

KÖNIG LONDON

DENNIS OSADEBE MODERN MAGIC

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17 JUNE – 16 JULY 2022

KÖNIG LONDON is pleased to present MODERN MAGIC, Dennis Osadebe's first exhibition with KÖNIG GALERIE, comprised of ten new paintings, all acrylic and archival ink on canvas. With the starting point of the influence of black culture, the works present themselves like a theatre filled with visual challenges and rich experimentation.

Viewers are given a front-row seat to an unfolding show as Osadebe's painted characters take on the role of performers captured amid moments of magic; their masks symbolic of divine protection. Abstracted architectural spaces are lit by variegated sources, along with exaggerated shadows, and heightened perspective, to create an atmosphere of a dreamlike stage. Drawing from a wellspring of metaphysical, Surrealist, and Renaissance painting, Osadebe conjures a realm where viewers can only question the location of the powers that be.

Lavish cultural motifs reflect Osadebe's fascination with craftsmanship. References to the Magic 8 Ball are found throughout the paintings and act as a point of focus for Osadebe's first-ever conceptually guided sculptural installation, with objects employed as vessels aimed at preservation. These include the traditional Nigerian fan – a ubiquitous, accessible object, necessary for everyday life – highlighted by a pristine, symbolic framing that celebrates its cultural significance. This one motif is exemplary for Osadebe's take on preservation, which looks to heritage for answers to the future, consciously speaking of blackness and its pivotal role in shaping contemporary culture.

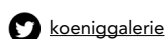
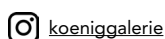
Osadebe's radical approach to self-portraiture manifests his philosophical basis for contemporary Nigerian art, fusing Western techniques and indigenous traditions to construct a new paradigm for the evolution of art. As said by prolific Nigerian painter Ben Enwonwu, "It is setting the clock back to expect that the art form of Africa today must resemble that of yesterday otherwise the former will not reflect the African image".

Text: Holly Gibbs

Dennis Osadebe (b. 1991 in Lagos, Nigeria) lives and works in Lagos. He earned a BSc in Business Management from Queen Mary University, London, and an MSc in Innovation and Entrepreneurship from the University of Warwick, Coventry, originally pursuing a career in business before embarking on his journey as a self-taught artist.

Dennis Osadebe is recognised for his post-pop style, which is centred around the idea of reimagining his heritage through positive, provocative, and progressive imagery and narratives. His practice utilises a personal iconography that explores ancestry, technology, and the possibilities of humanity. Osadebe juxtaposes elements of the past with the present, using his heredity as a starting point to instigate a dialogue between tradition and innovation. Loaded with provocative surrealist-like imagery, meaningful symbolism, and playful humour, Osadebe understands his artistic practice as an ongoing investigation of the perimeters between the traditional and the contemporary, placing his background in conversation with a future full of limitless possibilities.

A recent solo exhibition took place at the Museum of Contemporary African Diaspora Arts (MoCADA), New York (2021). Osadebe is also credited for projects including: THE RULES DO NOT APPLY for The National Gallery London; #StandFor in collaboration with Unique Board; and was part of the team awarded with Life Enhancer of The Year at the Wallpaper* Design Awards (2021).



EXHIBITIONS

JULIAN ROSEFELDT
Penumbra
ST. AGNES I NAVE
17.06 – 07.08.2022

BJARNE MELGAARD
Relapse
ST. AGNES I CHAPEL
21.06 – 24.07.2022

JOHANNES WOHNSEIFER
The Ella in Umbrella
KÖNIG SEOUL
01.06 – 03.07.2021

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Opening Hours
Fri – Sat 1 – 6 PM
And by appointment