

KUTLESA GALLERY

Odinakachi Okoroafor

Ogadimma

October 29—December 4, 2021

Kutlesa Gallery is pleased to present *Ogadimma*, an exhibition of new paintings by the Nigerian artist Odinakachi Okoroafor, on view at the gallery's location. This will be his first solo exhibition in Europe.

In African culture, it is not uncommon for personal issues to become a societal concern because, as in many communal societies, individuals' actions and decisions are held to high collective standards. Hence, one must develop a thick skin in order to survive and persevere in an atmosphere of acute awareness and critique. Reactions to this dynamic may be perceived as nonchalance, adamancy, or surrender. Here, these responses are depicted metaphorically through the singular, mundane act of sitting. Subsequently, through more subtle facial expressions and body positioning, the personal nuances of these reactions are discernible within the repeated action.

In *Ogadimma* which means "it shall be well" in Igbo language, Odinakachi explores human conditions of friendship, self-love, and empathy. His paintings consider society and the individual within solitary, intimate moments, drawing influence from the artist's memories and personal experiences. Odinakachi uses printing techniques such as screen printing, linocut, and transfers, paired with the use of a paintbrush, to make imprints on the canvas. In doing so, Odinakachi strives to leave "imprints" of positivity through his works.

Odinakachi Okoroafor (b. 1989, Abia, Nigeria) is a mixed media artist who lives and works in Enugu, Nigeria. Using imagery from his childhood and community as point of departure, Okoroafor examines the Black figure through the lenses of daily life and social and political struggle. Barcode lines feature prominently in his compositions, appearing as clusters that comprise the figures of his painting's featured subjects. Akin to scars physical and symbolic, these automated lines confront complex histories of the body as a commodity, both historically and in present-day contexts.

Okoroafor has recently exhibited at BLACK VOICES: Friend of My Mind, Ross-Sutton Gallery, New York (2021) and Next of KIN, Thought Pyramid Art Centre Ikoyi., Lagos (2020). Okoroafor was among the featured artists for the 2018 UNESCO X BBUZZart Project and was the second runner up in the Spanish Visual Arts Competition in 2018. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

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