

PROFILE

ONYINYE EZENNIA

'ZENNIA ART'

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Biography



ONYINYE EZENNIA

Onyinye is a Nigerian Multidisciplinary artist, a member of society of Nigerian Artists(SNA) and Female Artist Association of Nigeria. She graduated from Institute of Management and Technology Enugu, Fine and Applied Arts Department with a Distinction Grade. She is an explorative artist with flair for new ideas and has shown her mastery of different medium of art; Photography, Serigraphy on tiled Perspex, exploration with light and sound which has won her the prize for **Originality** in 2014. Presently she dwells more on String art which has won her the **Overall winner** prize in 2016 "Life in My City Art Festival" and **finalist** in Visual Art Competition organised by Spanish Embassy of Nigeria, 2018 and 2019.

However, her works are born out of personal experiences in life and mostly advocates for women empowerment. They paint pictures of life situations and dynamics with a view to motivate people to a better understanding of life as well as a well fulfilled life. This new exploration with threads and nails has shown her as an artist with patience and precision. Her use of colours, interplay of different strokes of thread on delicate compositions and artistry can only leave her audience in an exquisite expectation for more.

She has participated in various group exhibitions, workshops and competitions among which Pan African Artist(PACA) 2018 Exhibition "Dakar Biennial Off" Senegal, "October Rain" by society of Nigerian artists at Thought pyramid art centre Lagos Nigeria, 2019 "Balance for Better" by Female artist association of Nigeria at Nike art gallery Lekki Lagos, "Small Making" by InSEA(International Society for Education through Art) at the University of British Columbia, Canada, July 2019 and "Insight" by Xavier University of Louisiana in collaboration with Nike Art Gallery, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

My style of work is dynamic, focusing on giving voice to those who are often unheard, mostly women and children. My work begins with conceptualization. Looking at the happenings around, issues that are in the news, societal challenges and much more. I identify striking issues with which I form my images/ideas.

When I pick up my board, nails, hammer and threads to string, am well aware that my ideas, emotions, feelings and concepts formed from experience will engage a lot of mind trying to make meaning out of life. The thread I often used is timeless with an interwoven motion binding viewers to the past and present. My creation also deals on thoughts and connections using string to connect lines across time and space. The interplay of different colourful strokes of thread on nails has been used to reveal the fading culture and political issues as well.

My recent work "Becoming" depicts my personal experience in search of my dream and fulfilment in life. I used facial expressions to show through my own life's experience, that fulfilment and self realization is possible. And so we are not left helpless at the mercy of our difficulties and limitations which leads to depression and sometimes suicide. There is hope which derives from our resolve on our never giving up. "If we don't give up" states by Jack MA, "then we still have a chance".

Art remains the only way through which I share my thoughts and ideas with the aim to comfort the disturbed. My works are always laden with emotions and aesthetics.

RECENT EXHIBITIONS/AWARDS

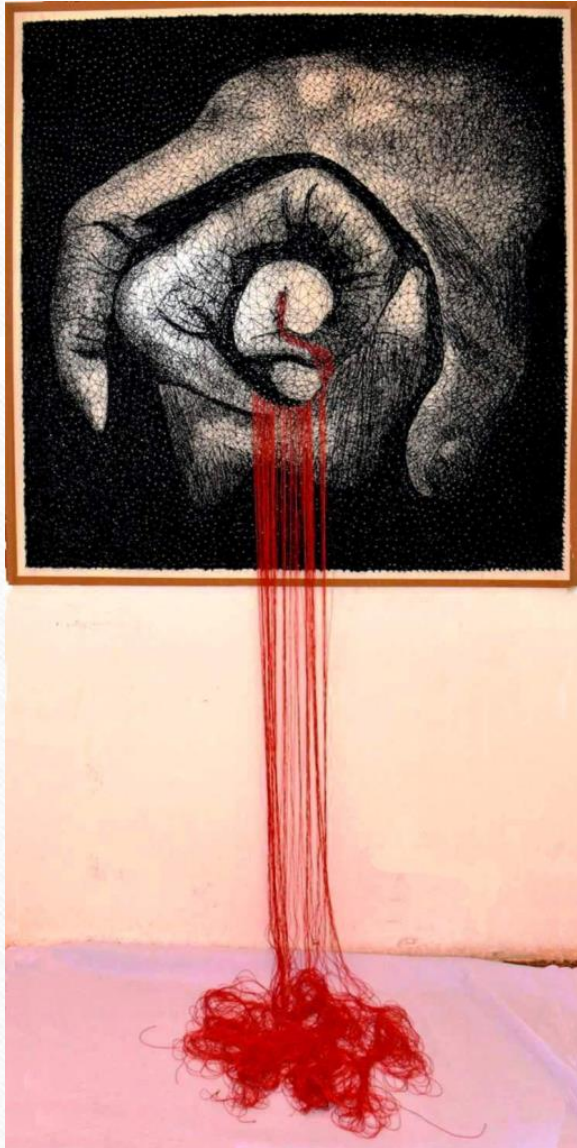
- "Insight" by Xavier University of Louisiana in collaboration with Nike Art Gallery, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA -2019.
- "Small Making" by InSEA (International Society for Education through Art) at the University of British Columbia, Canada, July 2019.
- FEAN & Agama Art Auction at the British Village, British Inn Abuja -2019
- "Balance for Better" by Female Artists Association of Nigeria to mark Women's Day, Nike Gallery, Lekki Lagos -2019.
- "Destiny" by Alexis Galleries, Victoria Island, Lagos -2019.
- "Visual Art Competition" by Spanish Embassy in Nigeria -2018.
- "October Rain" by Society of Nigerian Artist (SNA) Lagos -2018.
- Pan African Artist (PACA) Exhibition, Chambre de Commerce 1 Place de l'Indépendance Dakar. Dakar, Sénégal -2018.
- "Press for Progress" by Female Artists of Nigeria to mark Women's Day, Nike Gallery, Lekki Lagos -2018.
- 1st South East Zonal Festival of Arts and Crafts, Anambra State -2017.
- Ora-eze Ofala Festival Exhibition, Onitsha -2017.

- Life In My City Art Festival and Competition, Enugu.
 - Overall winner -2016
 - Consolation prize - 2015
 - Prize for Originality - 2014
 - Consolation prize - 2013
 - Finalist - 2012
- the TUTOR & the TUTORED, a Group Exhibition at National Gallery, Enugu -2015.
- Imago Mundi Art Workshop -2014.
- Enugu Cultural Fiesta -2013.
- ND Awards Photo Contest -2013.
- National Gallery of Art Competition -2013.

AWARDS:

- "Visual Art Competition" by Spanish Embassy in Nigeria -2018.
 - **Finalist (Best 10)**-2018 and 2019 finalist
- Life In My City Art Festival, Enugu Nigeria.
 - **Prize for Overall winner** -2016
 - **Prize for Originality** -2014

RECENT WORKS



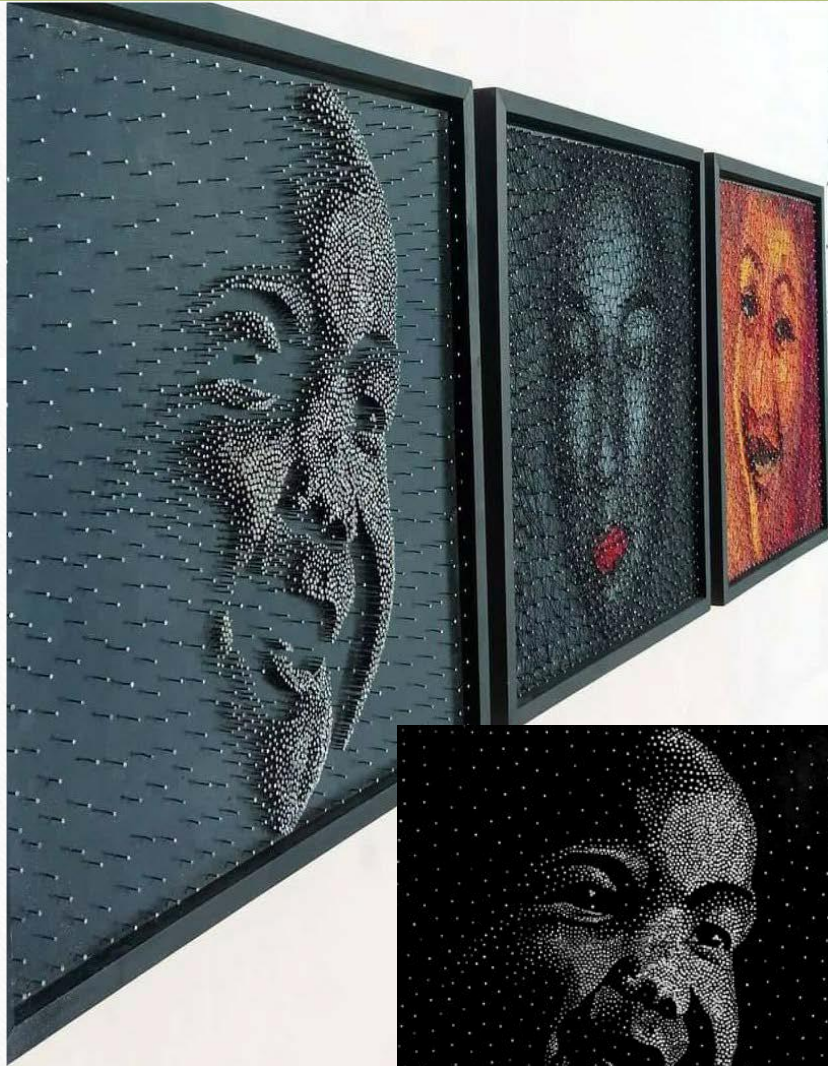
Title of work: BLEEDING ROSE

Medium: Nails & Strings on Board

Size: 48" x 48"

Year of Production: 2016

This is a figurative image showing the two powerful hands of adult male and female persons squeezing life out of a foetus. This portrays the abuse of human life in all forms; child killing, abortion, as well frustrations and helpless situation of most Nigerian and African children/youth in a supposed blessed country.



Title of work: BECOMING

Medium: Nails & String on Board

Size: 24" x 24" each

Year of Production: 2019

The artwork is about my personal experience in search of my dream and fulfilment in life. In this panel work achieved with 15,000+ nails and multiple layers of colourful threads, we see a group of three faces with varied expressions, an interaction of different life's stages. On the faces of these three is seen different expressions; a smiling infant face beaming with promise and possibilities, a dull youthful face lost in thought and swayed by challenges and a happy fulfilled adult face. Realizing one's destiny or dream is a feat that is not easy. It always involve difficulties and challenges that are usually frustrating. However, when one sticks in, one eventually breaks the barriers. I try to depict those long nights I stayed up feeling frustrated, confused and stuck.



Detail: Nails on board



Title of work: CHILD BRIDES

Medium: Nails & Strings on Board

Size: 24" x34"

Year of Production: 2018

They're too young to marry.
Educating girls is a necessary
investment for a peaceful and
poverty free world.



Title of work: LIFE

Medium: Nails & String on Board

Size: 20"x24"

Year of Production: 2018.

" Life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing" as states by William Shakespeare. Life we live it but we seldom understand it. All the contrasting experience we go through eventually makes sense. Giving rise to one beautiful life story.



Title of work: STUCK IN THE VOW

Medium: Nails & String on Board

Size: 34" x 24"

Year of Production: 2018

This work goes to expose the unpleasant experiences women go through in marriage. Marriage being so central to womanhood and women's happiness, Women go into marriage with dreams and lofty expectations which when smashed leads to an aberration of womanhood as depicted in the bald head. She's stuck in the marriage vow when her expectations are smashed and left with nothing but worries of life. She's pursuing lost cause through deep and disturbed thinking.



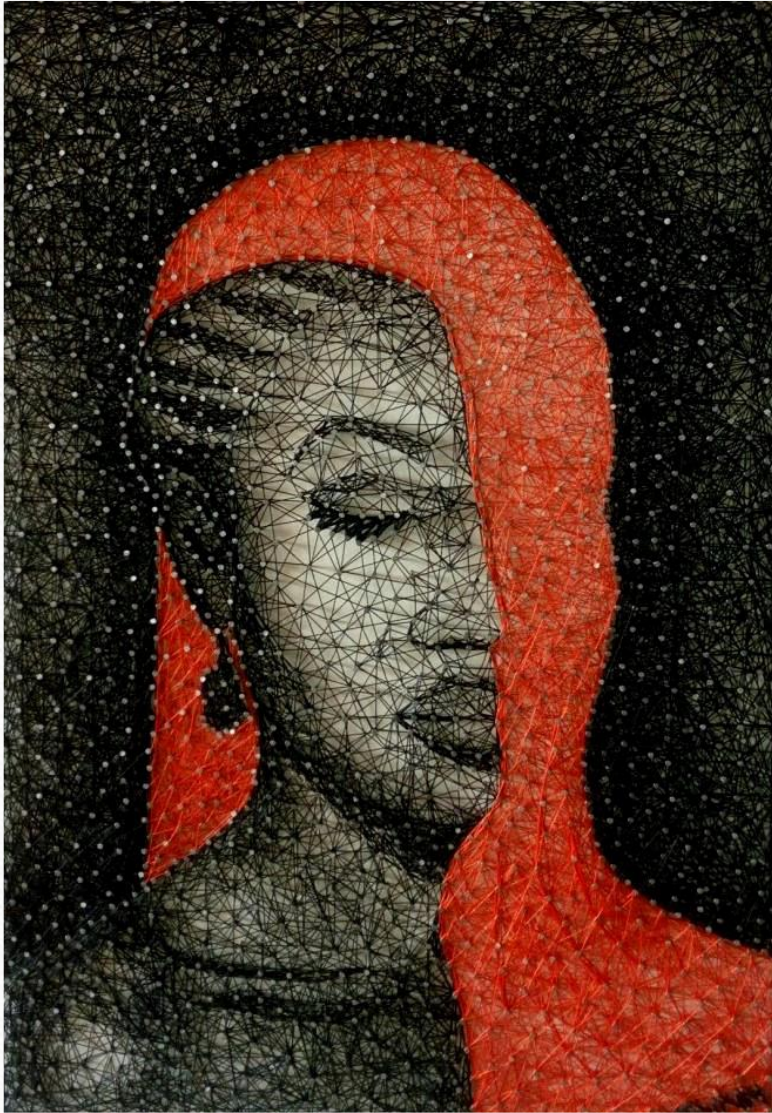
Title of work: “Amidst Her Tears”

Medium: Nails and Strings on board

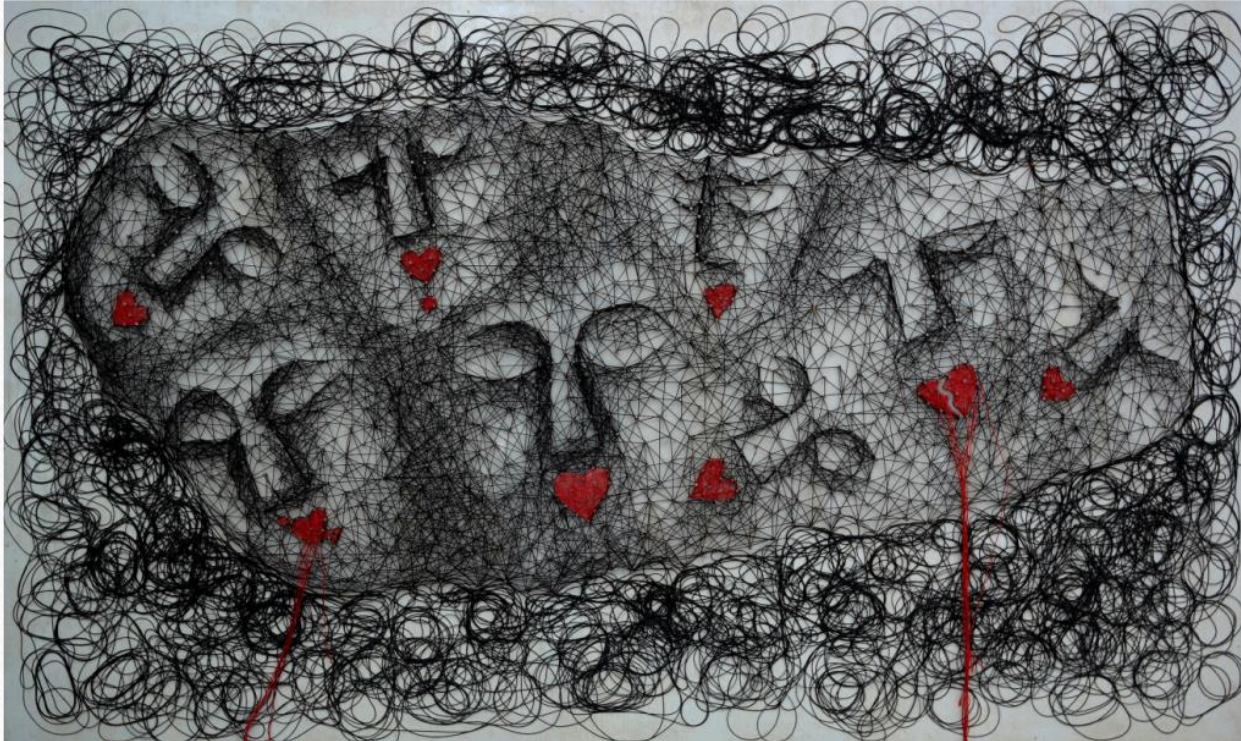
Size: 24” x 18”

Year of Production: 2018.

Pain is real. Suffering is real.
Depression is real. Yet the deeper
reality is that pain is part of life and
we have to cope with that reality. We
can't go below or above it, rather we
must go through it to excel.



Title of work: MUTILATED BEAUTY
Medium: Nails & String on Board
Year of Production: 2016



Title of work: LOVE IS A BATTLE FIELD

Medium: Nails & String on Board

Size: 48" x 30"

Year of Production: 2018-2019.

Love is indeed a battlefield, the fight, gain, pain, sorrow, joy, as well sacrifice we do for love. There's increasing conflicts and anarchy which tend to estrange the people of the world. Yet wherever love is, there's a synergy and spontaneous understanding that is expressed between people.



Title of work: 'Lyrics of An African Maiden 1' Series

Medium: Nails & Strings on Board

Year of Production: 2019

Our culture is our identity. Looking at the faces in this series, we see the unique personality of African Maidens wearing #Yoruba hairstyles named Shuku, Ologede and Paatewoo. Maidens are ambassadors that radiate the pride of the culture. The thread expresses connection showing the evolution in the culture, binding viewers to the past and present.





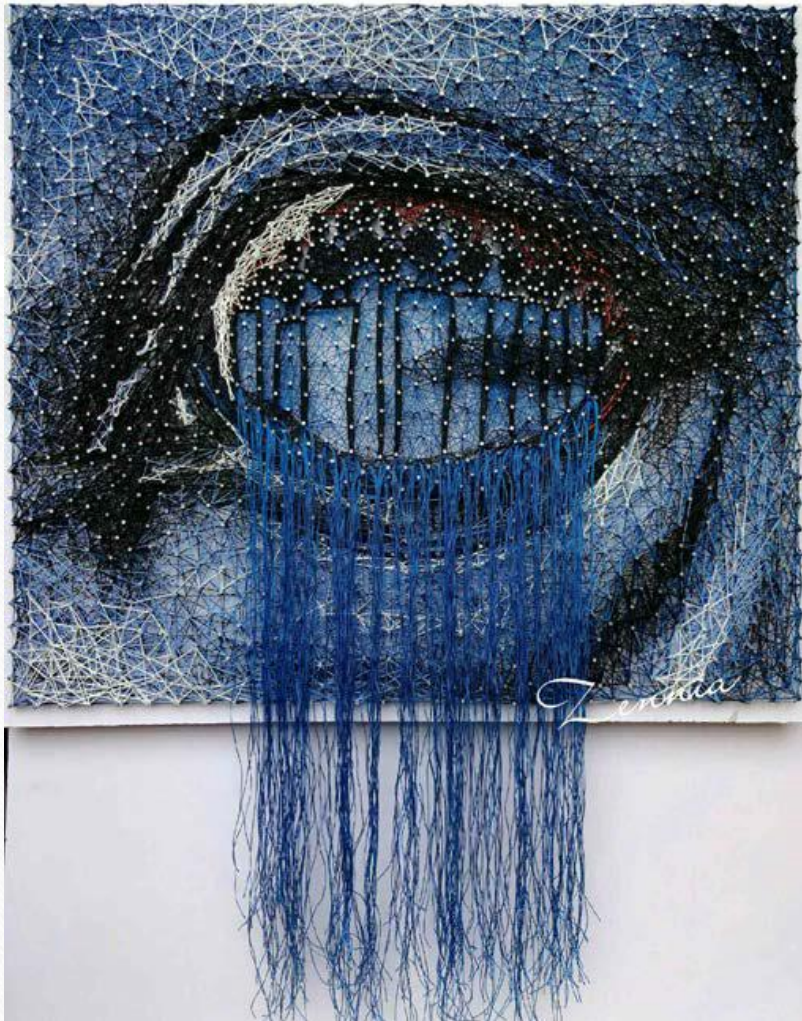
Title of work: BEHIND THE MASK

Medium: Nails & String on Board

Size: 34" X 24"

Year of Production: 2017

This highlights the myriads of challenges facing womanhood. Those challenges may be cultural, religious, political, financial, parental to mention but few. Whatever they may be there's always hope in the horizon as portrayed by steady gaze of the face behind the turban. In the words of Ziglar we face everything to rise.

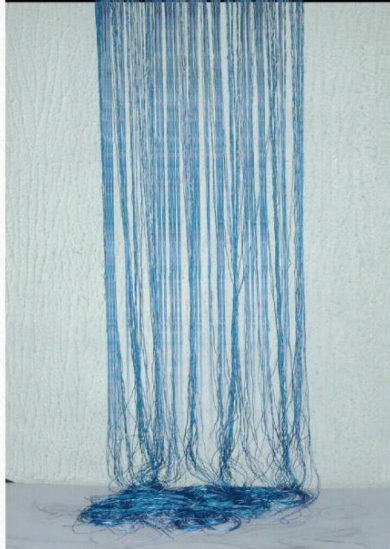


Title of work: TEARS OF THE PEOPLE

Medium: Nails & Strings on Board

Year of Production: 2017

Each time I hear of an attack or abduction I begin to imagine the endless tear that has run through the eyes of thousands of mothers, enough to complete a river flow. With this work I have tried to visually capture, measure and collect those tears which I still wonder if it will ever stop.

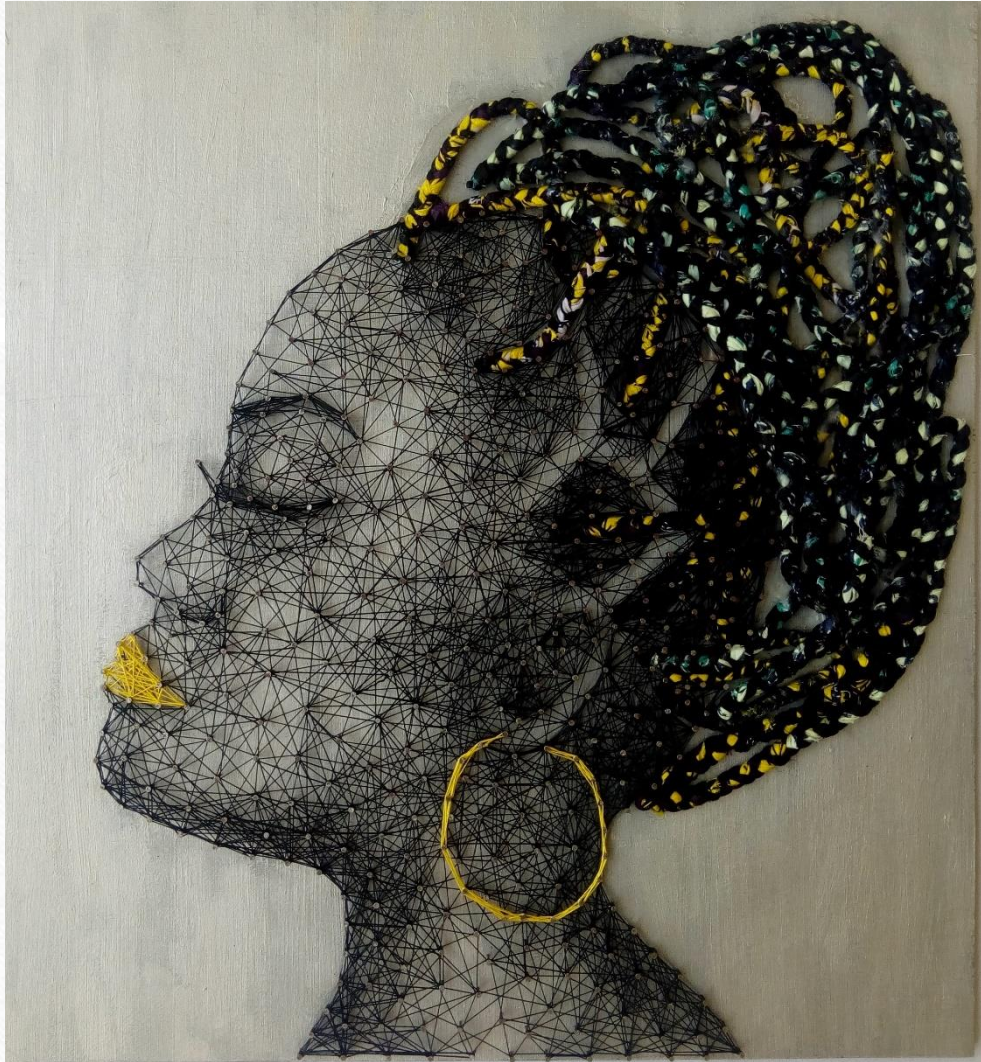


Title of work: BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Medium: Nails & Strings on Board

Year of Production: 2017

This art work goes to emphasize that aspect of our life that is open only to ourselves which may be offensive when shared publicly. It portrays where we are completely who we are without pretence. Every woman is qualified for best it doesn't matter who thinks you're not good enough, turn your back to negativity.

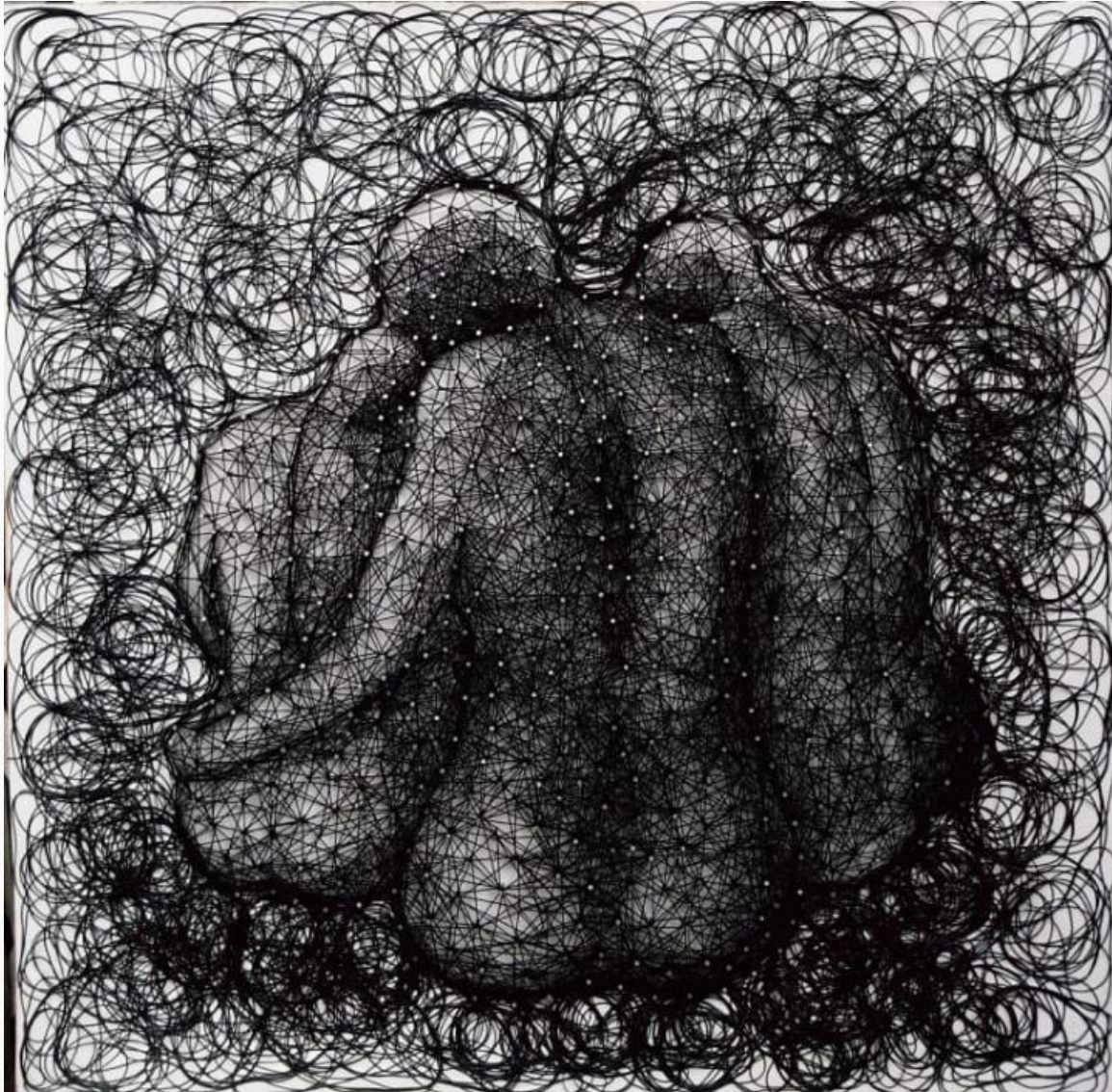


Title of work: 'Lyrics of An African Maiden 2' series

Medium: Nails & Strings on Board

Year of Production: 2019

We are ambassadors that radiate the pride of our culture. The thread expresses connection showing the evolution in the culture.



Title of work: "Who We Are"

Medium: Nails and Strings on Board

Year: 2018

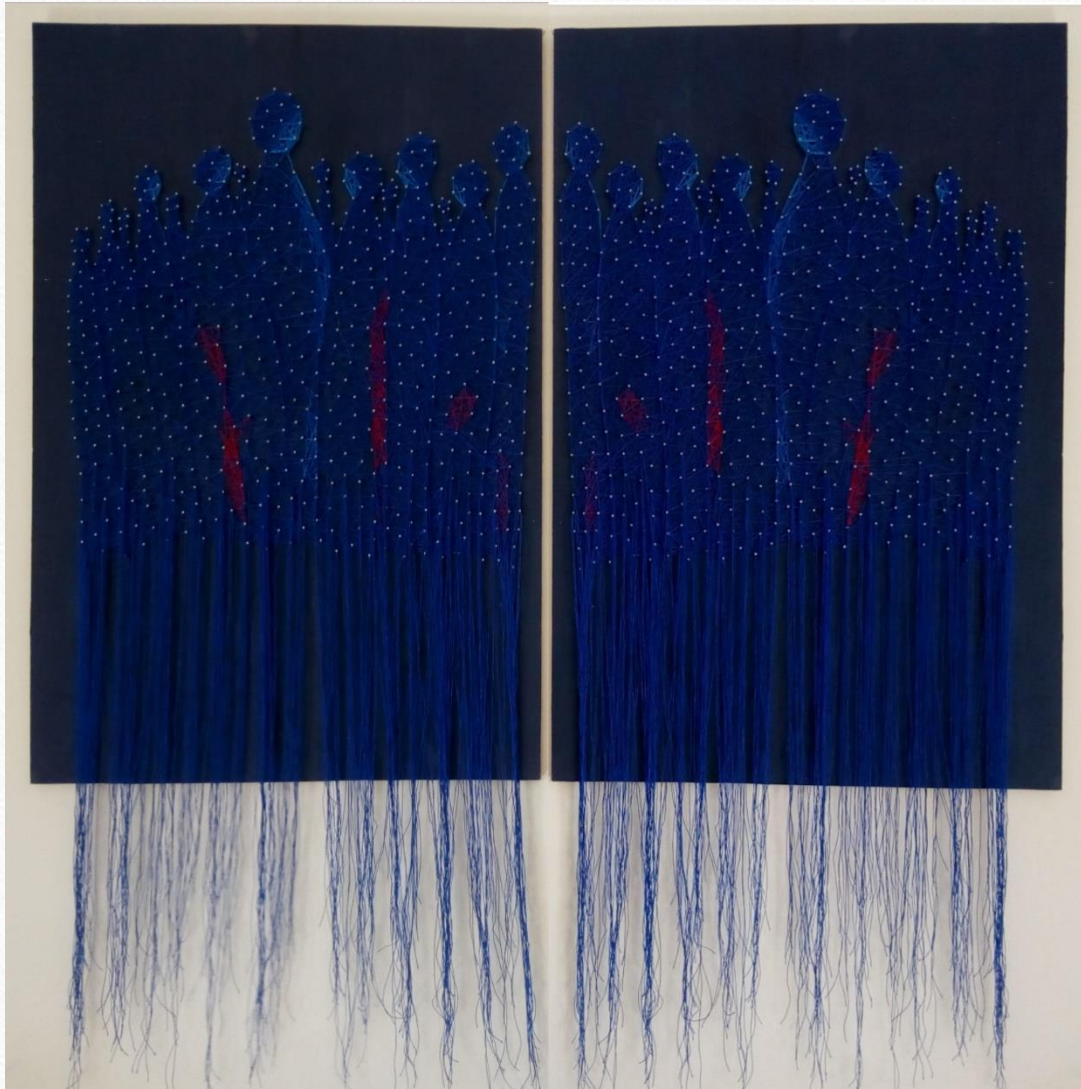
Women and children are of course the most vulnerable in all the heartless attacks by various terror groups across Africa. After being brutalized, terrified and stripped off all their possession. They are left on their own wondering who they are and where they belong.



Title of work: SEED OF LOVE

Medium: Nails & Strings on Board

Year of Production: 2019



Title of work: "Who We Are 2"

Medium: Nails and Strings on Board

Year: 2019-2020



Title of work: The Beautiful Ones
Medium: Nails & Strings on Board
Year of Production: 2019



Title of work: “We are Better Together”

Medium: Nails & Strings on Board

Year of Production: 2019 - 2020

Every woman is qualified for the best. It doesn't matter who thinks you're not good enough, turn your back to negativity. With this work "We are better together" I've tried to portray women coming together and pulling others to create awareness, as gender equality is a fundamental human right for sustainable and peaceful world. The free movement of threads on the board was tried to describe the journey of life which sometimes could be filled with fears, thoughts, struggles and challenges but when we stand together we push for progress to create a society where women and girls can exercise their choices and no right or role should be gender specific. Together our voices can be heard.