

## **Aurélie Djiena**

Cameroon

### Biography

Aurélie Djiena was born in 1993 in western Cameroon and lives and works in Douala. She trained at the Institute of Fine Arts (IBA) of the University of Douala in Nkongsamba. There she attended the workshops of Hervé Youmbi, Jean Jacques Kanté and Kristine Tsala. In 2017, she graduated with a master's degree in visual arts. Since her academic training, she has shown a particular interest in painting and installations. Her style, rooted in the technique of weaving, is a legacy that feeds from and resembles basketry (her grandparents practiced this craft). In most of her works, she deals with her main theme: human relationships. If you look longer at her paintings, musicality is born from abstraction and perceived things shake the silence: "Red solar circle, square of life in battle, let the power of signs return" Through the repetition of woven patterns, Aurélie Owusu pays tribute to Ankomah and El Anatsui. In 2017, she participated in the "Moving Frontiers" and "Artwork" workshops organized by the Paris-Cergy School of Art and led by internationally renowned curator Simon Njami in Douala. In 2017, Aurélie received an SCB Cameroon Special Woman award at the 6th edition of the Douala Urban Salon Festival - SUD2017 thanks to her work Daily Symphony. And in September 2019, she is having her first solo exhibition at the Villa des Allemands (Yaoundé) thanks to the "Goethe-discovery" prize initiated by the Goethe-Institute.

### The artwork: aesthetic positions

"My artwork questions the relationships between people. It asks questions about life in the community."

And again: "Social life is my source of inspiration. I spend my time wondering about the relationships between people. Art is the ideal means that I use to present my vision of the world. Thus, the permanent confrontation with social life leads me to plastic and even multimedia creations. The exploration of the different notions that govern life in community is the main concern of my plastic creations. These different notions represent values such as solidarity, meeting, the way and others. These values are symbolized in my work by the motifs resulting from the various weaving techniques of basketry: the spiral, the tablecloth and the braid. For me, life is a weaving. It is a weaving of origins, cultures and languages. It is also the weaving of artistic practices. My paintings are woven canvases. I create a crossroads where craft and contemporary art meet. I am enthusiastic and

passionate about creating bridges between artistic techniques and human behavior. Indeed, each person has a habit and an ability, just like weaving, which is made of warps and wefts. So weaving is an appropriate way to express myself. I say that complementary colors fascinate me a lot, because they allow me to confront the complexity of man and his environment.

The entanglement of chains and wefts translates the being together in society. Therefore my works are strong codes that question each individual on the links he has with the other and that reflect the effect of movement, dynamics and complicity. They are a harmony, a concert of colors that plays in the hearts and minds of people. The atmosphere, rhythm and movement of the lines, colors and effects of this technique allow me to express my objective of illustrating the beauty and harmony of living together.

A project : "Double identity".

This project aims to explore the notions of person and personality. The objective is to show the many faces and facets of each person, both from a physical and moral point of view. On the other hand, this work highlights, with the help of weaving techniques, the behaviors, attitudes and habits of people in order to represent the different undulating and difficult to grasp characters of each individual. "Person and personality" are to be understood as different ways of being, which the subject can both perceive and show.

The person is the expression of the universality of the human being. It refers to a being who thinks about himself, who maintains relationships with other people or who is able to give a moral meaning to his actions. Personality refers to self-assertion. It is individual identity, social identity, status in society. It is also what one becomes, and it is finally the character of a person in its unity, its singularity. Thus, as a living being, the person can have one or more personalities, conditioned by time, space and diversity. The personality is the social identity of the individual (About the work "Joker", 2021).

## Exhibitions

Individual exhibition:

September 2019: exhibition "toile de vie" at the Villa Allemande in Yaoundé thanks to the "Goethe Découverte" prize.

## Group exhibitions :

October 2017: exhibition at Doual'art as part of the "young hopefuls" competition of the "S.U.D".

December 2017: exhibition "Who are my poeple?" at the MAM gallery as part of the "At Work" project.

December 2017 : Exhibition "avis de tsunami" at the "carré des artistes" in Douala, Cameroon.

May 2018: exhibition "Cameroon, a contemporary vision" at the World Bank.

May 2019: exhibition at the contemporary art and design fair "Douala Art Fair" in Douala, Cameroon  
June 2019: exhibition "Today" at the National Museum of Cameroon.

December 2019: exhibition "the Kai" at the Annie Kadji gallery.

July 2020 : "Abstraction" exhibition at the Doual'art space.

October 2020: "Collective memory, national memory" exhibition at the Free Academy of Fine Arts.

December 2020: exhibition "Face au silence" at the Mam gallery.

October 2021: Exhibition "Prospective" at the Goethe Institut Cameroon

December 2021 : Exhibition "What Water? one for all" at the Carré des artistes in Hollerich, Luxembourg.

## The artworks

### *Joker*

Acrylic on canvas, weaving

2019

Size: 130 x 97 cm

### *Chute de la Métché (Waterfalls of the Métché)*

2019

Acrylic on canvas, weaving

Size: 190 x 130 cm /

### *L'innocence (Innocence)*

2020

acrylic on canvas, weaving

Size: 190 x 130 cm / 2020

## Commentary of the work by kukutana

Aurélie Djiena weaves the interweaving of being. Her colorful compositions, both abstract and real, made of drawing elements and interlacing materials, give the artworks a mystical materiality of their own: the elements want to step out of the frame, to overflow into the space. Their interlacing has an almost constructivist and cubist abstract look, their striking gesture reminds of murals or exhibition pieces. The transposition of the waterfalls of Métché (Cameroon) into a braid is very original. Here, the frame is not geometric, the waters flow in black and white with a yellow band inside a three-dimensional wavy shape that resembles a map. Djiena's artistic response to the world is one of determined strength and singularity; she cares about interconnections.