

ruby onyinyechi amanze



Biography

ruby onyinyechi amanze (b.1982, Port-Harcourt, Nigeria) is a Brooklyn-based artist of Nigerian descent and British upbringing whose creative practices and processes focus on producing mixed media, paper-based drawings and works. Her art draws inspiration from photography, textiles, architecture and printmaking.

amanze earned her B.F.A., Summa Cum Laude, from Tyler School of Art, Temple University, and her M.F.A. from Cranbrook Academy of Art. In 2012-2013, amanze was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

amanze's practice builds around questions of how to create drawings that maintain paper's essence of weightlessness. The large-scaled and multidimensional drawings are part of an ongoing, yet non-linear narrative that employ the malleability of space as the primary antagonist.

A nameless, self-imagined, chimeric universe has simultaneously been positioned between nowhere and everywhere. Using a limited palette of visual elements, including ada the Alien, windows and birds, amanze's drawings create a non-narrative and expansive world. The construction of this world is largely centered around an interest in the spatial negotiations found in the three-dimensional practices of dance, architecture, and design.

Most recently, amanze completed two-year long residencies at the Queens Museum and as part of the Drawing Center's Open Sessions Program, both in New York. She has exhibited her work internationally in Lagos, London, Johannesburg and Paris, and nationally at the California African American Museum, the Drawing Center and the Studio Museum of Harlem. In October 2024, she presented a solo exhibition titled 'Light Blue Violet' at Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg. Continuing her research on inventing and manipulating spaces, her playful configurations occur both within the two-dimensional drawing plane and into a three-dimensional presentation and experience.

Selected group exhibitions: 'Follow the North Star: Freedom in the Age of Mobility', International African American Museum, Charleston, SC (2024); 'A Superlative Palette: Contemporary Black Women Artists,' Curated by Dexter Wimberly, Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, Charlotte, NC (2024); 'A Slice through the World: Contemporary Artists' Drawing,' The Drawing Room and Modern Art Oxford, London, United Kingdom (2018); 'Affective Affinities,' 33rd Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil (2018); 'Regarding the Figure,' Studio Museum of Harlem, New York, NY; 'The Ease of Fiction,' Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, CA (2017); 'the silences between,' Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa (2017); 'Drawing Biennial,' The Drawing Room, London, United Kingdom (2017); 'Where Do We Stand?: Two Years of Drawing with Open Sessions,' The Drawing Center, New York, NY (2017).

Collections include: CSS Bard College Hessel Museum; Annandale-on-Hudson, NY; Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt, Germany; National Museum of African Art Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC; The Jewish Museum, New York, NY; The Microsoft Art Collection, Redmond, Washington; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY.

amanze lives and works between Philadelphia and Brooklyn, but calls multiple places home.

Artist Statement

amanze's large-scaled and multidimensional drawings are part of an ongoing, yet non-linear narrative that employ the malleability of space as the primary antagonist. A nameless, self-imagined, chimeric universe has simultaneously been positioned between nowhere and everywhere.

Taking roots in architecture, design, migration histories and non-nationalist politics, the manipulation of space functions as a poetic alternative to fixed identities and geographies. Navigating fictional and conflating worlds, a cohort of aliens, hybrids and ghosts play effortlessly and access magic as their mundane, yet expansive norm.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2022** *DUETS*, Goodman Gallery, London
- 2021** *Thinghood*, Mariane Ibrahim Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
- 2021** *How To Be Enough*, Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy
- 2020** *the ones that stayed*, Goodman Gallery, London, UK
- 2019** *Deutsche Bank featured artist*, Frieze Art Fair, New York, USA
- 2018** *there are even moonbeams we can unfold*, Goodman Gallery, Capetown, South Africa
- 2017** *STAR FISH*, Smack Mellon Foundation, New York, USA
- 2016** *The Divers*, The Armory Show with Mariane Ibrahim Gallery, New York, USA
- 2015** *SALT WATER*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa

2015 *astroturf rooftop picnics*, Morgan Lehman Gallery, NY, USA
2015 *a story. in parts.*, Tiwani Contemporary, London, UK
2015 *Magic*, Omenka Gallery, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria
2014 *Telling Truths, Speaking Secrets*, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, USA
2014 *merge*, Nomad Gallery, Washington D.C., USA
2012 *Waiting for the Queen*, Dyker Gallery, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, USA
2006 *All the Things I Never Said*, Forum Gallery, Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, USA

Group Exhibitions

2022 *J'Al Deux Amours*, Mariane Ibrahim Gallery, Paris, France
2019 *you are so loved and lovely*, Fridman Gallery, New York
2018 *A Slice through the World: Contemporary Artists' Drawing*, The Drawing Room and Modern Art Oxford, London, UK
2018 *Affective Affinities*, 33rd Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
2017 *Regarding the Figure*, Studio Museum of Harlem, New York, USA
2017 *The Ease of Fiction*, Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, USA
2017 *the silences between*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2017 *Drawing Biennial*, The Drawing Room, London, UK
2017 *When the Heavens Meet the Earth*, Heong Gallery, Downing College, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK
2017 *into the midst of things*, DiverseWorks, Houston, USA
2017 *Where Do We Stand?: Two Years of Drawing with Open Sessions*, The Drawing Center, New York, USA
2017 *Nine: Studio Program Exhibition*, Queens Museum, Queens, USA
2017 *The Day Comes*, Galerie des Galeries, Paris, France
2017 *Dialogues in Drawing*, Jenkins-Johnson Gallery, San Francisco, USA
2017 *In media res*, Diverse Works, Houston, Texas
2017 *The Day Comes*, Galerie des Galeries, Paris, France
2017 *Nine: Studio Program Exhibition*, Queens Museum, Queens, NY
2017 *Dialogues in Drawing*, Jenkins-Johnson Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2016 *Un-becoming*, Fridman Gallery, New York, USA
2016 *The Ease of Fiction*, California African American Museum, Los Angeles, USA
2016 *Planes and Corridors*, The Drawing Center, New York, USA
2016 *In Context: Africans In America*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2016 *Prix Canson*, The Drawing Center, New York, USA
2016 *The Other Hemisphere, Artists, Women, Africans*, Natural History Museum of Le Havre, France
2016 *New Revolutions: Goodman Gallery at 50*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2016 *The Ease of Fiction*, Contemporary Art Museum, Raleigh, NC, USA
2016 *KIN*, Hanger, Lisbon, Portugal
2015 *Speaking Back*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2015 *No Such Place*, Edward Tyler Nahem Gallery, NY, USA
2015 *Magic*, Omenka Gallery, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria
2015 *A Constellation*, Studio Museum of Harlem, NY, NY
2015 *Remember to Come Back*, Mariane Ibrahim Gallery, Seattle, WA
2014 *In Sheep's Clothing*, Gallery 220, Brooklyn, NY, USA
2014 *BRIC Biennial, Volume I*, Bric Arts Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA
2014 *Mutations*, Tiwani Contemporary Gallery, London, UK
2014 *I See You; The Politics of Being*, Harvey B. Gantt Center, Charlotte, NC, USA
2014 *Drawn Truly*, Corridor Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA
2014 *Telling Truths, Speaking Secrets*, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio
(e)merge, Nomad Gallery, Belgium, Washington D.C.
2013 *Select Fair – Art Basel*, Rush Arts Gallery [New York], Miami, FL, USA
2013 *Six Draughtsmen*, Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts, Brooklyn, NY, USA
2013 *no one belongs here more than you*, Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos, Nigeria
2013 *Crossing The Line; Contemporary Drawing*, Mixed Greens Gallery, New York, NY, USA
2013 Department of Fine and Applied Arts Faculty Exhibition, UNN, Nigeria
2012 *Neither Here, Nor There*, Brooklyn Public Library Flatbush, Brooklyn, USA
2012 *Waiting for the Queen*, Dyker Gallery, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, NY
2011 *Part II*, Causey Contemporary Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA
2011 *The Salon*, Greenpoint Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA
2010 *Paint&Print; a Portfolio Project*, Amsterdams Grafisch Atelier, The Netherlands
2010 *Exchange VI: Contemporary Prints*, West Gallery, Purdue University, IN, USA
2010 *Multiplicities of Syntax*, Cora Stafford Gallery, University of North Texas, USA
2010 *Transforming Technology*, SGC Philagrafika Print Conference, University of the Arts, Philadelphia, PA, USA
2009 *One Night Stand*, Main Line Art Center, Haverford, PA, USA
2008 *From Taboo to Icon*, Ice Box Gallery; Crane Arts, Philadelphia, PA, USA
2008 *Works on Paper*, Philadelphia Sketch Club, Philadelphia, USA
2007 *Works on Paper*, Muse Gallery, Philadelphia, PA, USA
2007 *Works on Paper*, South Shore Art Center, Cohasset, MA, USA
2006 *M.F.A. Graduate Thesis Exhibition*, Cranbrook Art Museum, MI, USA
2006 *All About Me*, Open End Gallery, Chicago, IL, USA
2006 *All the Things I Never Said*, Forum Gallery, Cranbrook Academy of Art, MI
2005 *Self Location, Third Generation*, Forum Gallery, Cranbrook Academy, USA
2004 Cranbrook /Wayne State Graduate Exchange, Community Arts Gallery, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI, USA

Teaching, Lectureships and Workshop

2015 Present Assistant Professor of Drawing, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, USA
2012-2013 Fulbright Lecturer for Drawing, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria
2011-2014 Adjunct Faculty, Essex County College Art Department, Newark, USA
2011-2013 Drawing Instructor, Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY

2009 Visiting Lecturer of Photography, Ursinus College, Collegeville, USA
2008-2010 Teaching Artist, The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, USA
2008-2009 Teaching Artist, Berman Art Museum, Ursinus College, Collegeville, USA
2008-2008 Instructor, Art in Continuing Education, Montgomery County Community College, Blue Bell, USA
2007-2009 Adjunct Faculty, Department of Art and Art History, Drexel University Philadelphia, USA
2007-2008 Drawing Instructor, Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia, USA

Professional Appointments and Consultation

2011-2013 Founder and Program Coordinator, MAP, Long Island University, Brooklyn, USA
2009-2013 Director of Education, Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts, Brooklyn, USA
2006-2008 Studio and Teaching Assistant, Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia, USA
2005-2006 Graduate Teaching Assistant, Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomington Hills, USA
2004-2006 Museum Gallery Assistant, Cranbrook Museum of Art, Bloomington Hills, USA
2004-2005 Assistant to the Education Curator, Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomington Hills, USA
2004-2005 Forum Gallery Director, Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomington Hills, USA

Conference and Workshop Participation

2018 *Multiple Black Realities: Akwaeke Emezi + Arthur Jafa + ruby onyinyechi amanze on Freshwater*, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library, New York, USA
2017 Visiting Artist Lecture, Brown University, Providence, Providence, USA
2016 Faculty Lecture, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY
2016 *Drawing: A conversation with Amanda Hunt*, The Drawing Center, New York, USA
2016 *The Politics and Privilege of Play: A conversation with Dexter Wimberly*, 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, New York, USA
2016 *Spatial Politics: A conversation with Torkwase Dyson and Kimberli Gant*, Studio Museum of Harlem, Brooklyn, USA
2015 *The Commoditization of Art*, Columbia University, New York, USA
2015 *Africa Salon*, Contemporary African Arts & Culture Festival, Yale University, New Haven, USA
2014 Artist Lecture, Tiwani Contemporary, London, UK
2013 *Process and Practice*, Montclair Art Museum, Montclair, USA
2013 Artist's Professional Development Workshop, Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos, Nigeria
2013 *Contemporary Directions in Drawing*, Centre for Contemporary Art and Yaba College of Technology, Lagos, Nigeria
2012 Fine Arts Faculty Lecture, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria
2011 *Making Art Relevant*, New York Alliance of Black School Educators, New York, USA
2010 *Contemporary Art of the African Diaspora*, Development and the Education of Students of African Descent, Adelaide L. Sanford Institute for Research, Brooklyn, USA

Awards and Merits

2018 Artist Commission Program, Montblanc Cultural Foundation, Hamburg, Germany
2016 Shortlisted for Prix Canson Drawing Prize, The Drawing Centre, New York, USA
2012 – 2013 Faculty Fulbright Scholar, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Academic Record and Residencies

Education

2004-2006 Master of Arts (Fine Arts), Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, USA
2000-2004 Bachelor of Arts (Fine Art), Summa Cum Laude, Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia, USA

Awards and Residencies

2017 Artist-in-Residence, Spring Workshop, Hong-Kong, China
2016-2017 Open Sessions, The Drawing Center, New York, NY
2015-2017 Artist-in-Residence, Queens Museum, Flushing, USA
2015 Fountainhead Residency, Miami, USA
2014 Workspace Artist-in-Residence, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, New York, USA
2014 Artist-in-Residence, Bric Visual Arts Residency, Brooklyn, USA
2012 Artist-in-Residence, Gallery Aferro, Newark, USA
2011 Artist-in-Residence, Cooper Union, New York, USA
2011 Artist-in-Residence, Better Arts Residency, Redwood, New York, USA

Collections

CSS Bard College Hessel Museum, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, US
National Museum of African Art Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, US
Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt, USA
The Jewish Museum, New York, USA
The Microsoft Art Collection, Redmond, USA
The Studio Museum of Harlem, Brooklyn, USA

Selected Articles and Reviews

2019 Lux Magazine
2019 Frieze Magazine
2019 Nataal
2019 BOMB Magazine
2017 Artist Interview Feature; Mask Magazine
2017 Transition Magazine
2017 Moon Man Magazine
2017 Artist Text for The Anatomy of an Image, Backroom Caracas

2016 Emerging Artist mention: Financial Times, South Africa
2016 Featured artist interview: Art South Africa
2014 BRIC Biennial Volume I, exhibition catalogue
2013 Short story: I charge you to leave this body, Manifesta Journal 17: Etude
2013 Article: The Forgotten Art of Drawing, Africa.com
2013 Article: 'The Underdog; an Ode to Drawing', HYCIDE journal
2013 Featured artist interview: African Style Daily
2009 Featured artist interview: 'Visions Fine Art: Spring Edition'
2008 Featured artist interview: Art Journal, University of the Arts, Philadelphia

Performances

2021 *Tell me a way you pretend to be strong*, performed with Emilee Lord & Mor Mendel, Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy