fellow, inaugural cohort

ART AND CULTURE

2026 — **100 African Women of Impact**
Arise News and ThisDay

2024 — **Official poster, Carnival of Santa Cruz de Tenerife**
First African artist in the Carnival's history

LEADERSHIP

2025 — **Black Women in Asset Management 40 Under 40**
Wealth Management

2024 — **Veuve Clicquot Bold Woman Award, Nigeria**
The world's longest-running award for women in business, established 1972

2024 — **Top 25 Women in Management**
Women in Management Africa

2022 — **EKO 100 Women**
Lagos State Government



Meet the Leader, Culture as an Economic Force, in conversation with Angelle Siyang-Le, Director of Art Basel Hong Kong · World Economic Forum, Dubai, October 2026

Exhibition record

SOLO EXHIBITIONS · 8

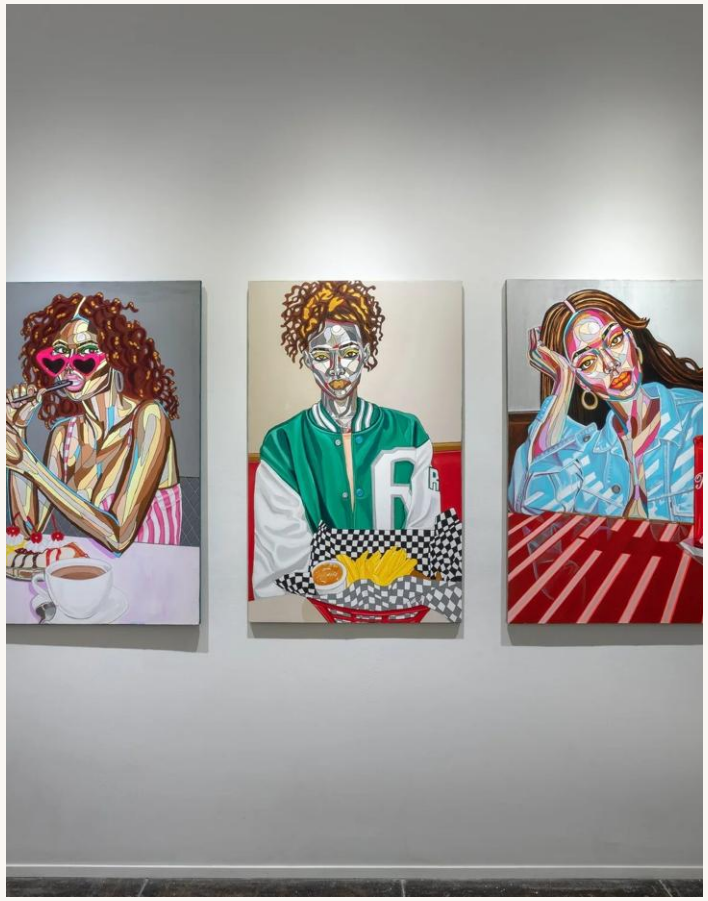
2026	**Embodied Spirits: Masquerades of Igboland**	Gaia Africa Club, Lagos · Aliko Dangote Foundation with the World Economic Forum's Forum of Young Global Leaders
2025	**ngala kwesili: Pride Within**	Out of Africa Gallery, Madrid
2025	**onye isi okanga: Proud Beings**	Ferrara Showman Gallery, New Orleans
2024	**ndi otu odu: Women of the Elephant Tusk**	The Africa Centre, London
2022	**Pink Party**	Band of Vices Gallery, Los Angeles
2021	**i'je awel'le: A Beautiful Journey, A Safe Journey**	Ferrara Showman Gallery, New Orleans
2019	**nwa agbo: Entering Adolescence**	Ferrara Showman Gallery, New Orleans
2018	**inu nwunye: Bride Price**	Ferrara Showman Gallery, New Orleans · her United States debut, within No Dead Artists

INSTITUTIONAL EXHIBITIONS · 5

2025	**Agbogho Mmuo · Secrets of Africa**	Casa del Carnaval, the Carnival Museum, Santa Cruz de Tenerife · permanent collection
2024	**Bridges of Culture: Contemporary African Art through Women's Eyes**	Museum of Ethnology and Cultures of the World (MuEC), Barcelona
2019	**Identity Measures**	Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans
2019	**Back to the Future: Still Here Tomorrow to High Five You Yesterday**	Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town
2017	**Annual Masquerade Ball, Group Exhibition and Auction**	Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA), New York

DUO EXHIBITIONS · 4

2022	**Afropolitans**, with Boris Anjel	Out of Africa Gallery, Barcelona
2022	**Ladies of Leisure**, with Megan Gabrielle Harris	DeBuck Gallery, New York
2021	**Emancipation + Liberation**, with Oluwole Omofemi	Out of Africa Gallery, Barcelona
2017	**Her Story: Sisterhood That Transcends**, with Dagmar van Weeghe	The Gallery of African Art (GAFRA), London



Installation view · Ferrara Showman Gallery, New Orleans, 2023

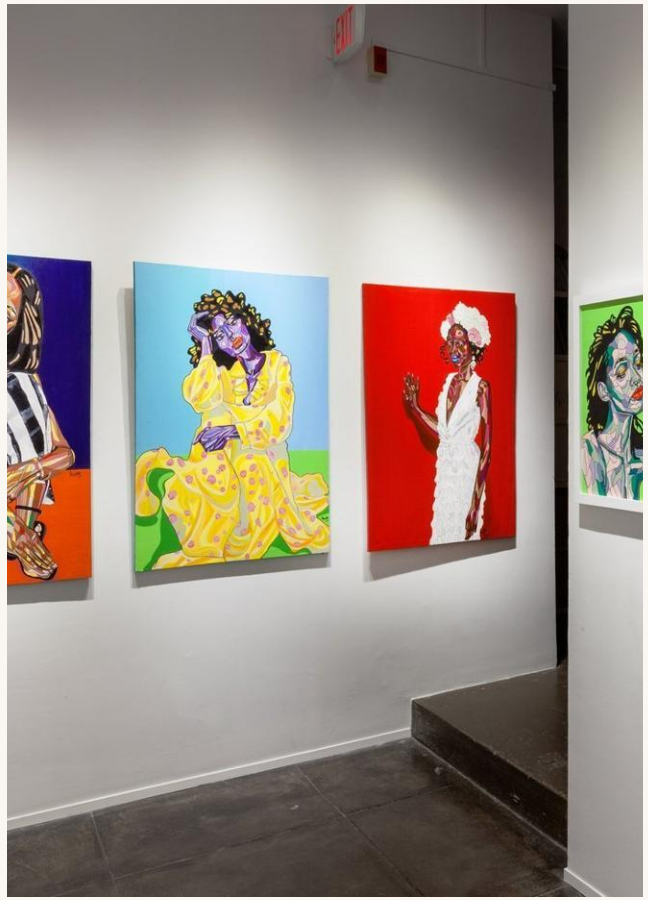
Exhibition record

GROUP EXHIBITIONS · 12

2022	**Africa Rises in the Fall**	Out of Africa Gallery, London
2021	**Mescaline, C11H17NO3**	Band of Vices Gallery, Los Angeles
2021	**The Shape of the New**	CasildART and ArtCan, virtual
2021	**Deus Ex Femina**	Art Dubai and AKKA Project, Dubai
2021	**The Truth About Me**	ArtLeadHer, Urban Zen Gallery, New York
2021	**Addicted to Africa**	Artsy and Out of Africa Gallery, Barcelona
2021	**In the Midst of All That Is**	Band of Vices Gallery, Los Angeles
2020	**Inspiration in Isolation**	Ferrara Showman Gallery, New Orleans
2020	**Kwetu: A Celebration of Black Art**	Mayor of London, virtual
2020	**ReLe Gallery Young Contemporaries Alumni Exhibition**	Nigerian National Museum, Lagos
2018	**Summer Art Fair**	The Gallery of African Art (GAFRA), London
2017	**ReLe Young Contemporaries 2017**	ReLe Gallery, Lagos

INTERNATIONAL ART FAIRS · 11

2024	**International Festival for Contemporary Art (IFCA)**	Algiers, Algeria
2023	**Art on Paper**	New York
2023	**RMB Latitudes Art Fair**	Johannesburg
2023	**Art Market San Francisco**	Ferrara Showman Gallery
2022	**SCOPE Miami Beach**	Out of Africa Gallery
2022	**Art Miami**	Ferrara Showman Gallery
2022	**Art Expo Chicago**	DeBuck Gallery
2022	**Art Market San Francisco**	Ferrara Showman Gallery
2021	**Art Miami**	Ferrara Showman Gallery
2020	**Art Miami**	Ferrara Showman Gallery
2020	**Art Dubai**	ReLe Gallery



nwa agbo: Entering Adolescence · Ferrara Showman Gallery, New Orleans, 2019

Collections and representation

CORPORATE · MUSEUM · PRIVATE · SCREEN

NOTABLE COLLECTIONS

2026 **H.E. William Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya**
Mmuo Ogonogo, from Embodied Spirits, presented as a gift by Aliko Dangote

2025 **African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank)**
Contemporary art collection

2024 **Casa del Carnaval**
Carnival Museum, Santa Cruz de Tenerife

2022 **AXA XL**
Art collection, United Kingdom

2021 **Beth Rudin DeWoody**
Art patron · The Bunker Art Space, Florida

2021 **Gina Monette**
Trustee, Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans

2020 **CCH Pounder**
Art patron and actress

2020 **Kent Kelly**
Art patron and Trustee, High Museum of Art, Atlanta

GALLERY REPRESENTATION

Ferrara Showman Gallery
New Orleans, United States · Matthew Weldon Showman · since 2018

Out of Africa Gallery
Barcelona and Madrid, Spain · Sorella Acosta

SCREEN, MUSIC AND FASHION

2024 **Usher, Ruin**
Six works on set in the music video, directed by Grammy winner Dave Meyers

OWN, All the Single Ladies
Oprah Winfrey Network documentary · paintings on set

NBC, Law & Order: Organized Crime
Paintings on set

ABC, Black-ish
Paintings on set

2021 **Burnett New York, Fall 2021**
kp'ari | Women of Onitsha printed on the collection's garments



REWA before her work · Out of Africa Gallery, Madrid, 2025

More than two hundred works made since 2016, with pieces held in corporate, institutional and private collections in Africa, Europe and the United States. An available-works list and installation notes can be supplied on request.



Selected press

MORE THAN FIFTY FEATURES · 2017 TO 2026

2026 **Tatler Africa**
REWA's Embodied Spirits takes centre stage at the Dangote and WEF summit in Lagos

2026 **World Economic Forum**
Meet the Young Global Leaders Class of 2026

2025 **El Confidencial Digital**
REWA: una voz africana global

2025 **Shangay**
Pride Within: el orgullo femenino africano según REWA

2024 **The Guardian Nigeria**
Veuve Clicquot Bold Women merging heritage with vision

2024 **Business Insider Africa**
Redefining finance and fashion in Africa

2024 **El Día, Tenerife**
A Nigerian artist for the African Carnival poster

2024 **Radio Televisión Canaria**
Designer of the 2025 Carnival poster

2024 **Business Day Nigeria**
Women of the Elephant Tusk and African female empowerment

2024 **Aspire Luxury Magazine**
Introducing the Women of the Elephant Tusk

2024 **The Guardian Life**
With finance, arts, happiness comes full circle for REWA

2023 **NBC**
Rising Women Africa: women making leadership strides

2021 **W Magazine**
Inside Donna Karan's new art exhibition

2021 **Complex**
Band of Vices immersive group exhibition

2021 **Pigment International**
Cover feature

2020 **ThisDay Style**
5 Minutes With REWA

2020 **Create Magazine**
Igbo Vernacular Art by REWA

2017 **CNN Africa**
Feature

Full press archive at artbyrewa.com/artbyrewa-press · REWA in the studio with ndi otu odu

CONTACT

REWA

Igbo Vernacular Art.

Studio · info@artbyrewa.com

Web · artbyrewa.com

Instagram · @artbyrewa

Telephone · +234 810 896 6557

Ferrara Showman Gallery, New Orleans · matthew@ferrarashowman.com

Out of Africa Gallery, Barcelona and Madrid · sorella@ooagallery.com

Portfolio 2026 · Lagos, November 2026

Artwork photography Adeyinka Akingbade · Event photography Chris Okedavis

