

ART ► EXHIBITIONS &amp; SHOWS

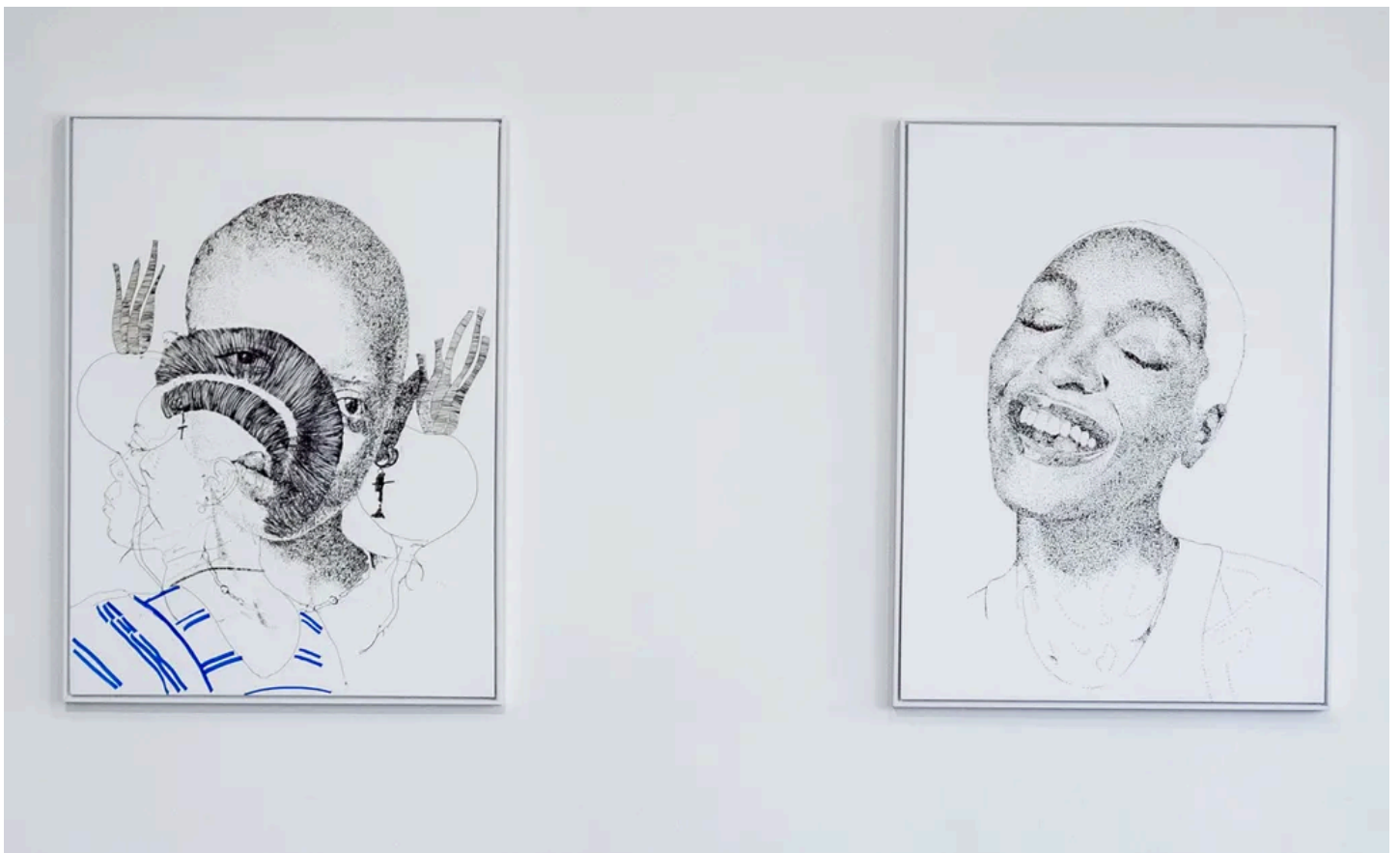
# Tejumola Adenuga contemplates the future of creativity in Nigeria

Inside Tejumola Adenuga's solo exhibition, 'FUTURE, PAST', at Art Twenty One in Lagos



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(Image credit: Courtesy of the artist)

BY CHISOM PETER JOB PUBLISHED JULY 9, 2024 IN [FEATURES](#)

Tejumola Adenuga's solo exhibition, 'FUTURE, PAST', is filled with paintings and furniture designs in black and white ink which he uses intricately, making

everything pop. The artist's choice of painting in black and white, free of colour is as a result of his colour blindness which makes colours not as vivid and everything linked towards grayscale. 'Colour blindness is a desaturation of the natural environment. So I never had a full understanding of what colour looked like. So having my work in a monochromatic format was a way in which it was best I could communicate at the point, and over time, in order to have a bit of complexity, I started leaning towards stippling in my work. That was the foundation aesthetic basic,' Adenuga shares.

The exhibition, which runs through July 14, 2024, features a series of paintings of people from a small village in Nigeria. The story, tied towards the street Adenuga grew up in, pays homage to the artisans and royals that lived there in the fictional universe — the village — which he created.



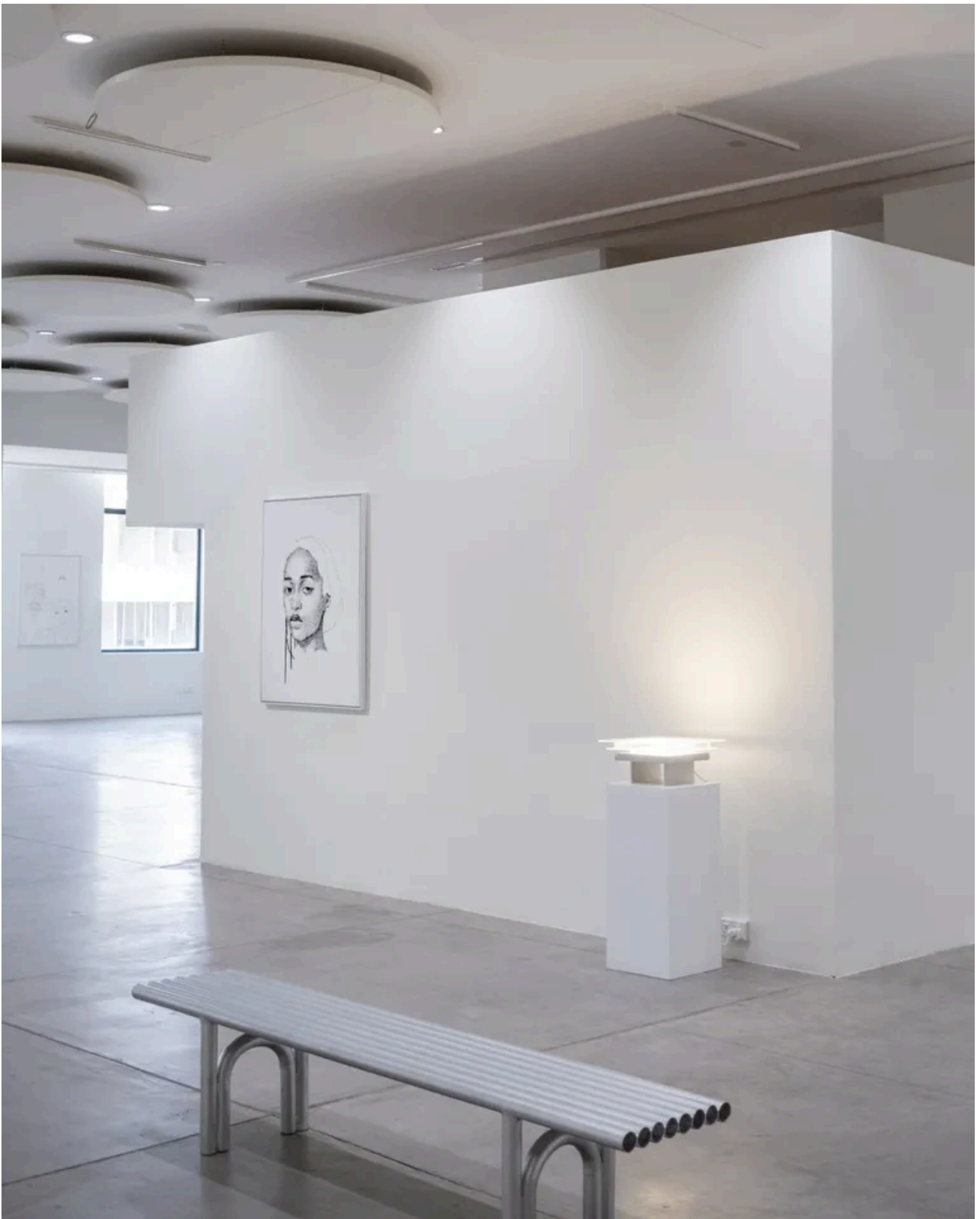
(Image credit: Courtesy of the artist)

'I grew up on the street, and it was full of different kinds of artisans; from weavers to carpenters, et cetera, and then I moved to England, which is where I live, and now it's like a split half and half,' says Adenuga. 'I have a memory of all these craftsmen that I grew up with, and all of them don't exist anymore. They've

all moved on, so I thought that my first exhibition here should kind of pay homage to the birthplace of where I first saw creativity being expressed.'

With 'FUTURE, PAST,' Adenuga tries to imagine a future where all the people whose memory he has of still exist. They flourish in his paintings as he marries what his 'mind looks like, with what the future of creativity in Nigeria should be.'

The furniture designs featured in the exhibition additionally gives a look into Adenuga's future show as he tries to have elements of a future show in a present one, linking the both.



(Image credit: Courtesy of the artist)

‘I made the raft benches here [Lagos], and they’re inspired by rafts boats across the river, and the two versions of lamps are to show a fictional creativity and craftsmanship that has come from the area,’ Adenuga says, referring to the area in this fictional world he has created.

With the exhibition, Adenuga also makes up for the lack of third spaces in Lagos by creating a makeshift area filled with balloons that reminds one of childhood, playful, leaves room for contemplation, while striving in making art spaces not elitist and creating free third spaces. 'When I came here in January, I discovered there was a lack of third spaces, so having this element in here was very important to me. It makes it more accessible. You know you can look at all the artwork, and can also come play around with no consequences,' Adenuga says.

*Tejumola Adenuga's solo exhibition, 'FUTURE, PAST', is at Art Twenty One in Lagos until July 14 2024*

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(Image credit: Courtesy of the artist)

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