

# The Ascendancy of Machine

OLU AMODA & KELANI ABASS

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O'DA Art Gallery is pleased to present, The Ascendancy of Machine, an exhibition bringing together the works of Olu Amoda (b.1959) & Kelani Abass (b.1979), running October 29th - November 19th, 2022.

In today's digital era, the world has evolved in its modes of creation, its dissemination of information and social engagement. The influence of modern technology has paved the way for multi-functional practices that ultimately make life easier for the masses. In this exhibition, both artists, although highly distinct in style and subject matter, share a common focus in which the evolution of modern and contemporary practices affect their interpretation of socio-political and environmental discourses in today's Africa. In Kelani Abass' work, he revisits the history and relationship between *Man and Machine* as it pertains to Africa's potential in capitalising production and Industrialisation. Similarly, using repurposed objects to create his work, Olu Amoda's sculptures intersect past & present contexts as a means to measure cultural value and encourage appropriate structural reforms in Nigeria. In a sense, both artists call for a shift in ideals, focusing primarily on encouraging a more progressive and forward-thinking environment.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

### Olu Amoda

Olu Amoda (Nigeria, b. 1959) has worked consistently over the past three decades to create a sculptural language that has unique character and beauty. Working as a sculptor, muralist, furniture designer, and multimedia artist, Amoda is best known for using repurposed materials found from the detritus of consumer culture. His works often incorporate rusty nails, metal plates, bolts, pipes, and rods, that are welded together to create figures, animals, flora and ambiguous forms. Amoda uses these materials to explore socio-political issues relating to Nigerian culture today, from sex, politics, race and conflict to consumerism and economic distribution. His seminal body of work, *Sunflower*, explores the connection between mass industry and the organic, winning top prize at the DAK'ART Biennale in Dakar, Senegal in 2014. More recently, Amoda was named the 2022 Hudgens Prize winner at the Jacqueline Casey Hudgens Center for the Arts in Duluth with a cash prize of \$50,000.

Amoda graduated in sculpture from Auchi Polytechnic, Nigeria, and received a Master's Degree of Fine Arts from Georgia Southern University, USA. Amoda has participated in exhibitions at the Victoria and Albert Museum (UK), the Museum of Art and Design (New York), Skoto Gallery (New York), Georgia Southern University (USA), Didi Museum (Nigeria), WIPO Headquarters (Switzerland), and Art Twenty One (Nigeria), among others. He has completed residencies at Villa Arson (France), The Bag Factory (South Africa), Appalachian State University (North Carolina), and the New York Design Museum. His work is included in many prestigious art collections including the Newark Museum and Fondation Blachère. Amoda has taught Sculpture

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and Drawing at the School of Art, Design and Printing at Yaba College of Technology in Lagos since 1987. Olu Amoda currently lives and works in the US.

### **Kelani Abass**

Kelani Abass (born 1979) studied at the Yaba College of Technology, Lagos, graduating in painting with distinction in 2007. He has won several awards including the Caterina De Medici/ 3rd Black Heritage 1st Prize in painting in 2010. Kelani has taking part in numerous artist residencies and is attending a residency program at the Headlands Center for the Arts in San-Francisco in October-November 2018. He is a member of the Society of Nigerian Artists.

Recent solo exhibitions include if I could save time at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos (2016), Aso Igba at Art Clip Africa, Lagos (2016), Asiko at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos (2013), Man and Machine at Omenka Gallery, Lagos (2011) and Paradigm Shift at Mydrim Gallery, Lagos (2009).

### **EXHIBITION DETAILS:**

**Exhibition Opening:** October 29th - November 19th, 2022.

**Opening Hours:** Tuesday - Saturday | 11am - 6pm |

**Location:** ODA Art Gallery | 10 Sir Samuel Manuwa Street, Victoria Island, Lagos

**O'DA**

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