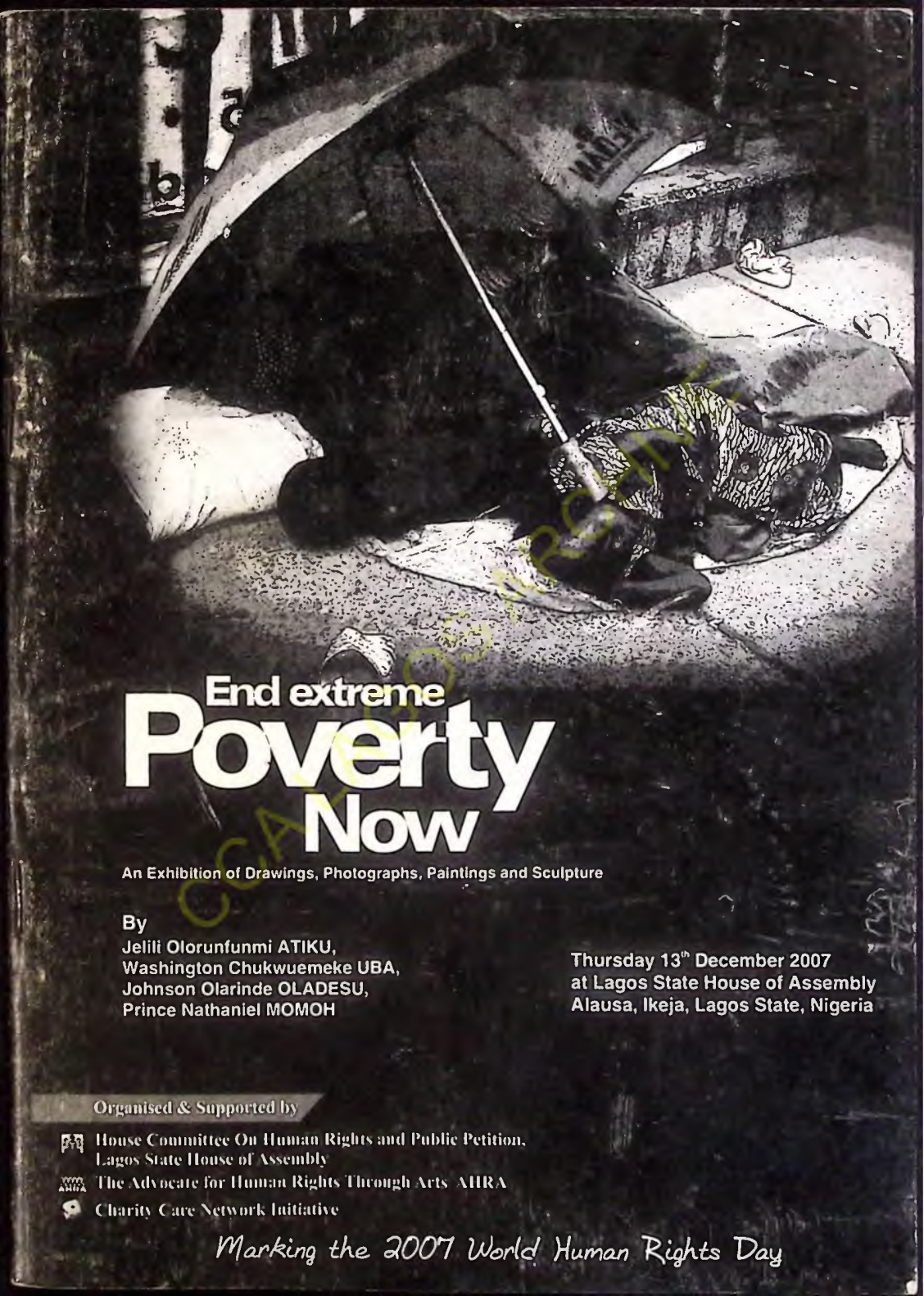




End extreme Poverty Now

An Exhibition of Drawings, Photographs, Paintings and Sculpture

By

Jelili Olorunfunmi ATIKU,
Washington Chukwuemeke UBA,
Johnson Olarinde OLADESU,
Prince Nathaniel MOMOH

Thursday 13th December 2007
at Lagos State House of Assembly
Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria

Organised & Supported by



House Committee On Human Rights and Public Petition,
Lagos State House of Assembly



The Advocate for Human Rights Through Arts (AHRA)



Charity Care Network Initiative

Marking the 2007 World Human Rights Day

End extreme Poverty Now

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A REQUEST FOR THE ERADICATION OF EXTREME POVERTY

Our concern for an egalitarian society has always been the propelling force, principle and philosophy behind the creation of our artistic visual forms. However, we take a wider view that art in our contemporary time must be concerned and assault all "emotional, psychological and moral crises that confront us all". Needless to say that the core of this concern is placed on the core of human values of life and freedom: Human Rights.

J.E.S. Fawcett said in F.E. Dowrick book, *Human Right: Problems, Perspectives and Test* (1979, University of Durham, Page 78) that "human rights might be better called common rights for they are the rights and freedom which do not depend for their exercise upon the holder belonging to any particular community group or category: They are the rights of all human beings... The right to be, the right to have, and the right to be given". Through searching to express the values of the foregoing and careful study of our milieu as well as human struggle for meaningful existence; we have come to a conclusion that human rights is the ultimate value of life. Its absence, using Kofi Annan (former Secretary General to United Nations) words is "more than a denial of human dignity; it is also at the root of the poverty and political violence that plague our world.

Therefore, our aim in this exhibition, titled *End Poverty Now* is to present a memorandum on a form of human right abuse in Nigeria: Poverty. Statistics have shown that 54 percent of population of Nigeria is battling with this malaise. We, the exhibiting artists are also experiencing and bearing witnesses to the violation.

By expressing these experiences through visual art forms, we are bringing to the fore the hidden realities of the pains, agonies and sufferings inherent in Poverty. We are disturbed by the facts that the country, Nigeria is rich but majority of the citizenry is languishing in poverty, worst still abject poverty.

Our works, drawings photographs, paintings and installation sculpture may appear to be realistic or conceptual or contextual or even abstract in forms and theme; we have as principle confined ourselves to the truth of incidences of poverty in Nigeria. Here, we are appealing for tolerant of our bluntness. Truth must be expressed in its real form and appearance. We hasten to say that we are only mirroring without distorting the reality.

It is our hope that through this exhibition, we have employ the system, which maintains the status quo to purge itself of the idea that is producing the enduring objects of poverty in Nigeria. That is the core of our goal.

We urge you as you view are works to join forces in eradicating extreme poverty and hunger in our country. End extreme poverty now!

For: Exhibiting Artists,

Washington Chukwuemeke Uba
Co-ordinator Charity Care Network Initiative,
Lagos,
December 2007

AN EPISTLE FOR MEMBERS OF LAGOS STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

13th December, 2007

Dear Honourable Members

Extreme Poverty and Hunger: Flagrant Human Rights Abuse

First of all, we salute the commitment of Lagos State House of Assembly since its inception in 1979 towards the task of promoting and protecting human rights in Lagos State as a humanitarian gesture in attaining social justice; with full guarantee of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The House yearly Special Parliamentary Session; devoted to the commemoration of World Human Rights Day exemplifies this commitment.

However, as the House observes this noble custom today, especially with a public lecture on the theme, "Human Rights and the Challenges of Democracy in Contemporary Nigeria: The Forgotten Realities, which will be delivered by Associate Professor Abolade Adeniji of the Department of History and International Studies, Lagos State University; we wish to add our voices to the reports of human rights situations in Nigeria.

Our agitation is expressed through an exhibition of our visual artistic works, which you have viewed at the House Lobby. These works are simple expressions of one of the grim realities in Nigeria social fabric: Poverty.

It should be recalled that Layi Adeboye wrote in Saturday Punch of October 20, 2007, page 45 that:

...the daily portrait of poverty walking the streets of Nigeria freely unchallenged with its devastating havoc, definitely imposes a duty on all stakeholders to redefine strategies for combating the menace

The centre-piece of this discourse, without any pretence to bearing vanguards on the scope of the malaise and its origin in Nigeria, is why has Nigeria refuses to move over out of the endemic zone, even when World Bank statistics has shown countries like Malaysia, Indonesia and Kenya exiting in measures. 20 years after poverty was officially recognised as a global malaise?

The foregoing statement succinctly epitomizes our concern in civil organisations in Nigeria. The concern has thus been enlarged beyond the causes or principium of extreme and egregious poverty in the country to the ambit of analytical reasoning that bother on the reason of the persistence of poverty in Nigeria in spite of her richness in human and natural resources.

Recently Professor Charles Soludo, the Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria had put the incidences of poverty in Nigeria at 54 percentage of the total population, with the North East

region having worst incidence at 72.2 percent; North West 71.1 percent, North Central 67.0 percent, South West 43.05 percent, South East 26.6 percent. These figures show that "77.6 percent of the population in the South East say they live in poverty: 74.85 percent in South South, 71.9 percent in the North West, 81.8 percent in South West and 80.0 percent in the North Central" (Reference to Kolapo, Y. *Breaking the Cycle of Poverty*. In The Punch, August 10, 2007, page 13).

It should also be recalled that United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1995 defined poverty as "a social condition of chronic insecurity resulting from the breakdown of economic, demographic, ecological, cultural and social systems and causing groups of people to lose capacity to adapt and to survive." This implies that the scourge (poverty) should be viewed beyond physical deprivation to the domain of its psychological effects that hinder people from attaining full utilization of their individual potential and fulfilling their aspirations.

By explanation, the credence of the above is clearly seen in our economic life where gross inadequate productive resources and equipments; income generating skills valued by the market; economic useful information (such as prices, etc) bargaining and marketing power, low income and low consumption from self production and above all lack of economic security or back up resources for emergencies, etc are order of the day. These are coupled with our educational problem where higher degree of literacy and other basic skills that add economic value to work are unattainable.

In our political lives, we are struggling with lack of political will and sufficient access to power holders to initiate, correct or improve political decisions. These also grow amidst inefficient democratic institutions that ought to channel or monitor or utilize our resources and the unprecedented incidences of scale of corruption, wastage of public fund, maladministration and electoral fraud, etc.

Our social lives also are characterized with deteriorating environment, resulting from pollution, insufficient of food, clean air and water, erosion, overuse and deforestation; lack of adequate sound shelter and sanitation at affordable prices, deteriorating infrastructural facilities, poor health system, which has brought about poor health, low resistance to illness and disease. As a matter of fact, poverty is destroying our "social fabric and natural environment". It is also denying many Nigerian the opportunities and choices to be developed and lived as normal human beings.

It is against this background that we are urging this great Assembly today as you are mark this Year Human Rights Day in a Special Parliament Session to deliberate and take urgent and concerted action (as urged by Ban-Ki-Moon, the Secretary General of United Nations) to stop poverty in Nigeria. The measures employed so far in this direction have proven to be ineffective in ameliorating it.

We are of the opinion that since Lagos State is the commercial heart of Nigeria, therefore any actions that emanate within it will effortlessly affect all other states of the federation. That is

to say, if an effective measure that will accelerate the eradication of poverty in Nigeria is initiated and executed in Lagos State. It will definitely spread to other part of the country. By doing so, the 54 percent of Nigerians that are wallowing in the field of poverty will be rescued to live meaningful and joyful life.

We will like to remind your honourable selves of the declaration in the United Nations 2007 Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) report. It says, "the greatest proportions of children going hungry continue to be found in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Poor progress in these regions means that it is unlikely that the global target will be met. If current trends continue, the world will miss 2015 target by 30 million children, essentially robbing them of full potential. It continues, "there have been some improvement in MDGs targets; but the poverty gap ration in sub - Saharan Africans remains the highest in the World. This means that the poor in the region are the most economically disadvantaged in the world." This report has shown that poverty will debar sub Saharan Africa, especially Nigeria from attaining the MDGs in 2015.

We shall anchoring this message by recommending that (i) the elimination of poverty should occupy the core part of any political programmes, (ii) all institutions that will enhance good governance and protect the welfare of the people should be strengthened, (iii) the people must be empowered through acquisition of skills and creation of opportunity, (iv) citizens participation in policy making should be encouraged; and (v) importantly, our political leaders should act accountably with focus on develop in- full the potentials of individual citizenry and the country's natural resources.

Poverty is a human rights abuse. It must be stopped now.

For: the Exhibiting Artists,

Jelili Olorunfunmi Atiku
Chief Co-ordinator
Advocate for Human Rights through Arts (AHRA)



Washington Chukwuemeke UBA, a prolific photo-artist who adopts camera's lens as a mirror for social and political critics. He is the founder and Co-coordinator of Charity Care Network Initiative. He holds a Bachelors Degree (B.Tech) in Production Technology from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State.

He started his works of charity from his youth days in the University where he was the Director of Charity, Madonna Mercy Family International (a Catholic Church Charity Group).

Washington has participated in many exhibitions including *Dawning Dreams* (2006), organized by Committee for Relevant Art (CORA), *Blooming Talents* organized by Transcorp Hilton in 2006, *Destitute in the Land of Plenty*, Media Presentation / Photo Exhibition held at the National Theatre, 2007, *Standing Against Poverty* at the United Nations Information Centre, Lagos in 2007, *Art Against Poverty* at 9th Book and Art Festival, National Theatre in 2007, etc. His present artistic direction premises on expressing the plight of destitute in Nigeria.

His Works in the Exhibition:

- I, *Race Against Time*, 2005, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.
- II, *Sanctuary*, 2005, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.
- III, *Cardiac Arrest*, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.
- IV, *Untitled*, 2007, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.
- V, *dein*, 2005, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.
- VI, *Reflection*, 2006, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.
- VII, *Water Naa Water*, 2007, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.
- VIII, *Sunset*, 2006, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.
- IX, *Generation*, 2006, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.
- X, *Vanity*, 2006, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.
- XI, *101 Avenue*, 2006, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.
- XII, *Sitting in Limbo* 2006, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.

His Contact:

Block 105, Flat 2, Low Cost Housing Estate, Oke-Afa Isolo, Lagos State, Nigeria
(Residence), capainhandinitiative@yahoo.com (E-mail), 234 805 500 1829 (Tel.)



Johnson Otarinde OLADESU, a lecturer at the Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ibegun Ogun State, Nigeria - where he teaches painting and drawing. Born in Ghana (but not a Ghanaian) to the family of David and Comfort Oladesu in 1964; he hails from Oyan in Osun State Nigeria. Otarinde lived in Osogbo for five years for his secondary education in Saint Charles Grammar school, prior to this time; he was in Ghana where he had both middle and primary school in new Edubiasi.

Before he got the lecturing appointment in the University, he was an art teacher at Gods Time Comprehensive Secondary School and Zaria Academy both in Zaria, Kaduna State. He was at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria (Zaria School), Kaduna State for a decade for both Bachelor of Arts and Masters in fine Arts Degrees in Painting. He was groomed in *Freedom in Art* by Jacob, Buhari; Gani; Muzzu; Gushem; Gutip; Onochuckwu, Kafas and the likes. Often, he gets transcends into a new planets of creativity.

He is a member of Nogh Nogh Art Movement in Nigeria and Ibegun Group of Artists. Johnson has had several exhibitions to his credit; these include *Butterflies* (held at Kashim Ibrahim Library, ABU in 2000) *CHOGM Exhibition* (held at Commonwealth People Market, Abuja, 2004), *Dualism* (staged at the National Museum, Onikan Lagos in 2004), *Standing Against Poverty* (at the United Nations Information Centre, Lagos, 2007), *Art Against Poverty* (at 9th Book and Art Festival, National Theatre, 2007), etc. Arts as healing is his current focus in his art forms. The born again painter, Oladesu Johnson Otarinde now lives in Ota in Ogun state, close to the former president [OBJ] farm. Johnson is married with two children.

His Works in the Exhibition:

- I, *State of The Nation II*, 1993, Oil on Canvass, 109cm x 78cm.
- II, *Poliganism*, 2007, Oil on Canvass, 76cm x 61cm.
- III, *Flight Age*, 2007, Oil on Canvass, 61cm x 76.3cm.
- IV, *Hajia*, 1999, Oil on Canvass, 109cm x 78cm.

His Contact:

1A Okosiji Street, Sango Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria (Residence), joladesu@yahoo.com (E-mail), 234 803 452 2514 (Tel.).

Washington Chukwura Mike UBA, Vantty, 2006, Photograph. 40cm x 50cm.



■ Nathaniel Momoh, Golden Table, 2007, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.



Jelili Olorunfunmi ATIKU

Jelili is a reputable Sculptor and art activist, has recently has been advocating for human rights protection through his artistic works. Born in September 27, 1968 in royal lineage in the ancient town of Ejigbo, Lagos State; he remains committed in creating such art works that advocate for egalitarian society. His visit to Ikot Ekpene Prison in 1998, during his National Youth Service influenced his disposition as human rights artist.

In 2004 he staged an arts exhibition to campaign for Nigerian penal and prisons reform. The show was titled *Shadows in the Dark*, held at the National Museum Onikan Lagos. Similarly, in 2005 he had an exhibition of an installation sculpture, titled *Ewawo: The Awaiting Trial Persons* at Lagos State House of Assembly. This was to campaign for the expunging of an obnoxious practice in Lagos State statutory book and Nigeria at large. The practice, which is known as Holding Charge is believed to be facilitating the over population of awaiting trial inmates in Nigerian Prisons.

He also participated in the Committee for Relevant Arts - CORA's 8th Book and Art Festival Exhibition Segment, titled *Dawning Dreams* where he used his installation sculpture, *Free the Press* to campaign for the freedom of press in Nigeria. This event took place in 2006 at the National Museum, Onikan Lagos. Recently he staged a performance art, titled *Stop The Killings* at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria; Lagos State House of Assembly and Ejigbo Police Divisional Headquarters, Lagos to campaign against extra judicial killings, especially political killings in Nigeria. He has also participated in many other group exhibitions and art workshops, which include *Standing Against Poverty* at the United Nations Information Centre, Lagos in 2007, *Art Against Poverty* at 9th Book and Art Festival, National Theatre in 2007, etc.

His contributions and commitment to community development have earned him several award and honours. These include, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) State Chairmanship Award of Excellence Performance (1998), Award of Excellence Performance for Community development by Association of Community Educational Development (ACED), Lagos (2003), Cyprian Ihejiabi Award for the best graduating Final Year Student in Sculpture (Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria, 1997/98).

The above-mentioned quality has also contributed to his appointment as Supervisory Councillor for Works (2006), Chairman Market Committee (2004) and Member, Assessment Committee (2005) of Ejigbo Local Council development Area, Lagos State.

Jelili had B.A (Hon.) Fine Art and M.A. Visual Art Specializing in Sculpture from Ahmadu

Bello University Zaria and University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos respectively. In 2005, he taught drawing and sculpture at the Department of Creative Arts, University of Lagos in Teaching Assistantship programme. He is the founder and Chief coordinator of the Advocate for Human Rights Through Arts (AHRA) and President, the Movement for Creative Drawing and Secretary II, Police Community Relations Committee, Ejigbo Chapter, Lagos State.

His Works in the Exhibition:

- I, Doubtless Hunger, 2007, Charcoal & Pencil on Paper, 70cm x 50cm.
- II, No Dough-Face Here, 2007, Charcoal & Pencil on Paper, 70cm x 50cm.
- III, Poverty in Rows, 2007, Papier-mâché, fabric, found objects such as shoes, wheelchair, Life Size.

Contact:

29, Ifoshi Road, Ejigbo, Lagos (Residence), G.P.O. Box 9723, Marina, Lagos, Nigeria (Postal), atikuolorunfunmi@yahoo.com (E-mail), 234 802 315 5408 (Tel.).



Jelili Olorunfunmi ATUQU, No Dough-Face Here, 2007, Charcoal & Pencil on Paper, 70cm x 50cm.



Johnson Olarinde Oladesu, Poliganism, 2007, Oil on Canvass, 76cm x 61cm



Nathanlel Momoh, *Alpha Billion Naira*, 2007, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm



Jelili Olorunfunmi Atiku, *Poverty in Rows (Detail)*, 2007, Papier-mâché, fabric, found objects, Life Size



Washington Chukwuemeke Uba, *Sitting in Limbo* 2006, Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.



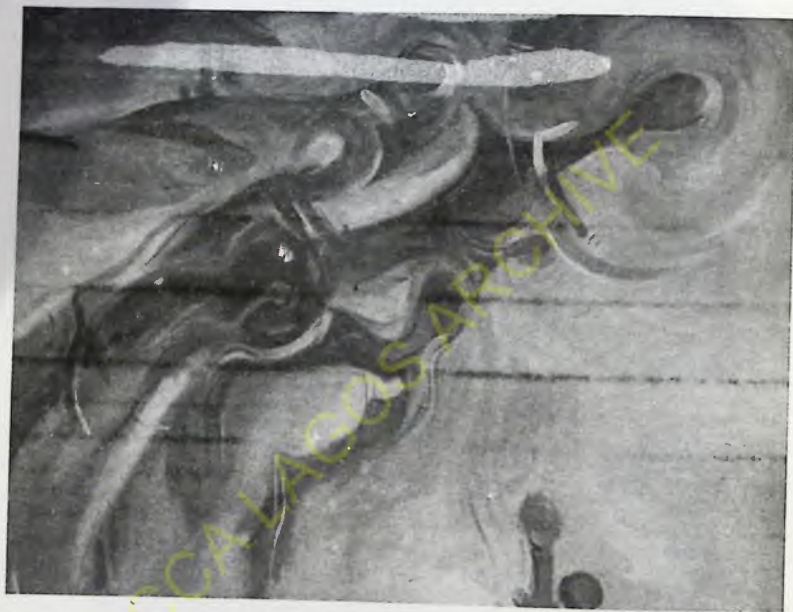
Jelili Olorunfunmi Atiku, *Doubtless Hunger*, 2007,
Charcoal & Pencil on Paper, 70cm x 50cm



Washington Chukwuemeke Uba, *101 Avenue*, 2006. Photograph, 40cm x 50cm.



Johnson Olarinde Oladesu, *Hajia*, 1999, Oil on Canvass, 109cm x 78cm



Johnson Olarinde Oladesu, *Flight Age*, 2007, Oil on Canvass, 61cm x 76.3cm.

Acknowledgements

The Advocate for Human Rights Through Arts AHRA, Charity Care Network Initiative and the exhibiting artists are gratefully acknowledge the support of Lagos State House of Assembly for allowing the staging of the exhibition as part of the House Special Parliamentary Session being devoted to the commemoration of World Human Rights Day and Gamma Communication for providing free administrative services.

We are grateful for the special assistant of Hon. K.O. Lawal, the Chairman House Committee On Human Rights and Public Petition, Mr. A. T. Olatunji, the Permanent Secretary / Clerk of the House for providing impetus for the realization of the exhibition.

The kind contributions and uncommon commitment of the following people towards the actualization of this unique project in Nigeria are highly appreciated. They are Amb. Segun Olushola mni ORF (Founder / Patron, African Refugee Foundation), Josfyn Uba, Chief Muniru Biliaminu, Mr. & Mrs. Ibc Odiaka, Lady I. J. Udoh (Principal, Federal Government Girls College, Calabar), Mr. & Mrs. Misty Uba, Inyang Udo, Jahman Anikulapo, Ogor Uba, Steve Nwosu, Chuka Nnabuike, Yemi, Adebisi, Mrs. Abimbola-Ibiyo Atiku, Mrs. Chi Aghughu, Mr. & Mrs. Barry Uba, Prince Nathaniel Momoh, Kazcem Raji, and Arnold Udoka.

We are grateful.