

The Busy African City: Down Below

Toni Okujeni

Abstract

Aerial paintings of African Cities.

I started painting from the bird's eye view perspective decades ago when I was commissioned to make paintings based on the poem "Ibadan," by renowned Nigerian author J.P. Clarke. "Ibadan" is an Ancient city in South West Nigeria. Hilly in nature, you could see the roofs below.

It later became a style, which I adopted to painting busy Lagos scenes and market places. Most of my views are from balconies, pedestrian bridges, and from imagination. I find the market places best suitable for my works because they are very colorful with patterns and movement.

I am naturally a landscape painter. I work mainly with oil paints and a palette knife. My favorite scenes are cityscapes and market places. The main focus of my works is colors and texture. The aerial nature is secondary. It offers me space to celebrate colors, forms, and texture.



Fig. 1. Toni Okujeni, *Market on a Sunny Day* (2015). 150 cm x 150 cm, oil on canvas.
Source: www.toniokujeni.com

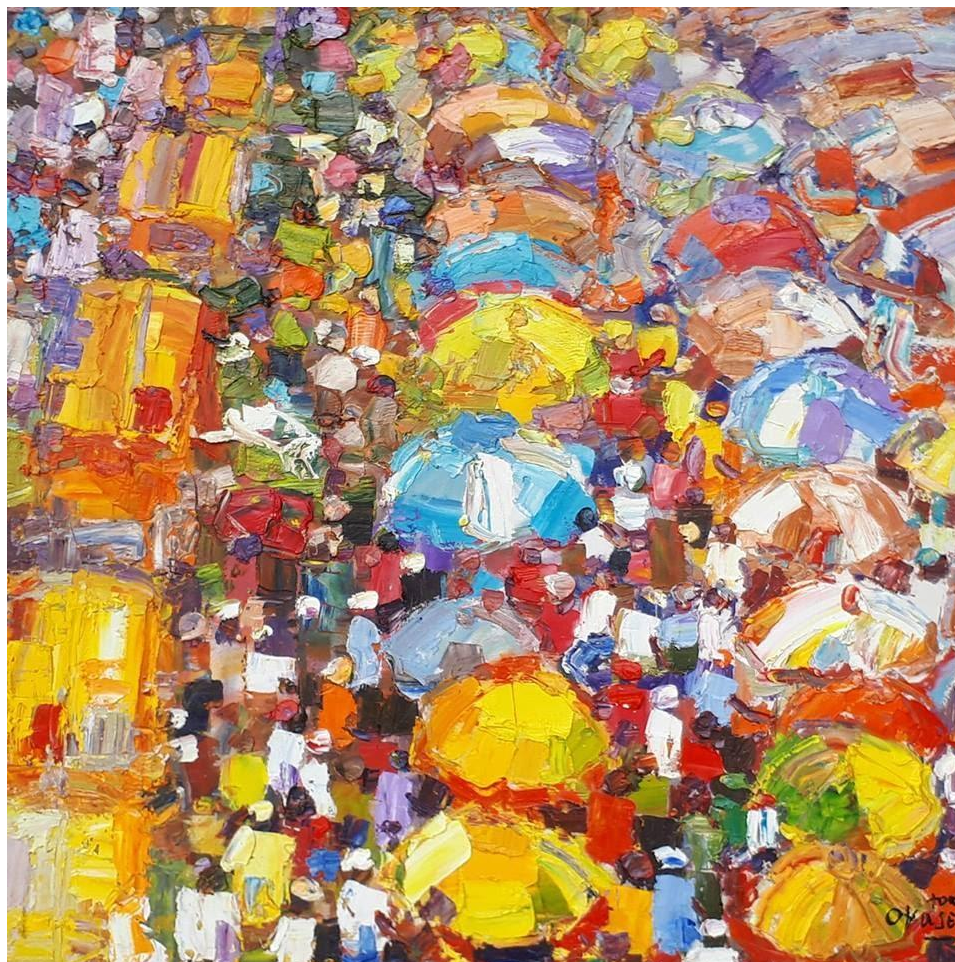


Fig. 2. Toni Okujeni, *Umbrellas Market 4* (2018). 70 cm x 70 cm, oil on canvas.
Source: <https://www.facebook.com/TypicArtsGallery/>

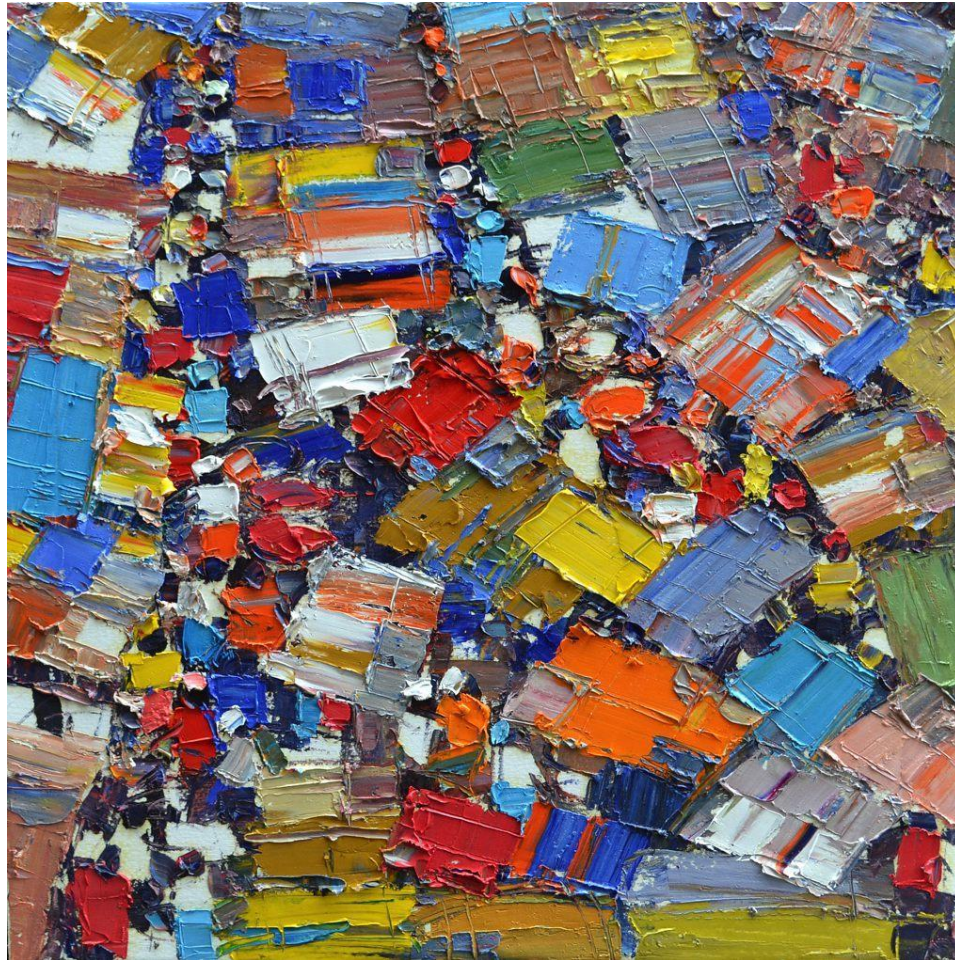


Fig. 3. Toni Okujeni, *Street View* (2014). 71 cm x 71 cm, oil on canvas.
Source: www.toniokujeni.com

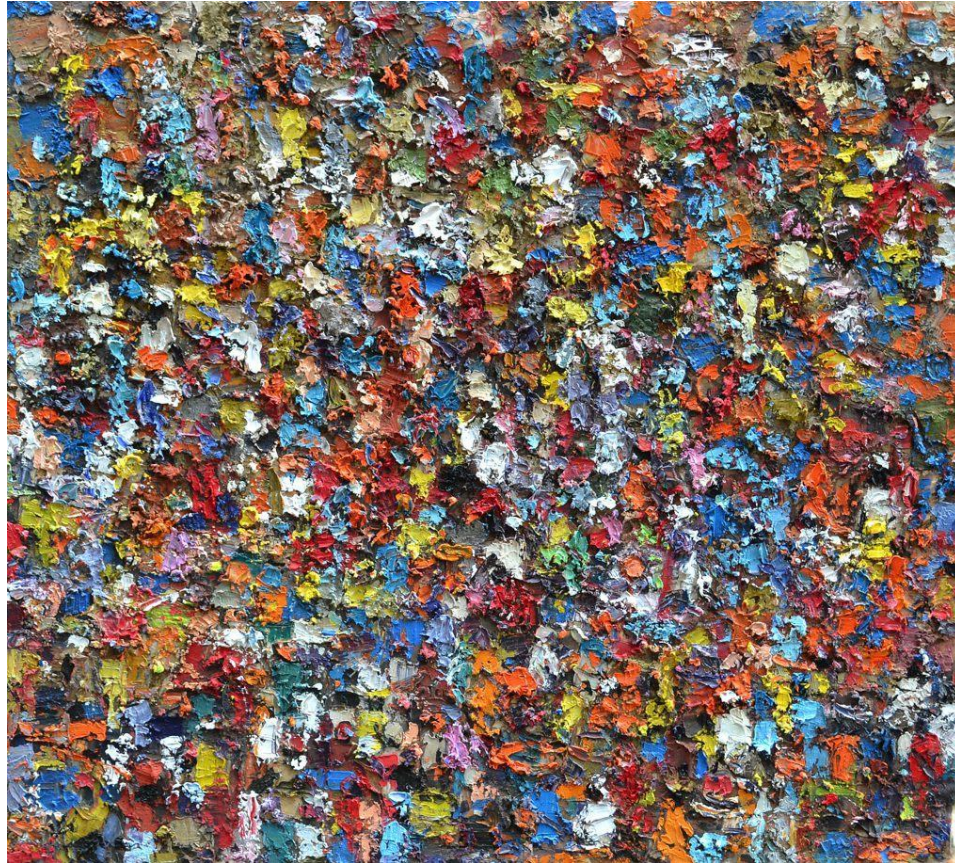


Fig. 4. Toni Okujeni, *Festival* (2014). 89 cm x 99 cm, oil on canvas.
Source: www.toniokujeni.com



Fig. 5. Toni Okujeni, *Oshodi Market, Lagos* (2006). 150 cm x 150 cm, oil on canvas.
Source: <http://richardmudariki.blogspot.com/2014/06/10-artworks-enjoyed-at-dakar-biennale.html>



Fig. 6. Toni Okujeni, *Colors of Aswani* (2014). 61 cm x 91 cm, oil on canvas.
Source: www.toniokujeni.com



Fig. 7. Toni Okujeni, *White Rooftops* (2014). 119 cm x 119 cm, oil on canvas.
Source: www.toniokujeni.com



Fig. 8. Toni Okujeni, *Return of the Fishermen* (Senegalese waterfront series) (2006). 80 cm x 100 cm, oil on canvas.

Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/230387337162495552/>



Fig. 9. Toni Okujeni, *Pirogues* (2018). 89 cm x 140 cm, oil on canvas.
Source: <https://www.facebook.com/TypicArtsGallery/>



Fig. 10. Toni Okujeni, *Townscape* (2015). 146 cm x 188 cm, oil on canvas.
Source: www.toniokujeni.com

About the author

Toni Okujeni (b. 1962 in Nigeria) is a Nigerian studio artist. He earned his Higher National Diploma in Painting from the School of Art and Design, Auchy Polytechnic in 1983 and worked with the African Guardian Magazine as illustrator before embarking on a full-time studio practice. He takes his early inspiration from the work of Vincent Van Gogh and his works are among those with the richest palette from the school. His favorite subjects are crowded market scenes and roof tops with lots of movement done in heavy impastos of the palette knife as a technique and style of painting. He has participated in several group shows, including Accenture Nigeria, Asilah Forum Foundation Morocco and gallery Yacine-Dakar. His works are in many private and public collections.