



Lagos Lagoon Chronicles

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NATIONAL MUSEUM LAGOS

**BOLAJI ALONGE
OGOOLUWA ADENIRAN
BASIT AKINSEMOYIN
OLABISI ALONGE
UCHE ENECHUKWU
RASHEED IBRAHIM
GASPARD KOUTCHIKA
ANTHONY MONDAY
JASON OGBAZI
OLUWAPELUMI OLAOSUN
ESTHER OLORUNTOBI
OLUWAYEMISI ONADIPE
FEMI SIMPSON
CURATED BY SANDRA ALONGE**



Lagos Lagoon Chronicles



Supported by



BOLAJI ALONGE

Project Coordinator, Lagos Lagoon Climate Response



The story of Epe, Lagos, is one of resilience, transformation and great potential. Ejirin, Saga and Oriba are communities rich in culture, history and natural resources. Yet, like many regions on the cusp of rapid urbanization, these areas face their share of challenges—infrastructure gaps, economic disparities, the water hyacinth menace and the pressing need for sustainable development. This catalogue chronicles a year-long development project supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark that sought to address these challenges. The Lagos Lagoon Climate Response implemented by Help Africa Initiatives (HAI) is not an isolated initiative, but a blueprint for inclusive growth and community-driven progress.

Over the course of twelve months, a diverse team of partners, healthcare professionals, artists, training facilitators and community leaders came together to reimagine the future. The main project partners, HAI and Eyes of a Lagos Boy, Healthnika and MitiMeth were joined by an ever-growing alliance of development enthusiasts that gave the best of themselves. Crown Troupe Africa, EcoLearn, the Sickle Cell Foundation, as well as government agencies, local government officials, traditional rulers, school directors, teachers and so many others contributed directly or indirectly.

This project was not merely about providing up to date books for students, or free medical assistance and training of citizens, it was about building bridges between tradition and modernity, between local aspirations and global opportunities. Lagos Lagoon Climate Response is about partnering with the people of Epe to take

ownership of their development while preserving the essence of what makes their community unique.

The pages that follow capture the triumphs, beauty and lessons learned during this transformative journey. They tell the story of how a community rallied together to overcome obstacles, how innovative solutions were crafted to address complex problems, and how the seeds of sustainable development were planted for future generations. From the bustling markets to the quiet fishing villages, this project touched every corner of Epe, leaving behind not just physical infrastructure, but a renewed sense of hope and possibility.

This chronicle is more than a record of events; it is a testament to the power of collaboration, vision, and perseverance. It is a reminder that development is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor, but a deeply contextual process that requires listening, learning and adapting. In this catalogue, you will witness the pictorial unfolding of a story that is as much about the people of Epe as it is about the place itself, while our project also builds bridges with another riverine Lagos community, Ilaje-Bariga.

The story of Epe is not a distant goal, but a continuous journey—one that is shaped by the voices of communities, the dedication of leaders, and the collective will to create a better future. To the people of Epe, may this work stand as a tribute to your resilience and a promise of the brighter days ahead. A heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone who has contributed to this project. It has been a deeply inspiring experience.

WWW.EYESOFALAGOSBOY.COM

ACHENYO IDACHABA-OBARO

MitiMeth, Reflections on the Lagos Lagoon Climate Response Project



Over the past several months, I alongside members of my team, have been involved in a multi stakeholder project - the Lagos Lagoon Climate Response Project (LLCRP). During this time the MitiMeth team has worked alongside other stakeholders Help Africa Initiatives, Eyes of a Lagos Boy, Healthnika, Crown Troupe Africa, EcoLearn, Lagos State Waterways Authority (LASWA), Sickle Cell Foundation Nigeria, Goge Africa, in some very HARD TO REACH communities along the Lagos Lagoon.

We have listened with heavy hearts to the stories in several communities. Disrupted schooling, disrupted livelihoods for weeks on end. Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness due to the massive infestation of aquatic weeds. Fishing, the lifeline of the communities grinding to an abrupt halt. Students and teachers who have to commute by water from other communities, cut off for several weeks on end.

I am a big proponent of home-grown solutions and leveraging indigenous knowledge. Through the Lagos Lagoon Climate Response Project, MitiMeth has introduced harvesting, crafting skills and biochar production (through its partner PIB) utilizing the water hyacinth abundant in Ejirin, Saga, Imoco, Oriba, Okotiye, Adepale, Abatuntun and Sangotedo communities. Helping the communities to see that in the midst of their adversity there also exists a pathway to prosperity. The enthusiasm and diligence of the women (and few men) in learning how to make baskets, bags, mats, furniture has been nothing short of impressive.

In one community there were several out of school kids eager to learn. They had been out of school for several months because the structure for their school had collapsed.

And even though the kids were not the original target of our workshops, we were obligated to ensure the kids got to participate in the workshops and were productively engaged while we were there.

My interaction with the children, teachers and students motivated me to give the primary school and secondary school students in Saga, Oriba, Ejirin and other coastal communities in Lagos an eco-challenge to design a water hyacinth harvester that can be deployed within their local environment. The challenge with prizes has motivated the students to think out of the box and beyond the challenge to design their own solutions. We have received submissions from several students to be judged by an accomplished Jury of Judges.

The establishment of a water hyacinth raw material bank took on a life of its own as several communities focused on harvesting to subsist and survive during the peak water hyacinth infestation periods. With one community recording up to fifty-seven harvesters in the community. Our gratitude goes to the Epe Local Government Chair, Hon Surah Animashaun, who graciously provided three market stalls free of charge for the storage of the harvested water hyacinth from the various communities.

The Lagos Lagoon Climate Project has exposed us on a deeper level to the challenges and opportunities for social and economic impact utilizing water hyacinth in far removed communities. It doesn't end here! The communities will still need ongoing capacity building support and access to markets to sell their products. I am happy to have been a part of the project and look forward to seeing transformed lagoon communities in the not too distant future.

#LLCRP #MITIMETH #ECOCHALLENGE #LAGOS #LAGOON #COMMUNITIES #WATER #HYACINTH #HARVESTER #CLIMATECHANGE #SOLUTIONS

DR TUYI MEBAWONDU

Healthnika



The Lagos-Epe Lagoon is my life, like the River Nile to Ancient Egypt.

As a young boy growing up in our fishing camp of Bodun, near Ejinrin, we understood the waterways, the movement of tides, seasonal fishing and the flora and fauna of the Lagoon. Our schools were just across the riverbank, necessitating the need to make daily crossings by boat. Health services were provided in downtown Ejinrin and Ketu (Ketu-Epe) and could be accessed only across the lagoon. Life on the banks of the lagoon became the substrate from which our lofty dreams were built until the challenge of climate change brought the water hyacinth in 1984.

From then on, navigation through the waters became a nightmare. Getting potable, drinking water became almost impossible. Access to health and education across the river banks suddenly became a mirage. Livelihoods were shattered and living became challenging.

The chain of events got to a climax when I lost a niece to eclampsia (a pregnancy complication) and an uncle who had a heart attack while he was fishing and subsequently died, because of the menace of water hyacinth, as navigation was obstructed and access to healthcare was denied. As a result, it became a personal challenge for me to intervene. We started in 2018, covering more than 100 villages on the banks of the Lagos-Epe lagoon. Back then, the purpose was to embark on health literacy; to teach early warning signs of health emergencies; to campaign for immunization, and to treat common ailments. I collaborated with Bolaji Alonge, Eyes of a Lagos Boy, to document the work we were doing. That resulted in a first exhibition – Greener Pastures – in 2021.

Then came this huge opportunity. The Lagos Lagoon Climate Response Project was supported by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with a well-defined health

component. During this project, more than 2000 individuals from vulnerable groups were treated for various illnesses like malaria, respiratory infection, diabetes, hypertension, ulcers, arthritis, anaemia, etc. Also, over 600 people received dental care and more than 300 were treated for different ophthalmological problems.

In Saga, during the project, we witnessed an outbreak of scabies in the whole community. We responded to this situation with medical treatment, using scabies medication, and followed up with hygiene education and subsequent visits, until the scabies outbreak was eradicated.

In Oriba, Ejinrin and Saga, children were given mass deworming and vitamin supplementation. For the first time in the whole riverine community, sickle cell screening and education were carried out among school children and more than 1000 children were screened. Various health messages, including leaflets, banners and posters were conspicuously displayed in these communities, to deepen health literacy, and encourage behavioural and attitudinal change. Routinely, urine, sugar, hepatitis, haemoglobin and malaria tests were carried out.

The project was a huge success, and indeed, I was conferred with a chieftaincy title (the Ba'awosan-meaning chief of health-of Ejinrin Kingdom), based on the impact of the health project on the people.

Nevertheless, we have to keep working on the sustenance of the project, to achieve SDG 6, where health will be available, accessible and affordable, even in these remote areas. For we know, good health is needed to preserve our corporeal and mental faculties in their fullest capacity. This is essential for us to enhance our talents, become empowered, and contribute to the economic growth of the nation.

The work has just begun.

OUR ARTISTS



ANTHONY
MONDAY



BASIT
AKINSEMOJIN



BISI
ALONGE



ESTHER
OLORUNTOBI



FEMI
SIMPSON



GASPARD
KOUTCHIKA



BOLAJI
ALONGE



JASON
OGBAZI



OGOOLUWA
ADENIRAN



PELUMI
OLAOSUN



RASHEED
IBRAHIM



UCHE
ENECHUKWU



YEMISI
ONADIPE



OGOOLUWA ADENIRAN

PHOTOGRAPHY

@ogooluwa__

Photographer and content creator in art, fashion, mobile and documentary. O.G's expertise in mobile photography and videography allows him to create compelling visuals. Beyond photography, he excels in content strategy, social media marketing and brand storytelling, working with beauty, fashion and food brands to enhance their digital presence. His work is driven by a passion for authenticity, creativity and community building.

Swimming on Gold (Photo on canvas)
24 x 36 inches. 2025

What Shall We Do with What We Have?
(Photo on canvas) 24 x 36 inches. 2025



BASIT AKINSEMOYIN

PAINTING

Akinsemoyin is an emerging contemporary artist exploring the intersections of identity, culture and human connection. Born and raised in Lagos, Nigeria, Basit draws inspiration from his homeland's vibrant colors, dynamic rhythms and rich traditions, infusing his art with a unique blend of modernity and heritage. He gained his B.A in Creative art (Visual Art) at the University of Lagos.

Twilight Saga I, (Oil on Canvas) 24 x 36 inches. 2025

Twilight Saga II, (Oil on Canvas) 24 x 36 inches. 2025



OLABISI ALONGE

PHOTOGRAPHY

@agent_bisisoft_

Born and raised in the bustling metropolis of Lagos. Bisi is captivated by the art of visual storytelling. He honed his skills in cinematography at Praxis Studios, Lagos. His unique background in capturing moments positions his art in the graphic internet content creation of short video advertisements and brands to effectively convey their messages through the power of photography and videography. Bisi's images highlight the strength of nature and human interaction with the environment.



Nature's Embrace (Photo on canvas)
24 x 36 inches. 2025

Support Nature (Photo on canvas)
24 x 36 inches. 2025



UCHE ENECHUKWU

DANCE

@enechukwuuche

Uche is a Nigerian performance artist with over fifteen years of experience across theatre, dance, and film, both locally and internationally. As a dynamic actor, dancer, choreographer, creative director and community organizer, his work bridges the realms of artistic innovation and social advocacy.

A core member of the renowned Crown Troupe of Africa, Uche trained under the esteemed Segun Adefila, honing his craft in socially conscious theatre. His artistic journey is deeply rooted in community engagement, harnessing the power of performance to inspire, educate and challenge societal narratives.



RASHEED IBRAHIM

DANCE PERFORMANCE

@rasheed.ibrahim.165470

Rasheed Ijolomo is the Artistic director and choreographer Ijolomo Dance Company a theatrical dance company based in Lagos. He has worked with choreographers and directors in and outside the country. Trained at Crown Troupe of Africa for over two decades under the artistic directorship of Segun Adefila. A graduate of University of Lagos Creative Arts Department theatre/Dance major. Ibrahim recently won the Goethe Institut Lagos Connect and Support initiative grant 2024/2025.

A Beautiful Life Is Closer Than We Think (Dance)



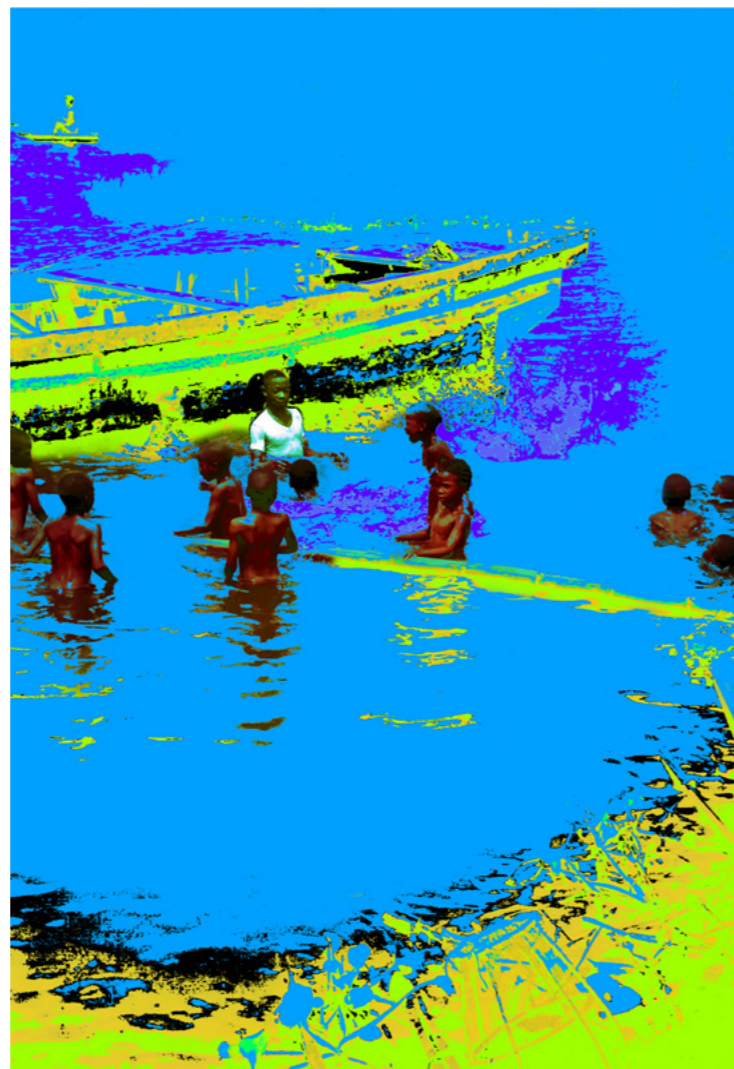
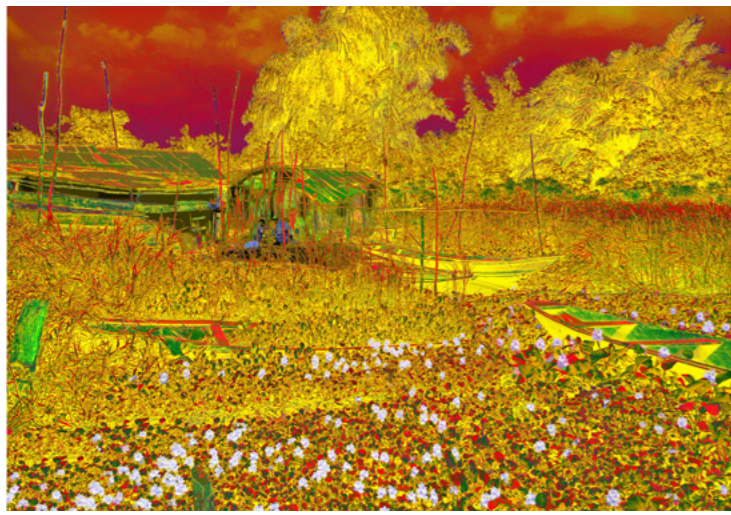
GASPARD LIHOUEYOU KOUTCHIKA

PHOTOGRAPHY

@Gaspardshotit_

A Lagos-based photographer who forged his path in the craft of documentary and innovation. In 2020, he became the Head of the Technical Department at Colvi Limited (Studio24) and later served as the Technical Assistant/Adviser to the GM-COO/MD-CEO. In 2022, Gaspard made history as the first African photographer to help Nikon launch Nikon's Z30 camera from the Z series in Nigeria. Gaspo is a member of the Lagos State Professional Photographers Association of Nigeria.

Water Hyacinth Effect (Photo on canvas) 24 x 36 inches. 2025



JASON NNAMDI OGBAZI

MIXED PHOTOGRAPHY

@therealjnazzi

Jason is an accomplished contemporary Artist and designer based in Lagos, Nigeria. His creative endeavor ignited while studying computer networks in the United Kingdom. He watched closely while working alongside some of the top fashion photographers and designers, first as a model. Naturally born with artistic talent, Jason has maintained consistency over the years in development of his distinctive style, by infusing some elements of computing and fashion backgrounds within his compositions. In his over two decades as a professional, Jason has participated in various groundbreaking projects and exhibitions, both local and international. His creativity is unique, modern, stylish and identifiable.

Sacred Quarter (Photo on canvas) 24 x 36 inches. 2025

Camouflaged (Photo on canvas) 24 x 36 inches. 2025

Water Haven (Photo on canvas) 24 x 36 inches. 2025



OLUWAPELUMI OLAOSUN

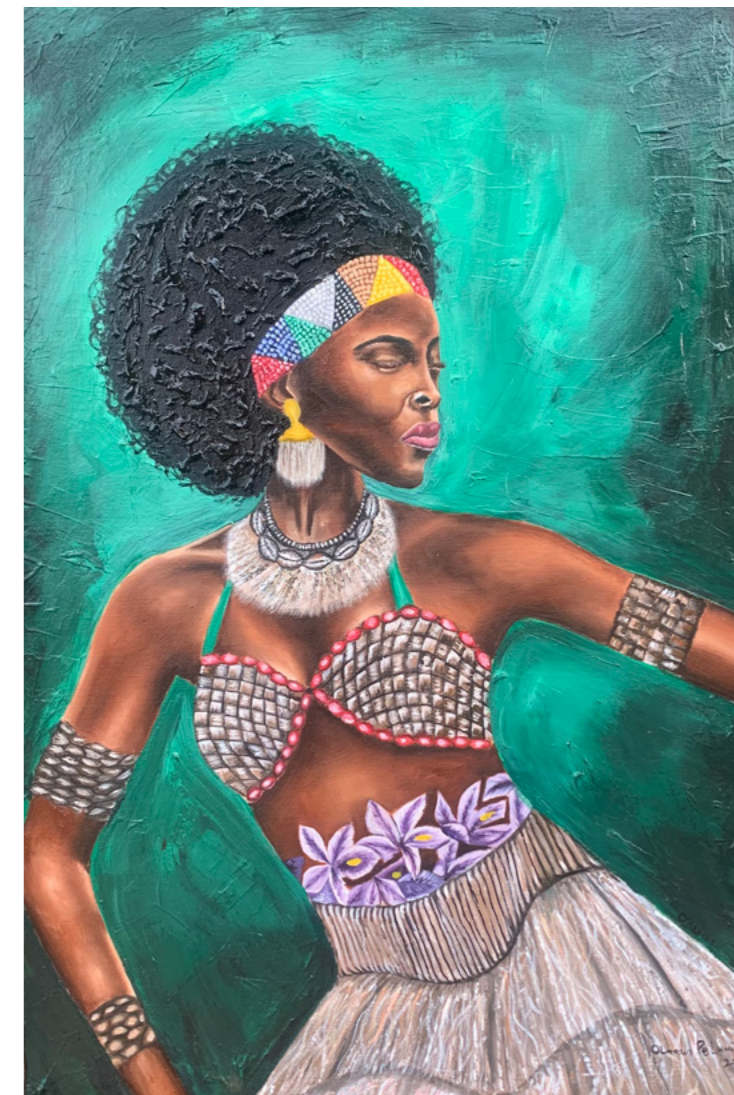
PAINTING

@therealjnazzi

Pelumi was born and raised in Osun State, Nigeria, and currently resides in Ibadan. She holds a BSc in Geography and Planning Science from Adekunle Ajasin University. Olaosun draws her inspiration from her life experiences and everything that touches her feelings. She is particularly interested in conveying messages on gender inequality problems, social issues, and African history, among other topics connected to black people. Through her art, Olaosun aims to create connection with her viewers, making them feel the vehemence in her artistic story.

Adversity and Survival, (Acrylic on Canvas), 24 x 36 inches. 2025

Beauty in Disguise, (Oil and Acrylic on Canvas), 24 x 36 inches. 2025





ESTHER MOBOLAJI OLORUNTOBI

SCULPTING

@oloruntobiesther

A Nigerian artist whose passion for creative expression is felt in her art – sculpting. The sculptor delves into the themes of cultural heritage, natural authenticity, resilience and the beauty of womanhood among other themes. Esther aims to inspire, educate, and spark meaningful conversations. Esther studied Fine Art at the College of Education, Abeokuta, and trained under masters in the arts: Francis Denedo Art Studio, Universal Studio of Art, and Okediji Femi Art Studio. Oloruntobi is currently pursuing a degree in Creative Art at the University of Lagos.

Encircled in wealth: Discovering hidden treasures –
Fiberglass and artificial moss. 2025
16 x 24 inches



OLUWAYEMISI ONADIPE

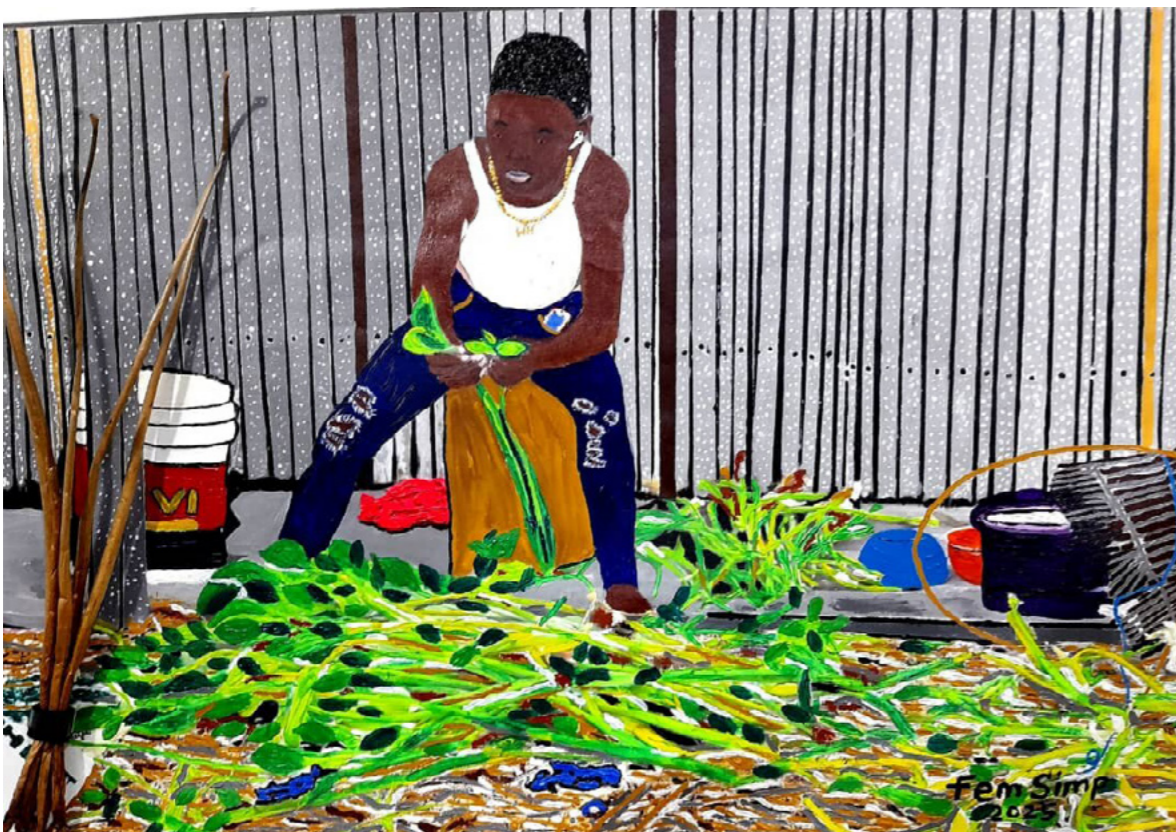
PHOTOGRAPHY

@oluwayemisionadipe

Yemisi is an artist whose visual vocabulary cuts across photography, painting, sculpture and installation. Born and lives in Lagos where she experienced her childhood, she is fascinated by time, change and memory. She uses her works to capture and interrogate the passage of time, re-imagining of objects, spaces and how change shapes perception and memory. She studied fine and applied arts at Federal College of Education, Lagos.

Ejirin Cheifs (Photo on canvas) 24 x 36 inches. 2025

The boy at work (Photo on canvas) 24 x 36 inches. 2025



FEMI SIMPSON

PAINTING

@Olufemisimpson

Teacher, writer, artist, photographer, and farmer. Former Desk Officer, Bilateral and Multilateral Relations at the Nigerian National Commission for UNESCO. Head, Department of English and Director of Publications (1998 - 2012) Atlantic Hall School, Epe. "I started active photography and video graphics in 2001 after a CNN training program, "CNN Students Bureau" organized by CNN and UNESCO. I led a team of students to produce two short documentaries (5 minutes each), "Physically Challenged Students in Nigeria" & "Hair Braiding in Nigeria," both of which were aired on CNN in August 2001.

"Gloom to Bloom". Processing the plant (Acrylic on canvas) 24 x 36 inches. 2025

"Bringing in the Sheaves". Harvesting the plant. (Acrylic on canvas) 24 x 36 inches. 2025



BOLAJI ALONGE

PHOTOGRAPHY

@EyesofaLagosBoy

Bolaji Alonge is a Nigerian photographer, artist, and journalist known for his work in visual storytelling through photography and other creative mediums. He gained recognition for capturing the essence of Nigerian and African culture, heritage, and everyday life through his lens. His work often highlights the vibrancy and diversity of the African continent, and he has been involved in various exhibitions and projects both locally and internationally. He shows his beloved Lagos from unexpected angles, a city that inspires and captivates. Bolaji makes the viewer reconsider what we have seen with our own eyes, through the Eyes of a Lagos Boy.

Emina-Saga Moment of Decision - Eyes of a Lagos Boy, 24 x 40 inches. 2025

Ejirin Jetty from Above - Eyes of a Lagos Boy, 24 x 36 inches. 2024





Twilight Cast, Eyes of a Lagos Boy,
24 x 36 inches. 2024

Emina-Saga Moment of Decision - Eyes of a
Lagos Boy, 24 x 40 inches. 2025

Egungun Oriba, Eyes of a Lagos Boy,
24 x 36 inches. 2024

Rejuvenation, Eyes of a Lagos Boy,
24 x 36 inches. 2024



LAGOS LAGOON CLIMATE RESPONSE

Supported by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Lagos is the biggest city in Africa today and is expected to continue growing, as Nigeria is billed to become the third most populated country in the world by 2050 – according to the United Nations. Lagos is known for its film industry, afrobeat(s) and fashion, fintech and digital start-ups. Lagos is a major port, a center of commerce and trade both for the region and the continent. It is a society that is both modern and traditional, with a strong Christian/Muslim presence and undertones of Ifa, one of the oldest religions on earth. Every day newcomers arrive in Lagos, eager to change their lives and make their dreams come true. Many leave their villages in other states of Nigeria or West Africa. This leads to constant pressure on water management, a need for new roads and infrastructure, housing and a wide variety of public services that are required to ensure human dignity, security, peace and prosperity.

Lagos is also a city surrounded by water – the Atlantic on the one side and expansive riverine areas, lagoons and rivers inside and around it. They set the stage for a tropical sprawling city, that reflects the challenges posed by rapid urban growth. Many coastal areas are at risk of flooding due to climate change and rising water levels, but also due to land-filling and short-term planning.

All along the Lagos lagoon, hundreds of small villages remain the home of local fishermen and farmers. Just two hours from the bustling city life of Lagos, people are living their lives depending on nature for their survival. Beyond the city of Epe, villagers in over two hundred settlements lack public infrastructure and have very limited access to health, education, power and gainful employment. Water hyacinth is an invasive plant that blocks access to the villages several months a year and affects the livelihoods of the rural dwellers.

The project addresses climate change at local level by transforming waste to wealth, promotes better local practices in terms of water management and sanitation, generates employment and impacts the lives of children attending public schools in these communities as well as supports public health service provision. The project has been professionally documented to raise public awareness and guide future initiatives. This holistic approach is rooted in a vision for sustainable development in a challenging and changing environment.

The project director, Bolaji Alonge has been documenting the impact of water hyacinth in these communities since 2018. 'Three years ago our exhibition 'Greener Pastures' put a spotlight on the difficulties the inhabitants of coastal villages of Epe experience year in year out due to the menace of water hyacinth, impediment to their livelihoods, healthcare and education of the young ones", Alonge continues, "we are glad our clarion call for support was heeded and were delighted to work together with the people of Epe again to achieve a better life in the rainforest/tropical paradise in the east of Lagos. The project covers the villages along the Epe axis of the Lagos Lagoon with nodal points at Oriba, Ejinrin and Saga.

HAI was set up in 2012 with the aim to help humanity through health, education, sheltering, food provision, orphanage homes and other humanitarian services. HAI including their partners has solid local expertise within public health and experience in terms of campaigning for better livelihoods for the target community. MitiMeth was established to address the negative environmental and social impacts resulting from waste by creating new sustainable materials derived from invasive aquatic weeds and agricultural residues.

Since July 2024, over 200 people in communities along the Lagos Lagoon were trained on the use of water hyacinth for crafts and production of biochar by MitiMeth, over 2000 people received urgent health advice by Healthnika under the leadership of Dr. Tuyi Mebawodu. Over 600 people received dental care and more than 300 were treated for different ophthalmological problems. Over 1000 youngsters were enlightened in collaboration with Sickle Cell Foundation Nigeria, 2250 school books were provided to kids directly, 12 school assemblies on climate change conducted in collaboration with Ecolearn and Crown Troupe of Africa. The project works closely together with LASWA, the Epe local government, Oba of Ejinrin, Bale of Oriba and community head of Saga, local schools and women's organisations.

The project results are being presented through an exhibition by a group of 13 talented artists that were selected and joined the project team in the communities for an immersive art experience. Their works are the result of their intimate encounter with the beauty of Epe and its inhabitants. At the exhibition to be held at the National Museum Lagos, the documentary "Lagos Lagoon Chronicles" will also be premiered.



ANTHONY MONDAY

Antony is the project photography assistant and contributed to the production of the Lagos Lagoon Chronicles documentary.

Antony is the project photographer and assistant producer of the Lagos Lagoon Chronicles documentary. Monday's work often explores personal confronting issues, sociocultural issues, politics, spirituality, memories, sports, identity themes, and nostalgic elements vis-a-vis the present juxtaposed with the banal. Shortly after the "The Silent Majority Project" workshop, Monday was shortlisted for the African Artist Foundation/ Etisalat National Amateur Photography with a certificate of excellence for his innovations. He has since then attended different art and photography workshops such as Lagos Photo Summer School, The Nlele Institute Center for Photography, Fotofactory Lagos, and Z-A art workshop to sharpen his creative mind.





Lagos Lagoon Chronicles