

Nzingah Oniwosan

Multi-disciplinary Artist



Photography by Louis Davis

Nzingah Oniwosan, a Haitian American artist, began drawing once she was able to control a crayon with dexterity. “I was born an artist,” Nzingah explains. “It’s part of my DNA.” While in grade school she started drawing freelance, mainly portraits of her classmates. By twelve she won first place for an MLK drawing contest. In high school under the tutelage of her art teachers she began to perfect her craft. During this time Nzingah and several classmates had their first major exhibit at the Milagro Center in Delray Beach. After a brief hiatus Nzingah began her professional career as an artist. She has been featured at several museums and galleries, such as Cornel Museum, in Delray Beach, Old Dillard Museum in Fort Lauderdale, and Amadlozi Gallery in Miami. In addition she has her work noted in periodicals like the Sun Sentinel (2006/2007), and Art & Culture Magazine (Fall 2006). Her most recent accolades include: a grant in 2010 to exhibit the "Sankofa Experience" and in 2009 to exhibit “Un-murdered,” being named 2008 artist of the year by the Links Incorporated, and placing first in several juried exhibits.

Nzingah has extended her work as an artist by working as a teaching artist. Her commitment to reaching children through the arts has allowed her to work with well over two thousand students, in south Florida and nationally. In addition to her work with children, she has given several professional development workshops designed to educate teachers how to integrate the arts into their curriculum. Over the years Nzingah has become an advocate for children and adults with disabilities; as a result she has given several workshops designed to demonstrate how the arts can be used to reach children with special needs. Along with being a resident artist at several schools with the special needs population. She currently is a field reporter for Teaching Artist Journal in addition to being an artist in resident with Arts 4 Learning, Miami, VSA FL, and Old Dillard Museum.

In addition to being a visual artist Nzingah is a classically trained pianist and bass clarinetist, published poet and writer, jewelry designer, and an up and coming African and Haitian Folklore dancer. She is currently working on a new project entitled "Dirty Laundry: For girls who lost their voice and whose tears flooded their soul" where she addresses sexual abuse through spoken word, movement, paintings, and a multimedia installation. This project is set to be released the Spring of 2012.

IMPRESSION
ARTIST STATEMENT
Nzingah



Within my artistic world, there are ever expanding and contracting themes. There remains however, one constant and that is the desire for my art to plant the seed of imagery that makes a profound impact on the way people think. I am proud to say that my current series is the most tangible realization of the vision I have for my work as an artist

During my journey toward understanding and self-discovery, “legacy” has become a crucial theme. What have my ancestors left for me? How has that knowledge shaped me as an individual? What will I contribute to future generations? The questions were many and the answers were overwhelming. A critical realization was that I was trying to define myself as a second generation Haitian born in America.

My search for identity began in Haiti but did not end there. I found myself traveling across the Atlantic to Africa and in making that metaphoric journey I was able to see myself not as a Haitian American but as an African of the Diaspora. In my comprehension of the circumstances, I recognized much was lost; language, beliefs, dress, rituals, the basic essential culture. I also realized how much I am influenced by the sum experience of my ancestors, from Africa to Haiti to America. Each generation was shaped by their life experience be it good or bad. These experiences can be called impressions, and consciously or subconsciously the prior influences each successive generation so that they become more complex in nature.

In my series Layered I am artistically exploring what it means to be Black in the 21st century. Externally we are grouped based on our hue but each one of us have been shaped by our ancestors experience. I decided to stripe away the brown hue and used a variation of colors to shape my subject. Each piece has its own impression sometimes seen by the viewer as a scar. It is that what makes the subject distinct from the other. The viewer is seeing the person naked if you will as the sum total of their generational experiences prior.

Jolanda “Nzingah” Blanchard

1310 SW 2nd Court, #102
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312
Work: (561) 880-7700
sankofaschild@gmail.com
www.Nzingah.com

Awards/Honors

- **2011** Broward County Cultural Division Individual Artist Mini Grant (SOLEcial ARTivism)
- **2011**, Broward County Cultural Division Individual Artist Mini Grant (Journey through Kuumba)
- **2010**, Broward County Cultural Division Individual Artist Mini Grant (The Sankofa Experience)
- **2009**, Broward County Cultural Division Individual Artist Mini Grant (“Un-Murdered)
- **2008**, The Links Inc Artist of the Year, Fort Lauderdale Chapter
- **2007**, 1st Place From There to Me Exhibit, African American Research Library
- **2007**, Honorable Mention, Oscar Thomas Memorial Exhibition, Amadlozi Gallery
- **2006**, 1st Place Kwanzaa Exhibit, African American Research Library

Exhibition(* solo shows marked by asterisk)

2011

- *Beyond Black*, Fort Lauderdale City Hall, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- *Beyond Black*, Miramar Multi Purpose Complex, Miramar, FL
- *Contemporary Black Art Captures Life*, Broward College, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- *Mixed Media*, Sailboat Bend Artist Loft, Fort Lauderdale, FL (

2010

- *Memories*, African American Research Library, Ft Lauderdale, FL
- *Art that Bridges Culture*, Broward College, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- *The Vision Project*, Sailboat Bend Artist Loft, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- *Beyond Black: The Proverbs Series*, African American Research Library, Ft Lauderdale, FL*
- *Midtown Urban Arts Show*, Midtown Commerce Center Building, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- *UnMurdered*, Fort Lauderdale City Hall, Fort Lauderdale, FL*

2009

- *A Reflection of Culture*, Broward Community College, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- *Proverbs*, Fort Lauderdale City Hall, Fort Lauderdale, FL*
- *The Middle Revisited*, Nova University, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- *Don't Back Down*, Sailboat Bend 1310 Gallery, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- *Oscar Thomas Memorial People's Exhibition*, Amadlozi Gallery, Miami, FL (catalogue)
- *Collaboration-Salute to Women*, EG2, West Palm Beach, FL

- *Un-murdered*, Old Dillard Museum, Fort Lauderdale, FL(catalogue) *
- *Proverbs*, Sailboat Bend 1310 Gallery, Fort Lauderdale, FL *
- *Ocular Inoculation*, Sailboat Bend 1310 Gallery, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- *Kwanzaa Exhibit*, Amadlozi Gallery, Miami, FL

2008

- *Art, the Essence of Culture*, Broward Community College, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- *Breaking Ground*, Sailboat Bend 1310 Gallery, Ft Lauderdale, FL
- *A4L Artist Showcase*, Space 4004 Gallery, Miami, FL
- *Transformation*, Sailboat Bend 1310 Gallery, Ft Lauderdale, FL
- *Rhythms of Kwanzaa*, South Regional Library, Miramar, FL
- *Kuumba-Quest for Creativity*, Old Dillard Museum, Ft Lauderdale, FL (catalogue)

2007

- *Kuumba*, Cornel Museum, Delray Beach, FL
- *Bearer of Culture*, Broward Community College, Ft Lauderdale, FL
- *African Diaspora Experience*, Art Serve, Ft Lauderdale, FL
- *Lake Worth Street Painting Festival*, Lake Worth, FL
- *A4L Artist Showcase*, Camposition Studios, Miami, FL
- *Oscar Thomas Memorial People's Exhibition*, Amadlozi Gallery, Miami, FL (catalogue)
- *From there to me*, African American Research Library, Ft Lauderdale, FL (catalogue)

2006

- *Black History Exhibit*, Art Serve, Fort Lauderdale FL
- *Kuumba*, Cornel Museum, Delray Beach, FL
- *Lake Worth Street Painting Festival*, Lake Worth, FL
- *Oscar Thomas Memorial People's Exhibition*, Amadlozi Gallery, Miami, FL (catalogue)
- *Can a Sista Rock a Mic*, R&B Coffee House, Washington D.C
- *Kuumba Revitalized*, Deluxe Gallery, Miami, FL
- *Kwanzaa-The Ngozo Saba*, African American Research Library, Ft Lauderdale, FL (catalogue)

2005

- *Kuumba*, Cornel Museum, Delray Beach, FL
- *Oscar Thomas Memorial People's Exhibition*, Amadlozi Gallery, Miami, FL

1999

- *International Baccalaureate Student Show*, Milgro Center, Delray Beach, FL

1998

- *Atlantic High School Student Show*, Student Gallery, Delray Beach, FL

Exhibition Curated

- *Ocular Inoculation*, Sailboat Bend 1310 Gallery, Fort Lauderdale, FL (2009)
- *The Vision Project*, Sailboat Bend Artist Loft, Fort Lauderdale, FL (2010)
- *Mixed Media*, Sailboat Bend Artist Loft, Fort Lauderdale, FL (2011)

Workshops/Lectures

2011

- “Haiti Beyond a 3rd World Country,” North Lauderdale Elementary, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- “Adinkra Stamping,” Broward County Library Systems, Broward County FL

2010

- “Artist Integration in Inclusive Settings,” North Miami Senior High, North Miami, FL
- “Egyptian Calligraphy,” Walker Elementary, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- “Haitian Folklore,” Old Dillard Museum, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- “Basket Weaving,” Old Dillard Museum, Fort Lauderdale, FL

2009

- “Under Water World: Marine Biology through the Arts” Broward School Board, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- “Marine Life -Inclusive Art workshop,” Miami Children’s Museum, Miami Beach, FL
- Adinkra Stamping Workshop, Old Dillard Museum, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- “Un-murdered-Slide show presentation to middle school students,” Old Dillard Museum, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- Sankofa Show and Tell-distance learning to middle school students, Old Dillard Museum, Fort Lauderdale, FL

2008

- Arts Integrations & Cultural Awareness (Lecture), Miami Dade Community College, Miami, FL
- Pastel Demonstration, Utrecht Art Store, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- Adinkra Stamping Workshop, Artscape, Baltimore, Md

2008-2006, Arts Integration Workshop for Parents at over 25 schools, including:

- § St. John’s Montessori, Miami Beach, FL
- § Small World Montessori, Miami, FL
- § YWCA-Carol Center, Miami, FL

2006-2009, Presenter for Art’s Integration Workshop for Teachers & Artist, Arts for Learning, Miami Beach FL

2006 Facilitator for Language Arts, Arts Integration Institute, Center for Creative Education, West Palm Beach, FL

2005 Facilitator for Social Studies Arts Integration Institute, Center for Creative Education, West Palm Beach, FL

Artist in Residence

2009-Present, Old Dillard Museum, Fort Lauderdale, FL

2009-Present, VSA arts of FL

- Wilton Manors Elementary, Miami, FL (2010)
- WJ Bryan Elementary, Miami, FL (2009)

- Bunche Park Elementary, Miami, FL (2009)

2005-Present, Artist in Resident at over 40 Schools in South FL including:

- United Way Center for Excellence, Miami, FL
- Forest Park Elementary, Boynton Beach, FL
- Lantana Elementary, Lantana, FL

2005-Present, Artist in Resident at over 6 different special needs program, including:

- Debbie School, School for Hearing Impaired, Miami, FL
- Angels Reach, School for Autistic Children, Hialeah, FL
- North Miami High School-Project Fit, Miami, FL

Professional Experience

2005-present, Sankofa's Child, *Independent Contractor/Teaching Artist*, Boynton Beach, FL

- Provide supplemental art enrichment to after school programming.
- Work with students from PreK-12.
- Artist in Resident at over 25 Schools in South FL
- Artist in Resident at over 10 different special needs program
- Develop teacher training workshops i.e. Integrating arts into your Pedagogical Methodologies.
- Provide consultation to institutions so ensure that their curriculum meets local, state, and national educational standards
- Facilitator for Language Arts, Arts Integration Institute, Center for Creative Education, West

Palm Beach, FL (2006)

- Facilitator for Social Studies Arts Integration Institute, Center for Creative Education, West

Palm Beach, FL (2005)

- Arts Integration Workshop for Parents at over 25 schools
- Provide private piano lessons to elementary and middle school students
- Collaborated with World Arts Now to provide workshops in African and Haitian Folklore Dance

2006-present, Arts 4 Learning, *Independent Contractor/Teaching Artist*, Miami, FL

- Provide supplemental art enrichment to after school programming
- Artist in Residence: Collaborated with teachers to revitalize learning process
- Develop arts integration programming that allows special needs children to reach necessary milestones
- Present workshops to parents, teachers, and artists: Disability-the ability to do things different: Inclusion Strategies for Classroom, Integrating Arts at Home, & Using the arts to enhance your Educational Techniques

2006-present, Ashanti Cultural Arts, *Independent Contractor/Teaching Artist*, Fort Lauderdale, FL

- Provide supplemental art enrichment to after school programming
- Teach African dance and music to elementary and middle school students
- Teach visual arts to elementary students
- Teach keyboard to elementary and middle school students
- 2006-2008 Directed scenes from Chocolate Nutcracker

2005-2006, Sirius Roots Charter School, *Managing Music Director*, Fort Lauderdale, FL

- Designed and executed music curriculum for the facility (PreK-5)

- 2005-2006**, Daughter of Zion Junior Academy, *Managing Art Director*, Delray Beach, FL
- Created and implemented art curriculum for the student body (K-8)
- 2004-present**, Fahima Rites of Passage, *Co-Founder and Director*, Boynton Beach, FL
- Youth development program focused on young women.
 - Coordinated self empowerment seminars.

Bibliography (Reviews/Articles/Interviews)

2011

1. Rojas, Samantha. "Art, Science, and the Gaps" Broward Cultural Quarterly [Broward County, FL] 1B

2009

1. Taylor, Tracy-Ann. "Un-Murdered" The South FL Times [Broward County, FL] 22 May 2009: 1B

2008

1. Mills, Jillian. "Residence for the Right-Brained." Home Ft Lauderdale Sept. 2008: 72-77
2. Hare, Mary Gail. "Artscape a fun escape for Many" Baltimore Sun 20 July 2008
3. Taylor, Tracy-Ann. "Kuumba: Three Women put creativity on display." The South FL Times [Broward County, FL] 12 December 2008: 1B

2007

1. Feinstein-Bartl, Beth. "Colors of Black." Sun Sentinel [Fort Lauderdale, FL] 11 February 2007: Broward Edition
2. "Bearers of Culture: Celebrating Black History Month." The Broward Times [Broward County, FL] 2 February 2007

2006

1. Shabaka, Onajidé. "6th Annual Oscar Thomas Memorial." Miami Art Exchange (25 May, 2006).
2. Shapiro, Jennifer. "Unique Expressions." Sun Sentinel [Palm Beach County, FL] 14 May 2006: Wellington Edition
3. Smith, Catherine. "Small Voices Big Impact." Art & Culture Fall 2006: 63-650
4. "Local Artist." Palm Beach Post: Residencies [Boynton Beach, FL] 12 March 2006: North Edition

2005

1. Tafari, Jabulani. "Artist Profile: Nzingah." Rootz, Reggae & Kulcha Magazine Mar. 2005: 12
2. Mohammed, Tony. "Cultural Activist in Thought, Spoken Word, Canvas & Community." Urban America Feb. 2005:22

Collections

- “Her Eyes No. 2,” African American Research Library & Cultural Center, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- “Untitled,” Veterans Affairs Office, Miami Beach, FL
- “Inspiration,” Veterans Affairs Office, Miami Beach, FL
- “RBG,” Private Collection, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- “Still Life,” private collection, Delray Beach, FL
- “Serenity,” private collection, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- “Kindred No. 1,” private collection, Delray Beach, FL
- “Kindred No. 2,” private collection, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- “Kindred No. 3,” private collection, West Palm Beach, FL

Professional Affiliations

- **2009- Present** VSA Arts Florida. Teaching Artist
- **2008- Present** Sailboat Bend Artist Loft
- **2006 - Present** African World Artist Collective. Secretary
- **2006 - Present** Arts 4 Learning Miami. Teaching Artist
- **2005 - present** Kuumba Artist Collective