

## OBOU GBAIS



Obou Gbais was born in 1992 in Guiglo, Ivory Coast. After studying at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts d'Abidjan (INSAAC), he graduated in 2019 under the direction of the Artist Pascal Konan. His career is now successfully developing between West Africa and Europe, especially in France and Germany where he lives and works. A versatile artist, Obou also practices music; rap and hip-hop undoubtedly contributes to the urban and street art influence that can be found in his canvases and the many frescoes he paints on the walls of Abidjan.

The Dan mask is emblematic of the traditions of the west of the Ivory Coast where Obou is originally from. The artist paints this mask as well as he wears it. The faces with elongated chins and almond-shaped eyes, which he uses in crowd scenes or portraits, have become his trademark and his artistic identity. Obou also represents the bustle and vitality of Abidjan. In plain sight, on the facades of buildings or along roads, more discreet in the abandoned villas of Bassam, his touch is now familiar and omnipresent. Obou is the spokesperson for a young generation that is trying to reconcile two worlds: a connected and abundant urban life with

traditional rural foundations. Obou thus reaffirms his anchorage with his native land and mixes it with European cultural influences that he appropriates bridging two worlds whose confrontation reveals both powerful links and mutual ignorance.

LouiSimone Guirandou Gallery has been accompanying Obou since 2019 in various events: two group exhibitions in Abidjan - Density in 2019 and Carte Blanche in 2020, 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair in New York (online) in 2021. The gallery will present his first solo show in Abidjan from September 22 to November 12, 2022.

## Exhibitions

- 2023 *Picnic by Obou*, Hoop Gallery, Dakar (Sénégal)  
*Look Closer*, Musée Rietberg, Zurich (Suisse), Commissaire Michaela Oberhofer  
*Ambivalent*, Notagalerie, Berlin (Germany)
  
- 2022 *Babi est doux*, 193 Gallery, Paris (France)  
*The Dreams and realities of identity*, National Museum, Vilnius (Lituany)  
*Dak'Art Biennale*, Loman Art Gallery, Dakar (Sénégal)  
*Identité ivoirienne*, 24 Beaubourg, Paris (France)  
*Filafrique* Genève (Suisse)  
*Man Dan*, LouiSimone Guirandou Gallery, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)  
*Scope Art Miami*, Tumo Gallery Vilnius (Lituanie)  
*Le Bleu d'Obou*, Hoop Galerie, Dakar (Sénégal)
  
- 2021 *Pièce Unique* – Fondation BJKD, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)  
*B Lounge Art*, Geneve (Suisse)  
*AFRIKA ARTFEST*, Paris & Chambéry (France) dans le cadre des expositions Africa 2020  
*Abidjan Street/Act*, de la rue au Musée, Musée Adama Toungara pour les Cultures Contemporaines, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), curateur Amédé Mulin  
*Iwalewaha*, Bayreuth (Germany)  
 1-54 New York, LouiSimone Guirandou Gallery  
*Ebony Art Gallery*, Rotterdam (Netherland)



- 2020 Iwalwahauss, Bayreuth / Allemagne.  
Mainoeuvre Gallery, Berlin (Allemagne)  
Wetsi Art Gallery, Bruxelles (Belgique)  
ABOBO Ê ZO, Street Art Project à Abobo Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)  
Carte Blanche Ange-Arthur Koua Louis Simone Guirandou Gallery, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)  
Ebony Art Gallery, Rotterdam (Pays-Bas)
- 2019 Galerie ART TIME, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)  
*Densité*, Louis Simone Guirandou Gallery, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), curateur Amédé-Régis Mullin.
- 2018 Galerie Case Bleue, Grand-Bassam (Côte d'Ivoire)  
*Redonner un sens à la vie*, Rotonde des Arts Contemporains Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), curateur Yacouba Konaté
- 2017 *Système DTAART* Gallery, Zurich / Suisse.  
Exposition collective, Jeune Création Sofitel, Hôtel Ivoire, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)

## Collections

Obou's works have entered numerous private and institutional collections, including :

- Collection Gervanne et Mathias Leridon
- Société Générale (Côte d'Ivoire)
- National Museum of Vilnius (Lituanie)
- Présidence de la République de Côte d'Ivoire
- Musée Rietberg, (Zurich – Suisse)