

IS THIS A WOMAN?



Dandelion Eghosa



Artist Statement

When Dandelion Eghosa started their journey documenting the current realities facing non-binary and gender non-conforming people in Africa via their debut solo exhibition ‘**Unspoken Rudiments**’, they were met with gentle but persistent censorship.

Many argued was too dangerous to be overt with conversations of gender identity in a deeply religious and conservative country to their friends and social circle who didn’t understand at the time, that their motivations for pursuing this line of art was deeply personal, and a corollary for the political implications of gender identity.

As with many young artists at the start of their career, Dandelion was convinced by their champions and guides that a compromise of this sort was normal, and a blunting of perspectives was necessary to straddle the line of being a commercially successful, critically contemporary artist. As result, **Unspoken Rudiments**, her debut solo exhibition focuses only the more sanitized aspects of the social impact of non-binary and gender non-conforming people on African politics, culture, entertainment and history.

Dandelion is excited to expand on her previous exhibition and provide a more detailed, expansive and most importantly uncensored visual commentary with her new body of work, titled “**Is this a woman?**”

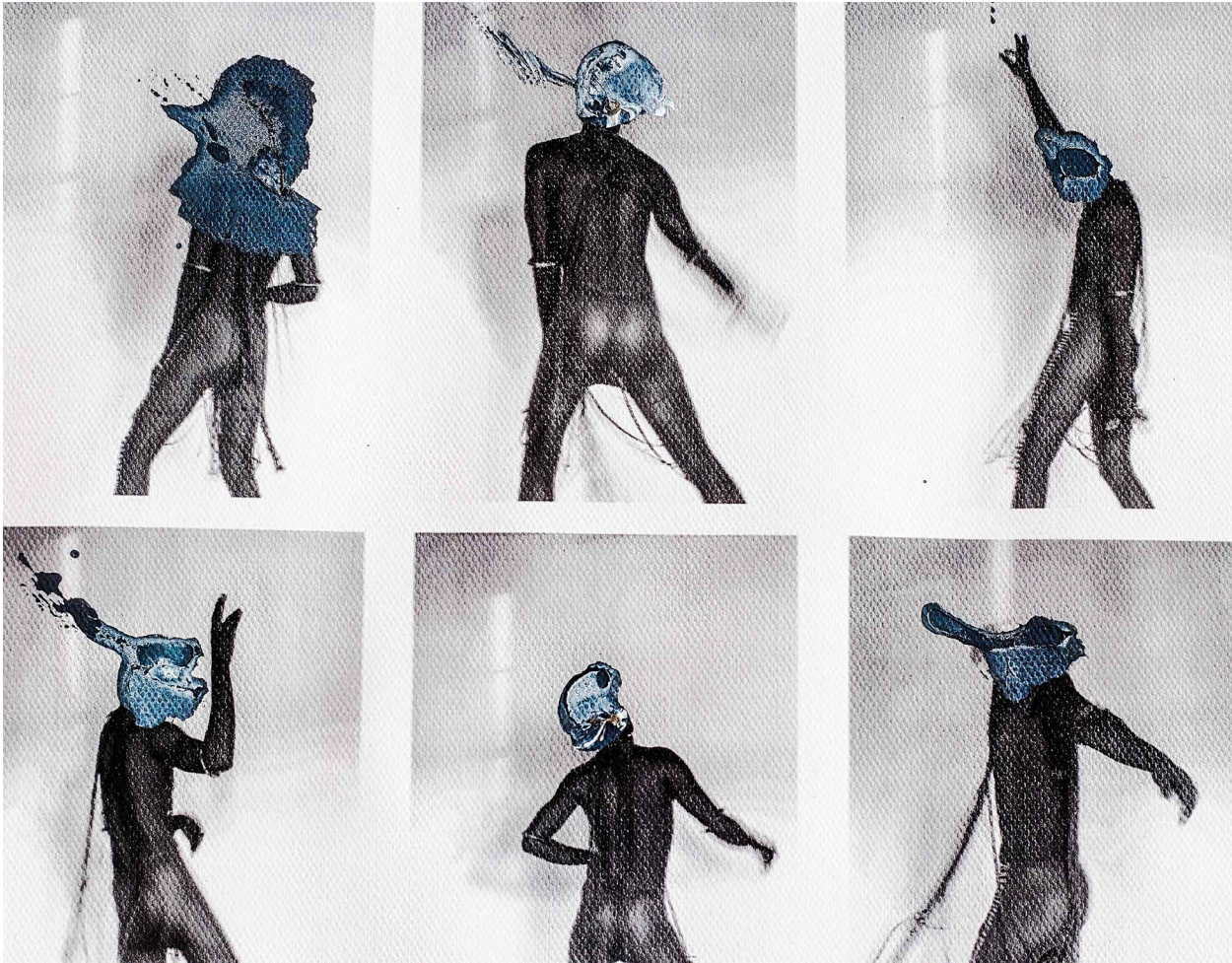
Bodies, when stripped of their sexual agency remain political. Policies exist that define what is permissible and what is unacceptable for bodies to express, and prescribe punishment and exclusion as tools to control how we choose to express our identities. But bodies remain political, even when people those bodies house would much rather conform and obey.

Desire is political, dress is political, physical modification of our bodies to reflect internal truth is an act of affirmation and an act of rebellion. Individual acts of self-affirmation lead to a revolution, only if they are connected through observation and amplified through documentation.

‘**Is This A Woman?**’ is Dandelion’s contribution to the movement, their way of acknowledging the politics of the body and who seeks to suppress this form of autonomy using the juxtaposition of photography and analogue collage to document the changing social trajectory of their

immediate community as it relates to gender, sex and sexuality. Dandelion seeks to center the experiences of African LGBT persons through this series, and to make a clear distinction between the politics of desire as it relates to sexuality and the politics of identity as it relates to self-expression and political autonomy. She seeks to make this distinction because sexuality and desire is often used to flatten the humanity of trans, non-binary and non-conforming persons, to deny them agency and dismiss the ways in which they choose to identify.

By using photography, analogue collage and embellishments with acrylic paints and embroidery, Dandelion seeks to separate the layers of conversation that often obscure the humanity of individuals on the identity spectrum and reassert this humanity by reconstructing each of her images in ways reminiscent of how people on the spectrum must dismantle social conditioning and community expectations and reassemble their true identities. Each collage is a layering of many influences, distorted with acrylic paint and embroidery to pay homage to the ritual of distorting the body through physical and sartorial modifications to reclaim ownership of those bodies.



Title: **A dance i love to do I**
Medium: **Collage**
Year: **2020**



Title: **A dance i love to do II**
Medium: **Collage**
Year: **2020**



Title: **A colorless idea of blue I**
Medium: **Collage**
Year: **2020**



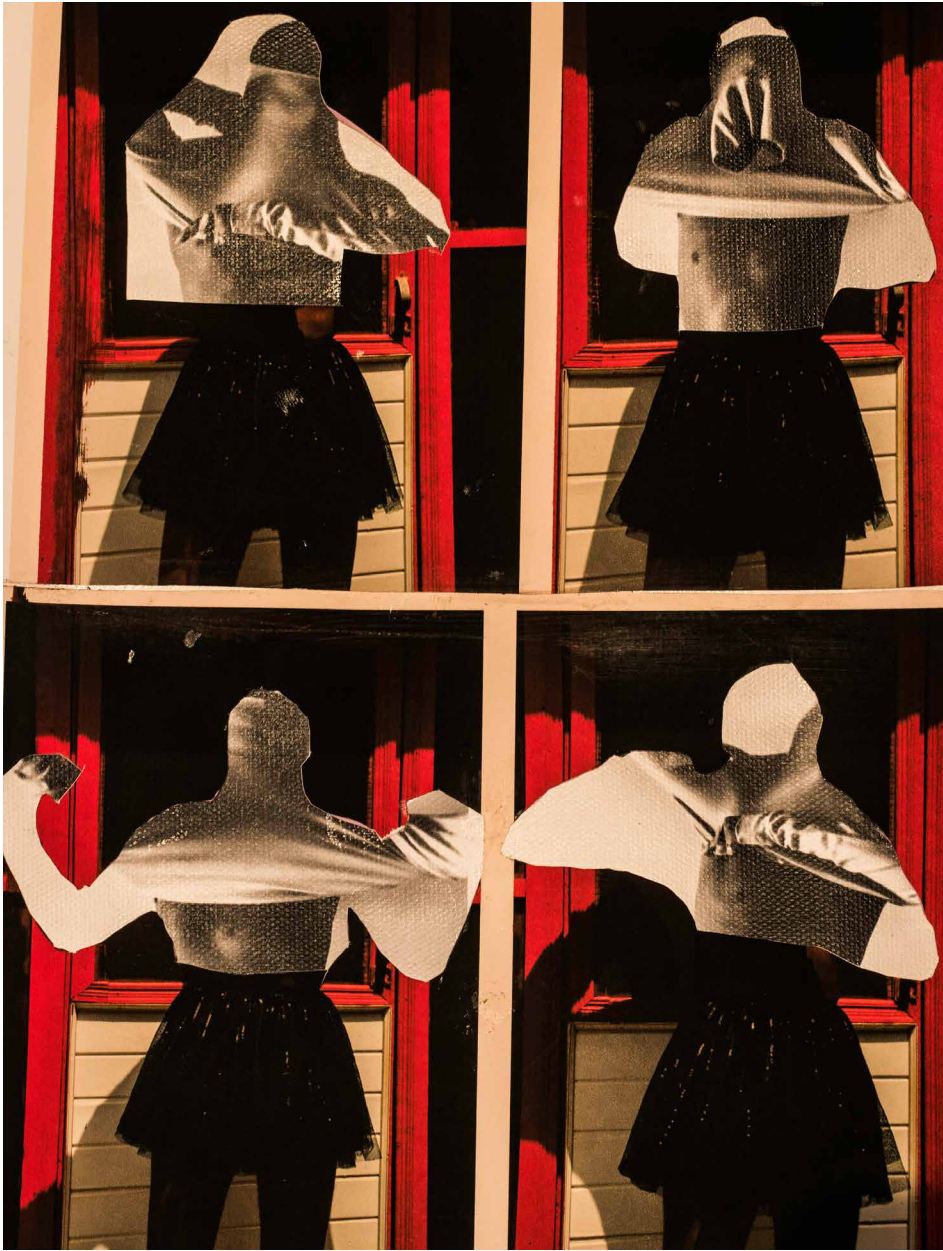
Title: **A colorless idea of blue II**
Medium: **Collage**
Year: **2020**



Title: **Venus is burning**
Medium: **Collage**
Year: **2020**



Title: **Venus is burning II**
Medium: **Collage**
Year: **2020**



Title: **Wearing my love**
Medium: **Collage**
Year: **2020**



Title: **Wearing my love II**
Medium: **Collage**
Year: **2020**

IS THIS A WOMAN?

Dandelion Eghosa
2020