

HUMAN STORIES

INSIGHT INTO AN ARTIST'S PRACTICE: BUBI CANAL

Bubi Canal is a New York-based artist from Spain who works across photography, video art, and sculpture. His primary focus is on photography, which allows him to incorporate elements from other disciplines into his practice. He combines performance, fashion, sculptural objects, and graphic design elements to build his own world for the camera. This world is often inhabited by characters and still lifes he has created by blending everything from American and Japanese pop culture to Cantabrian mythology to aspects of his own expansive imagination.

Working intuitively in response to his environment and personal experiences, his projects each reflect the current moment in his life, like a journal. While the characters are constructions, the models are friends and family. He styles them as dreamlike beings from alternate realities using handmade costumes and everyday materials from his environment. He combines continuous light and flash to create bold and graphic staged scenes that underscore his dramatic themes of hybrid mythology, identity, and personal history.

Canal's aesthetic hovers between the real and fantastical, revealing his sense of wonder. His images are often created in natural locations from a bright palette of colorful costumes and geometrically shaped objects. These are made from playful materials and are often worn or held by his subjects. However, his subjects' facial posture and expressions remain deliberate, as he allows them to communicate through their own spontaneous gestures.

Ultimately, Canal's work inspires the viewer to create their own dream worlds where magical things could happen.



**BUBI CANAL
Island**

Edition of 5

Year: 2019

Size: 520 x 785mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



**BUBI CANAL
Tuchi**

Edition of 5

Year: 2022

Size: 727 x 1100mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



BUBI CANAL
Union III

Edition of 5
Year: 2019

Size: 490 x 715mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



BUBI CANAL
Joy is Real

Edition of 5

Year: 2022

Size: 1080 x 713mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



BUBI CANAL
Cosmvision

Edition of 5

Year: 2019

Size: 1075 x 708mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



**BUBI CANAL
Union IV**

Edition of 5
Year: 2019

Size: 490 x 715mm
Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



BUBI CANAL
Cosmvision

Year: 2019

Medium: Moving Image

Duration: 00:01:20



BUBI CANAL
Dark-Haired Girl

Edition of 5

Year: 2022

Size: 490 x 740mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



BUBI CANAL
Union V

Edition of 5
Year: 2019

Size: 490 x 715mm
Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed

NYUGEN SMITH ON HIS WORK AS SEEN (RAINY SEASON) 2017:

Part of my research throughout the Caribbean looks at how people move through their environments, adapt to the elements while navigating landscape and use ingenuity to problem solve. Here I'm thinking about practical solutions to shielding oneself from the rain. It is common to see people use plastic bags (which have flooded their environments) to cover the head from the rain. I change bags beginning with one from a company that maintains a monopoly in 8 countries in the Caribbean. They own supermarkets, car dealerships, real estate, energy, insurance, and more. But they provide jobs for those who otherwise would be struggling to find work. The other bag used is a local hardware store (entrepreneurship, local support, community). Then the colored bag (back to visuals along the landscape) a nod to the way people take pride in individuality when it comes to the way they paint the exterior of their homes and the nuanced relationship to gender and colours in the region. I made the piece inside of the ruins of former sugar cane mill as the rain falls on me.

Nyugen Smith is a Caribbean-American interdisciplinary artist based in Jersey City, NJ. Through performance, found object sculpture, mixed media drawing, painting, video, photo, and writing, Nyugen deepens his knowledge of historical and present-day conditions of Black African Descendants in the diaspora. Trauma, spiritual practices, language, violence, memory, architecture, landscape, and climate change are primary concerns in his practice. His work has been presented at Pérez Art Museum Miami, the Museum of Latin American Art, Nordic Black Theater, Norway, Newark Museum, and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, among others.



NYUGEN SMITH
Sophisticating the Negro (Still)

Year: 2017
Medium: Moving Image
Duration: 00:00:59



NYUGEN SMITH
As Seen (Rainy Season)

Year: 2017

Medium: Moving Image

Duration: 00:01:29



NYUGEN SMITH
Pulling Cart Bending Backwards

Edition of 5

Year: 2017

Size: 578 x 460mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Matt, Framed



NYUGEN SMITH
Pulling Cart I & I

Edition of 5

Year: 2017

Size: 582 x 462mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Matt, Framed



NYUGEN SMITH
Pulling Cart Holding Palm

Edition of 5

Year: 2017

Size: 580 x 465mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Matt, Framed

TRY TRAN ON FRIENDSHIP:

The portrait series of Panda Wong was shot in 2020, during the first wave of the pandemic. It was a collaborative project between the Liminal magazine (based in Melbourne, Australia), Panda Wong-the poet and I. The project has given us an opportunity to rekindle our friendship since I have left the country for quite some time.

Introversion has always been my way of life, but as Covid-19 swept across the globe, not being able to see Panda during the process of making this series allowed me to continue with my 'faceless portrait' with a playful twist. I began to 'collect' her online presence through Facebook, her Instagram's account, we went through several online meetings, even took screen-caps of her during our conversations to build up my Panda's photo archive.

With an attempt to abstract my photographic subject, using large printed screenshots, close-up portrait printed on a cake and various backdrops are essential elements in these photographs. I began to re-photograph these portraits entirely in my studio. Each 'Panda' was placed in a different but rather intimate space, a parade of surreal set ups : she is in a bedroom, as a cake wrapped around by holographic fabric, distorting her features by folded print to create almost a vase-like shape. Unlike most of my previous faceless portraits, this was a rare moment where I allowed myself to make direct 'eye contact' with my subject. In return, viewers are offered to get a glimpse of Wong's soft gaze, her sparkly eye make-up, her red finger nails, the dynamic established between a subject and a photographer with endless possibilities to explore.

Thy Tran is a Vietnamese-Australian visual artist living and working in Saigon. Thy's work is charged with a quiet yet sensual intimacy and melancholic narrative of a deep, dreamy romance. Her work explores sexuality, relationships and identity through imagery that is emotional yet surreal, capturing ephemeral moments within relationships.



THY TRAN
Panda's Portrait

Edition of 5
Year: 2020
Size: 670 x 682mm
Medium: C-Type Fuji Flex, Framed



THY TRAN
Orchids

Edition of 1

Year: 2020

Size: 670 x 780mm

Medium: C-Type Fuji Flex, Framed



THY TRAN
Panda's Portrait in Bed

Edition of 5
Year: 2020
Size: 714 x 485mm
Medium: C-Type Fuji Flex, Framed



THY TRAN
Panda's Portrait on a Cake

Edition of 5
Year: 2020
Size: 517 x 657mm
Medium: C-Type Fuji Flex, Framed

LEONARD SURYAJAYA'S POST PANDEMIC IMPRESSIONS:

I'm turning 34. Fml I'm old... Do I want babies? But why? I don't fucking want one. And if i change my mind later that's fine.

Human stories thru photography: With my friends and self portrait, using both large format film and digital cameras, I want to show 4 different ways I employ photography:

- portrait,
- tableaux,
- installation/site for performance,
- documentaon/progression of me/ me lapse

The work navigates the pandemic, sickness, isolaon, suspension, fear, mortality, dreams, friendship, joy, celebraon, healing, relief, trust. In simpler terms: Covid, monkey pox, Quaranne, lost, afraid, dead, mental health management, love, self faith, courage, grit, enlightenment, peace.

I turned 34. Maximalist? I just have a lot to think I just have a lot to express... Every expression honors: where I come from (Chinese Indonesian blood), where I'm at (American Green Card), where I want to be (happy and content)

"No Baby No Cry" acts like a self-soothing mantra for the inner child born out of Covid-19 pandemic, wars, women's rights protests, isolation, uncertainties, and the pursuit for self-peace.

Leonard Suryajaya (Chicago, IL) uses his work to test the boundaries of intimacy, community and family. He uses photography, video, performance and installation to show how the everyday is layered with histories, meanings and potential.

Suryajaya's work has been exhibited in Art Institute of Chicago; Fotomuseum Winthertur; Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Photography Chicago; Arsenale Nord, Venice; Benaki Museum, Greece; Photoforum Pasquart, Switzerland; National Library, Singapore; Wrightwood 659, Chicago; Aperture Gallery, NY; The Block Museum, Chicago; Frost Museum, Miami. Awards: 2022 DCASE Chicago Esteemed Artist Award; Aaron Siskind Foundation Award, Artadia Awards, Robert Giard Foundation Fellowship, CENTER Excellence in Multimedia Award, New Artist Society Award, James Weinstein Memorial Fellowship, Claire Rosen and Samuel Edes Prize for Emerging Artist, The Santo Foundation Fellowship.



LEONARD SURYAJAYA
No Baby No Cry

Edition of 5
Year: 2022
Size: 11000 x 2935mm
Medium: Phototex



LEONARD SURYAJAYA
Monkey Proxy

Edition of 5

Year: 2022

Size: 711 x 889mm

Medium: C-Type Fuji Flex mounted on Dibond



LEONARD SURYAJAYA
Temp Check

Edition of 5

Year: 2022

Size: 1270 x 1016mm

Medium: C-Type Fuji Flex mounted on Dibond



LEONARD SURYAJAYA
I Made My Friends Lit

Edition of 5

Year: 2022

Size: 813 x 1524mm

Medium: C-Type Fuji Flex mounted on Dibond

STEPHEN TAYO CONJURES THE ESSENCE OF LAGOS:

In this new body of work, Lagos based artist and photographer Stephen Tayo continues to explore the themes that have become synonymous with his storytelling, paying homage to the cities that shape the subjects he captures.

Tayo resists the temptation to create a contained body of work, choosing instead to anthologize this new project as a series of interconnected instalments exploring different aspects of his relationship to the city. He explores Lagos through fashion, using it as an expression of culture and a repository of history. Stretching the boundaries of editorial photography through careful composition and exquisite staging using found materials and unconventional visual imagery, The visual language in this new anthology is familiar, but elevated.

In this first instalment of the 'Na Lagos We Dey' anthology, Stephen employs depersonalisation, removing the human subjects that are central to his earlier work. In their place, Stephen employs avatars, anonymous figures draped in found objects that represent certain rituals that have become synonymous with the city. The common thread between these items, each different in form and primary function from the next, is that they are all made of plastic.

Ubiquitous in Lagos, plastic is the new currency of the city's cosmopolitan future. It is draped across shoulders and thighs as yards of shiny rayon and polyester embellished with brittle sequins as patrons glide across dance halls across the city. It is garlanded on trees and trellised around windows at Christmas time, announcing the Yuletide. It is swept across streets during the summer rains, collecting in gutters and clogging the city's flood channels, a stark reminder of the rabid consumption that happens in brightly lit mall aisles and tiny mallam kiosks. It holds entire livelihoods as people migrate from the villages to the city, the workhorse of immigration.

It is folded in sweaty palms and squeezed in bags, and fished out to ward off the heat of the increasing warm summers. It is moulded into brightly coloured starter footballs, sold in corner shops, promising escape through athletic prowess for the diligent. It is sewn onto scalps and glued on to lashes, exaggerating features to attain elusive beauty. Eroded by this sea of shiny, brilliantly coloured plastic, renowned for its ability to withstand wear and tear, are the relics of the city's past lives. The instantly recognisable yellow of the Lagos Molue's fade on the walls that used to house now outdated private taxi parks. Roadside mechanic shops littered with second hand spare parts still linger from an era when bad roads and cheap parts meant vehicle malfunctions were common and expected. Pockets of brushland remain at the fringes of the city, stragglers that are yet to shrivel under the glare of the construction lights.

Through photo manipulation and digital collage, Stephen invites the observer to witness this tussle between newness and obsolescence, referencing its cyclical nature as it plays out in Lagos. The motifs of the past are exemplified in its symbolic buildings; made of mortar and concrete and designed to accommodate a singular purpose, draws its permanence from the lack of alternatives. The motifs of the present Lagos reflect the city's exploding population and the swarm of providers who want their attention. It draws its permanence from its pliability, twisting to accommodate the many needs of an emerging megacity.

He conjures the essence of Lagos, animating its colourful sights and sounds through short form videos. They are familiar to every Lagosian; the silent triad that welcomes travellers at the Berger Bridge, the avatar of luck that haunts every baba ljebe stand luring in gamblers with the promise of wealth, the arbiter who announces itself with adhesive posters and bright red caution tape, reminding citizens that the authorities are watching and can intervene. His avatars dance and pose, their movements captured on film, their movements replicating the constant movement that animates the city.

He honours and acknowledges the future by juxtaposing them in the present, asking of the observer, 'Which Lagos You Dey?'



STEPHEN TAYO
Everyday Na Celebration 1

Edition of 10

Year: 2022

Size: 975 x 650mm

Medium: C-Type Fuji Gloss mounted on Dibond



STEPHEN TAYO
Everyday Na Celebration 2

Edition of 10

Year: 2022

Size: 352 x 528mm

Medium: C-Type Fuji Gloss mounted on Dibond



STEPHEN TAYO
Ballers Plenty

Edition of 10

Year: 2022

Size: 578 x 435mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



STEPHEN TAYO
Baff Up

Edition of 10
Year: 2022

Size: 678 x 437mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



STEPHEN TAYO
I Get Your Size 2

Edition of 10

Year: 2022

Size: 864 x 640mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



STEPHEN TAYO
Package Yourself

Edition of 10

Year: 2022

Size: 460 x 625mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



STEPHEN TAYO
Buy Your Fan Heat Dey 2

Edition of 10

Year: 2022

Size: 460 x 626mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



STEPHEN TAYO
Gucci Dey Learn 2

Edition of 10

Year: 2022

Size: 460 x 625mm

Medium: C Type Fuji Gloss, Framed



STEPHEN TAYO
Which Lagos You Dey 1

Year: 2022

Medium: Moving Image

Duration: 00:00:57



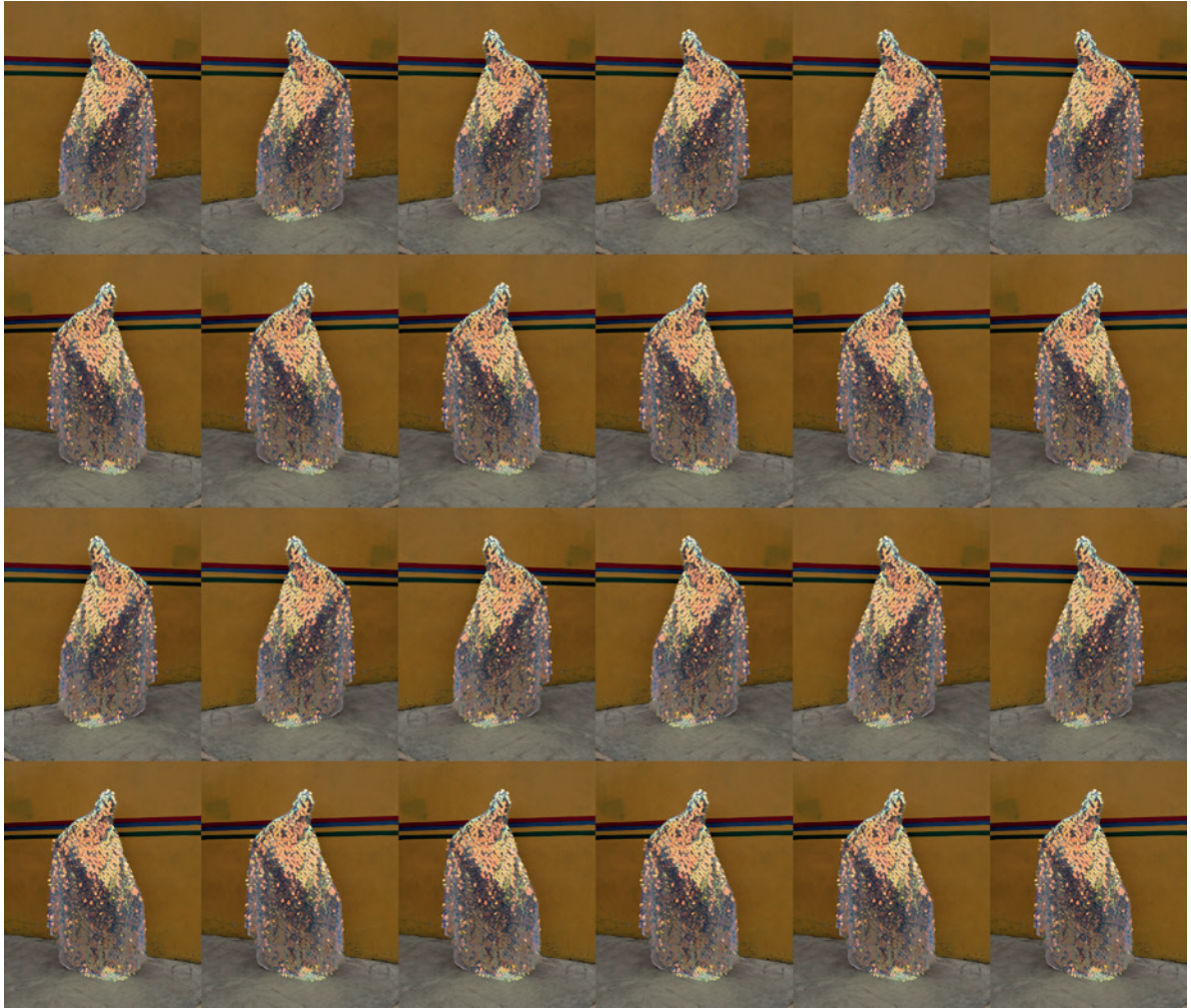
STEPHEN TAYO
Package Yourself

Year: 2022
Size: 2244 x 1523mm
Medium: Vinyl



STEPHEN TAYO
You No Dey Hear Word 1

Year: 2022
Size: 2120 x 1517mm
Medium: Vinyl



STEPHEN TAYO
Shine Shine Bobo

Year: 2022
Size: 2123 x 1816mm
Medium: Vinyl

THANDIWE MURIU IS REPURPOSING THE EVERYDAY INTO POWERFUL ART OBJECTS:

Camo 2.0 3953

"African Stunners" languidly perch on the model's face in an African nod to the huge trend of Shutter Shades of the early 2000's. Like the Shutter Shades, these "African Stunners" have horizontal lines running across the eyes instead of tinted lens, but the similarity stops there: the hot pink slats of the eyewear are the interlocked bristles of two hair combs. The artist recalls how cool and on trend she would feel as a child whenever she wore sunglasses- a feeling she translated to this Camo through the blasé pose and the handles of the combs that jut out nonchalantly from the model's face.

Camo 23

"He who is destined for power does not have to fight for it." African Proverb

It is a very strong, confident woman who gazes into the lens of Camo 23. The look of calm defiance in her face, as she balances five fistful hands within her strong armed hairstyle. The bright dashes of colour within her hair are made from iconic afro combs, which add a burst of lightness but also fierceness to the image, quietly visualising the gentle power of a woman who is confident in herself.

Camo 2.0 4322

"Where a woman rules, streams run uphill." African Proverb

The row of orange combs that sit daintily within the model's hair of Camo 2.0 4322 turn the simple item into a symbol of power. These plastic combs are humble everyday tools used by Kenyan women every morning as she prepares for her day. To every woman her hair is her crowning glory, making the combs of this image a symbolic celebration of the strength, shine and curl of African hair. It is a crown that empowers a woman; a height that she rules because she alone ultimately decides the impact and beauty of her coiffure.

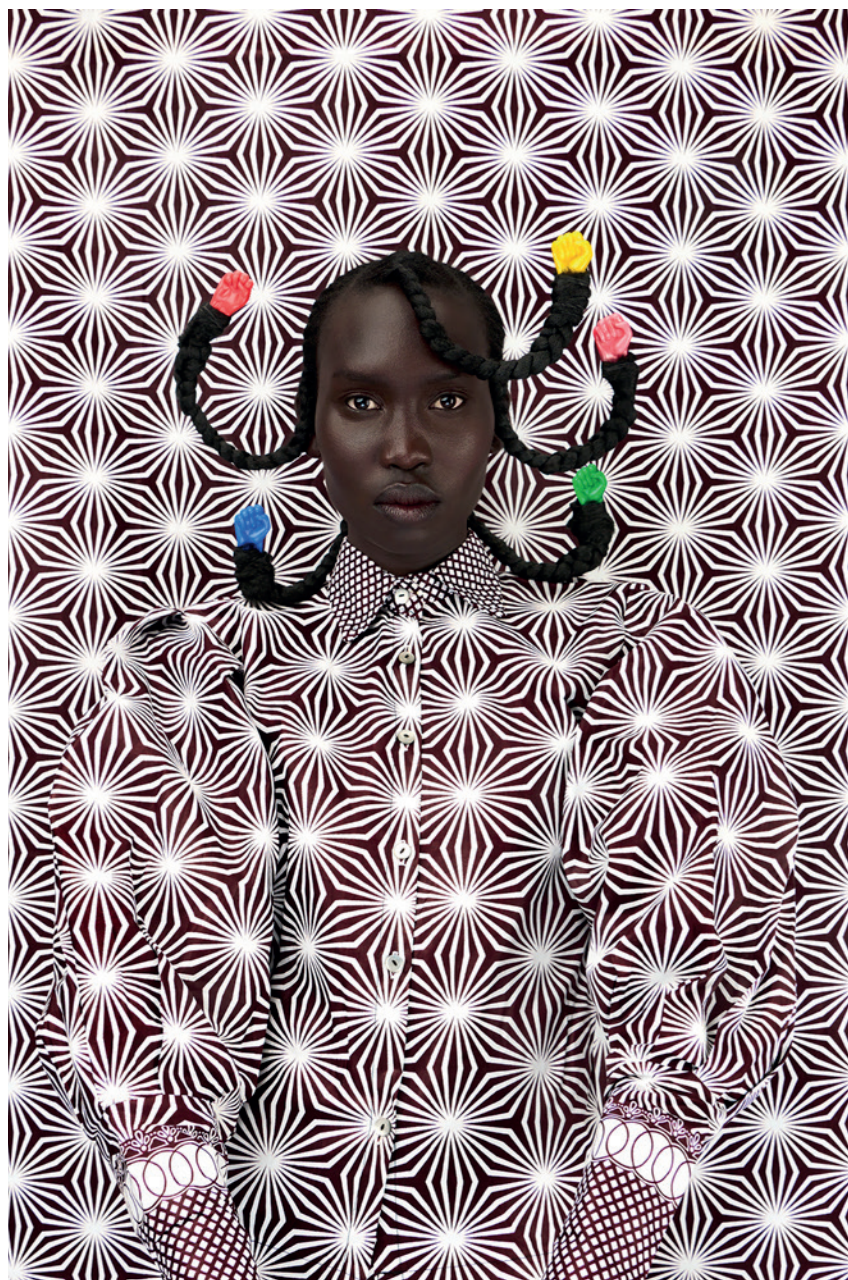


THANDIWE MURIU
Camo 2.0 3953

Year: 2018

Size: 735 x 1025mm

Medium: C-Type Fuji Flex, Framed

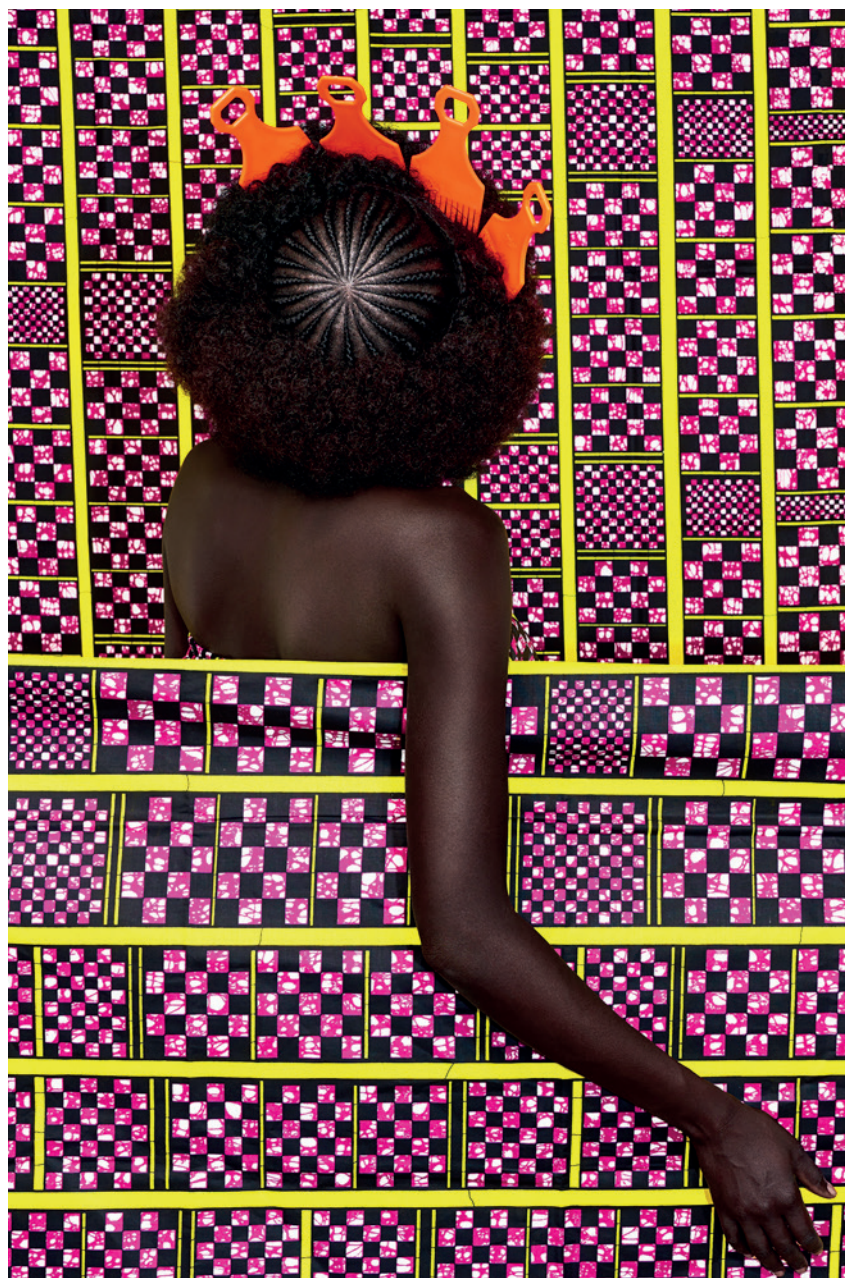


THANDIWE MURIU
Camo 23

Year: 2021

Size: 850 x 1245mm

Medium: C-Type Fuji Flex, Framed



THANDIWE MURIU
Camo 2.0 4322

Year: 2018

Size: 735 x 1025mm

Medium: C-Type Fuji Flex, Framed

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