

JULY - OCTOBER 2024

# afew?

EXHIBITION CURATED BY AISHA ALIYU-BIMA

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YEMISI SHYLLON  
**MUSEUM OF ART**  
PAN-ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY



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**Arewa (lit. 'The North') is the Hausa word used to describe Northern Nigeria and its peoples. However, as Nigeria has evolved, so has Arewa and its meaning.**

**Amongst the millions of people that live in this geopolitical region known as Northern Nigeria, the term holds a myriad of meanings.**

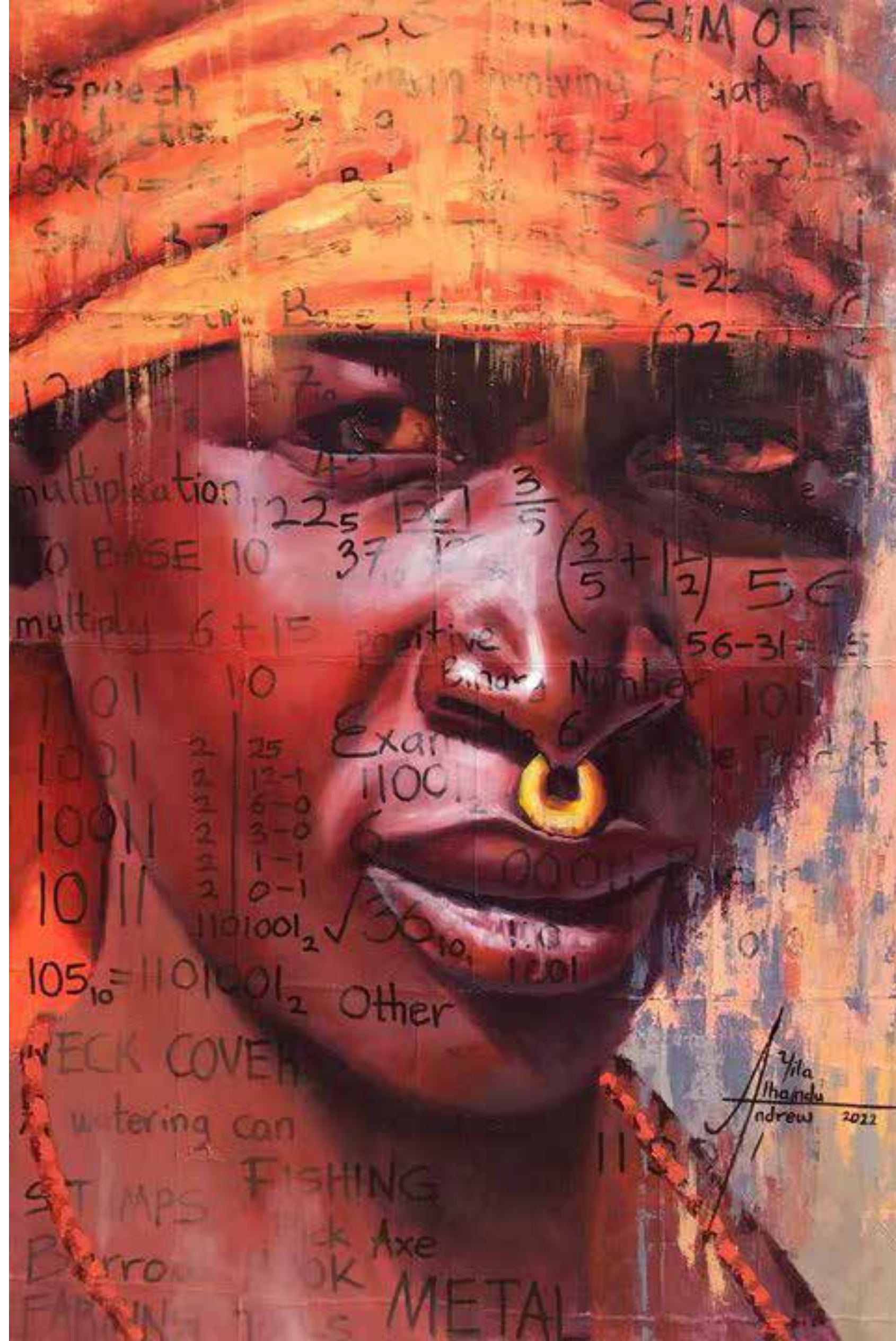
**What remains true however, is the region's rich diversity of cultures, ideas, representations and voices.**

# About the Project

‘AREWA?’ presents a nuanced tour of Northern Nigeria, its evolving physical and socio-cultural landscape and identities via an art exhibition and complementary programmes.

The YSMA, through the exhibition, seeks to amplify the voices and creative expressions of artists from Nigeria’s northern region by providing them with increased visibility, recognition and opportunities for collaboration and growth.

Through the complementary programmes, we aim to establish lasting networks and alliances that will contribute to the advancement of Nigerian art and culture, challenging stereotypes and harmful narratives, replacing them with more balanced and nuanced representation.



Alhamdu Andrew **YILA Malame**, 2022  
Oil and marker on handwritten notes pasted on canvas  
91 x 61cm




# The Exhibition

‘Northern Nigerian’ motifs and artifacts have been greatly represented in Nigerian Arts, with many artists drawing inspiration from events and images such as the Durbars, Fulani Milk Maidens, Hausa embroideries, Gbagyi images and symbols, Tiv culture, Nupe bronze works and other numerous and diverse tapestry of minority cultures in their richest presentations. We recall that in 1958, one of Nigeria’s definitive leading art movements, the Zaria Art Society, also began in Zaria, one of the biggest and historical towns in Northern Nigeria.

Lacking in this mainstream representation however, are the works of artists from the Northern Region of Nigeria. This underrepresentation and lack of visibility has left a void in the study, research and engagement of works from this region, alongside the evolution of artistic practices, the declines and resurgences and the contributions of the artists in this region to a holistic experience of the Nigerian artistic landscape.

Bringing together a cross section of generations of artists, as well as a variety of artistic expressions in medium, subjects, techniques, styles and identities, *AREWA?* presents a deep and ambitious tour of Northern Nigeria, the first of its kind in recent time. The exhibition looks at its modern history, its evolving physical and socio-cultural landscape, fascinating variety of identities and its place in the larger Nigerian and African discourse of modern and contemporary art.

This exhibition hopes to educate and encourage viewers who might not be exposed to Northern Nigeria to engage with the region, learn about its subtleties beyond often parroted cliches and stereotypes. The project will attempt to explore a variety of cultures and identities, from the most popular Hausa-Fulani culture, to the smaller, lesser known cultures that exist alongside it, challenging prevailing preconceptions of Northern Nigeria as a monolith and showing that Arewa is a more diverse and multi-layered region made up of over 150 ethnic nationalities, engaging and interacting with each other in a constant push and pull synergy.






Niger **ABUI**, ***Durbar Riders in a Mist***, 2018  
Acrylic and Enamel on canvas, 122 x 183 cm



# Programmes

To extend the impact of the exhibition, this project includes complementary programmes designed for the project's primary target groups. The aim is to establish networks and alliances that will contribute to the advancement of Nigerian art and culture.

We want to create a multiplying effect by engaging groups with the potential to reach a broader audience and positively influence their respective fields. Thus, the programmes will be directed at teachers, art curators and media professionals.





Fati **ABUBAKAR**, *Unsung Heroes*, 2017  
Photograph, 61cm x 91cm

# ARTISTS

Abdulrazaq Ahmed  
Ahmad Abdullahi (Almajiri)  
Aisha Augie  
Alhamdu Andrew Yila  
Bara Sketchbook  
Ben Ibebe  
Blaise Gundu Gbaden  
Dhlimi Munza  
Faith Shemfe  
Fati Abubakar  
Hakeem Salaam  
Idris Abdulwahab  
Imran Tilde  
Jacob Jari  
Jacob Onoja  
Jerry Buhari  
Jesse Josh Goje  
Jide Adeniyi-Jones  
Jimoh Akolo  
John Oyedemi  
Judith Daduut  
Kaltume Gana

Lasisi Lamidi  
Maijidda Kura  
Makama John  
Mangai Joel Dawang  
Mark Rwang  
Maryam Maigida  
Maryam Turaki  
Mustapha Muazu Gabari  
Ngueveren Ahua  
Niger Abui  
Nura Garba  
Qalbsaleem Muhammed  
Retji Dakum  
Salim Abdulrazaq  
Salma Ja'eh  
Sor Sen  
T.J. Benson  
Tlatu Adiwu  
Tayo Quaye  
Tonie Okpe  
Williams Chechet

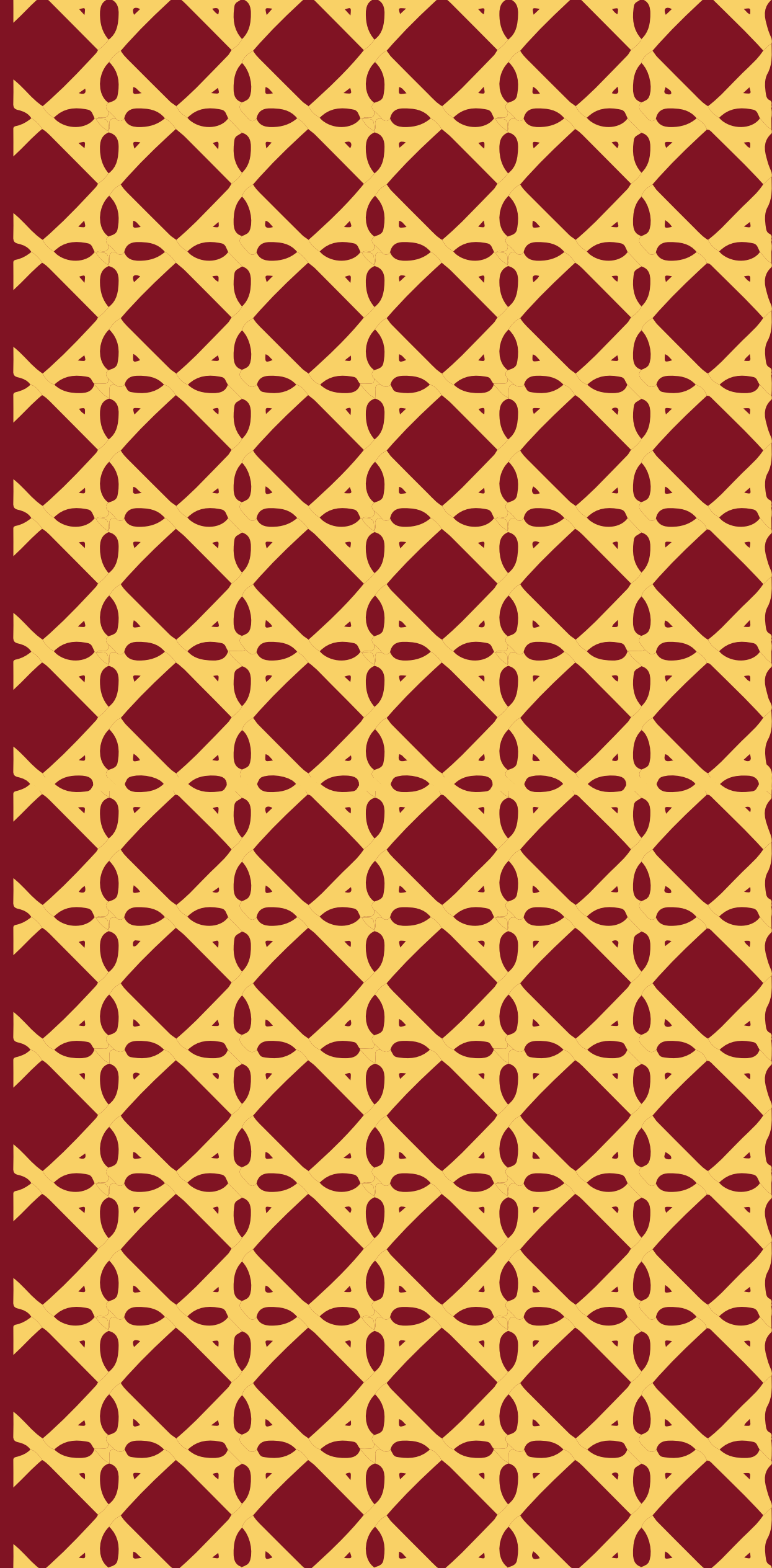


Jerry **BUHARI**, *Guardians of the City*, 1992  
Acrylic on canvas, 85.5 x 102 cm

# About the Curator



Aisha Aliyu-Bima is a writer, curator, photographer, researcher, and archivist with a keen interest in Northern Nigerian Social Anthropology. She is a member of the Society of Nigerian Artists, Black Women Photographers and has curated exhibitions in Abuja, Kaduna, Kano, and Budapest.





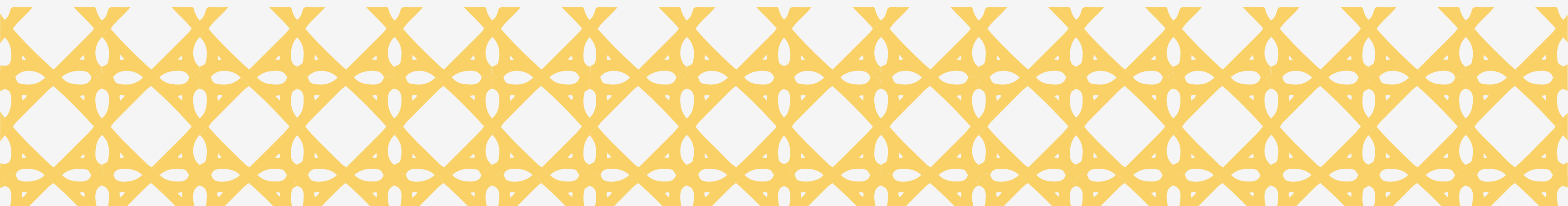
Hakeem **SALAAM**  
***Untitled***, 2021  
Photograph  
91 x 61cm

# About the Sponsor

Africa No Filter (ANF) is a donor collaborative that supports the development of nuanced and contemporary stories that shift stereotypical and harmful narratives within and about Africa.

ANF envisions a world where the prevailing narrative within and about Africa is reflective of a progressive and dynamic continent.

The organisation's goal over time is to leave an empowered narrative change ecosystem and an informed community of storytellers who work more deliberately to change harmful narratives within and about Africa.





# About the Museum

The Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art (YSMA) is the museum of the Pan-Atlantic University, established in 2019, with a mission to serve and engage diverse audiences by advancing knowledge about Nigerian art and by offering exhibitions and programmes that enable them to learn about art and through art. The YSMA owes its initial collection of over 1,000 works to Prince Yemisi Shyllon, who also donated funds for the construction of the museum building and provides annual grants for its upkeep and sustainability.

Through collaborative partnerships with private funders and strategic partners, we also provide opportunities for underserved groups to participate in arts and culture programmes.

At the YSMA, we prioritise the learning experiences of our audiences through our collection and have carried out several initiatives aimed at telling our stories and enhancing inclusion and access to our arts and culture.

Running for over two years, our programmes promote learning through Nigerian art, particularly for young people and consist of exhibition tours, class sessions and hands-on arts and craft activities that have, so far, engaged over 2000 young people between 10 and 25.