



J.D. Ojeikere, Traditional ceremonial Suku, 1974. Gelatin Silver Print, 50 x 60 cm.

Johnson Donatus Aihumekeokhai Ojeikere (1930 - 2014), known as J.D. 'Okhai Ojeikere, was a Nigerian photographer known for his work with unique hairstyles found in Nigeria. Born in Western Nigeria, Ojeikere spent his formative years as a photographer for the Ministry of Education in Lagos and later in the West African Publicity Agency. He opened his own studio 'Foto Ojeikere' in 1975 and about this time began his legendary series photographing women's hairstyles.

Although there is a strong documentary quality to the series, preserving an ancient heritage, Ojeikere presents the hairstyles as works of art. Often taken from the back, they are sculptural and abstract, sensitive to the intricacies of the work and admiring the beauty of the design. With every portrait, Ojeikere notes where the hairstyle is from, its meaning, its name and its history.

'Royal families have the exclusive right to their hairstyle, which cannot be imitated... it's a mark of distinction. Their knowledge is transmitted from mother to daughter.'

Solo Exhibitions

- 2015 J.D.'Okhai Ojeikere, Musée de Bamako, Mali
Staying Power, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK
- 2013 J.D.'Okhai Ojeikere: Hairstyle, Wilmotte Gallery at Lichfield Studios, London, UK
- 2010 Sartorial Moments, Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos, Nigeria
- 2005 Hairstyle, Maison de France, Lagos, Nigeria J.D.'Okhai Ojeikere, Galerie Blaffer, Houston, USA
- 2002 Hairstyle, Wedge Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2001 J.D.'Okhai Ojeikere, MAMCO, Genève, Switzerland
- 2000 J.D.'Okhai Ojeikere, Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France 1995
J.D.'Okhai Ojeikere, National Arts Council, Lagos, Nigeria

Group Exhibitions

- 2022 *Sandro Miller & J.D. Okhai Ojeikere: My Hair, My Soul, My Freedom*, Gallery Fifty One, Antwerp, Belgium
- 2015-19 Making Africa, A Continent of Contemporary Design, travelling exhibition
14 Mar 2015 – 13 Sep 2015 Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein, Germany
30 Oct 2015 – 21 Feb 2016 Guggenheim Bilbao, Bilbao, Spain
22 Mar 2016 – 28 Aug 2016 CCCB Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain
01 Oct 2016 – 17 Jan 2017 Kunsthal Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands
15 Oct 2017 – 07 Jan 2018 High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia, USA
03 Feb 2018 – 06 Mai 2018 Albuquerque Museum, Albuquerque, New-Mexico, USA
14 Oct 2018 – 13 Jan 2019 Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, USA
- 2017 Studio Africa!, Tristan Hoare Gallery, London, UK
On aime l'art...!! Un choix d'Éric Mézil parmi les oeuvres de la Collection Agnès B., Collection Lambert, Avignon, France
- 2016 Regarding Africa: Contemporary Art and Afro-Futurism, Musée d'art, Tel Aviv, Israël
Paris Photo, Grand Palais, Paris, France
African Portraits: Omar Victor Diop, Seydou Keïta, Aida Muluneh, Malick Sidibé & J.D. 'Okhai Ojeikere, HackelBury Gallery, London, UK
Photo Basel, Basel, Switzerland
Art X Lagos, Nigéria
- 2015 Paris Photo, Grand Palais, Paris, France
Africa, Musée Louisiana, musée d'art moderne, Humlebaek, Danemark
In and Out of the Studio : Photographic Portraits from West Africa, Metropolitan Museum, New York, USA
1:54, Contemporary African Art fair, New-York, USA
Staying Power, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK

- 2014 Paris Photo, Grand Palais, Paris, France
Mémoires vives, Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France
Ici l'Afrique, Musée des Suisses du Monde, Genève, Switzerland
Hommage à Frédéric Bruly Bouabré et J.D. 'Okhai Ojeikere, Palais de Tokyo, France
Art Genève, Genève, Switzerland
- 2013 Paris Photo, Grand Palais, Paris, France
Paris Photo Los Angeles, USA
1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, London, UK
Keïta, Ojeikere, Sidibé, 11 Columbia, Monaco
Il Palazzo Enciclopedico, Venice Biennale, 55th International Art Exhibition, Venice, Italy
Sartorial Moments and the Nearness of Yesterday, Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, USA
- 2012 Cheveux Chéris, Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, France
Portraits et Identités, The Walter Collection, Burlafingen, Germany
- 2011 ARS 11', Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland
- 2010 A life in Pictures, Lagos, Nigeria
Anos 70, Fotografia y vida cotidiana, Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporanea, Sevilla, Spain
Stare: The Pleasures of the Intensely Familiar and the Strangely Unexpected, Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, Florida, USA
- 2009 Hairdos and Parties: African Typographies by J.D. 'Okhai Ojeikere and Malick Sidibé, L. Parker Stephenson Photographs, New York
- 2007 Art & about, City of Sydney, Sydney, Australie Documenta 12, Kassel, Germany
- 2006 100% Africa, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain
Vive l'Afrique, Galerie du Jour -Agnès b., Paris, France
Vive l'Afrique, Galerie du Jour -Agnès b. Tokyo, Japan
About Africa, part one, Fifty-One Fine Art Photography, Anvers, Belgium
- 2005/2006 Arts of Africa, Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of African Art, Washington, DC., USA
African Art Now: Masterpieces from the Jean Pigozzi Collection, National Museum of African Art, Washington DC, USA
Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, USA
Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Houston, USA
- 2005 Arts of Africa, Grimaldi Forum, Monaco
Vive l'Afrique, Galerie du Jour – Agnès b., Paris, France
- 2004/2005 Kurzdavordanach, Photographischen Sammlung, SK Stiftung Kultur, Mediapark, Köln, Germany
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Awards

- 2004 Je m'installe aux abattoirs, La collection d'art contemporain d'Agnès b., Les Abattoirs, Toulouse, France
Joy of Life - Malick Sidibé and Ojeikere, Two Photographers from Africa, Hara Museum, Tokyo, Japan
- 2003/ 2004 Parures de tête, Musée Dapper, Paris, France
- 2001 Century City: art and culture in the modern metropolis, Tate Modern, London, UK
- 2000 Africa Inside. Noorderlicht 2000 photofestival Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, Netherlands
La Beauté in fabula, Palais des Papes, Avignon, France
- 1996 Nigerian Traditional Hairstyle, Goethe-Institut, Lagos, Nigeria
- 1983 «Ten top Photographers », National Museum, Lagos, Nigeria
- 1978 Photography in Advertising, 50th Anniversary of Lintas Limited, Lagos, Nigeria

Public Collections

- Museum of Modern Art, New-York, New York, USA
Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris, France
The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, USA Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey, USA
Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France
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