

OSARETIN UGIAGBE

Osaretin Ugiagbe (b. 1986 Lagos, Nigeria) is a painter and photographer who lives and works in the Bronx and Baltimore. He has worked extensively on social documentary projects in the United States, the Caribbean, Europe, China and Nigeria. After finishing his BA in Computer Science, Ugiagbe received his MFA from the Royal College of Art, London, in 2019. Much of his work focuses on themes of displacement and longing. Ugiagbe utilizes his art to open up a space for existential interrogation.

The **“Bounty” series** combines the concepts of self, memory, and the artist’s lifelong interest in portrait painting, using interiors from past experiences. These spaces within the canvas visualize a certain sense of confrontation. Ugiagbe, aiming to tackle and ultimately re-address the tradition of portraiture, hazily depicts the people around him; adding imprinted patterns of Bounty paper towels as a reminder of domesticity and the ephemeral. In these paintings, people appear like mysterious figures without faces, leaving it to the viewer to give them a name. They show unfinished details that break the conformity of the composition. The “unfinished,” then, becomes a reminder of the ever-changing aspects in today’s life, of both the power of instability and reinvention.

“Metal Summer” is another way of dealing with similar subjects, yet has a more symbolic, abstract visual language as sculptural works that surpass disciplines. Ugiagbe uses the disintegration and layers over layers of paper, found objects, and metal clamps to externalize his relationship with the streets of cities that impacted him. As Ugiagbe approaches identity politics from the physical surface, these works signify how bureaucracy and physical labor have the power to shape culture. This technique he developed during his time at the Royal College of Art demonstrates a similarly arduous work, and requires many tasks: painting, drawing, folding, binding, ripping, cutting and layering of materials be it found objects, paper or canvas, all held together by metal clamps: a device, in the artist’s own words, “universal in its functionality to hold *work*, both the physical labour and the work of art, in place.” While the papers and found materials symbolize his personalized urban connection, the metal clamps are a visual manifestation of the physical labor and the working class.

Both series, although perceptibly distant from each other, are intimately connected. Ugiagbe created both series contemporarily, moving between painting and sculpting and sometimes finishing up to 4 works at the same time. They also inform each other: While the canvases are a figurative description of feelings of belonging, personality, and home, the sculptural installations of “Metal Summer” address Ugiagbe’s rendering of the urban landscape, and complete that vision from the outside, from the world.

Ugiagbe has exhibited his work at the *Bronx Documentary Centre* and the *Bronx Museum* in New York, NY, the *De Cacaofabriek* in Helmond, Netherlands, amongst other contemporary galleries. His work is in the *Museum of Fine Arts, Houston* and in private collections in the US, Europe, and Nigeria.



Osaretin Ugiagbe, *Blue Steel*, 2022, Metal clamps, acrylic & print ink on layered paper, 32x35 in. \$ 7,500



Detail shot





Osaretin Ugiagbe, *Brown Sea* (front and back), 2022, Metal clamps, acrylic and print ink medium on layered paper, 38x29 in. \$ 7,500



Osaretin Ugiagbe, *Brown Sea*, 2022 (detail)

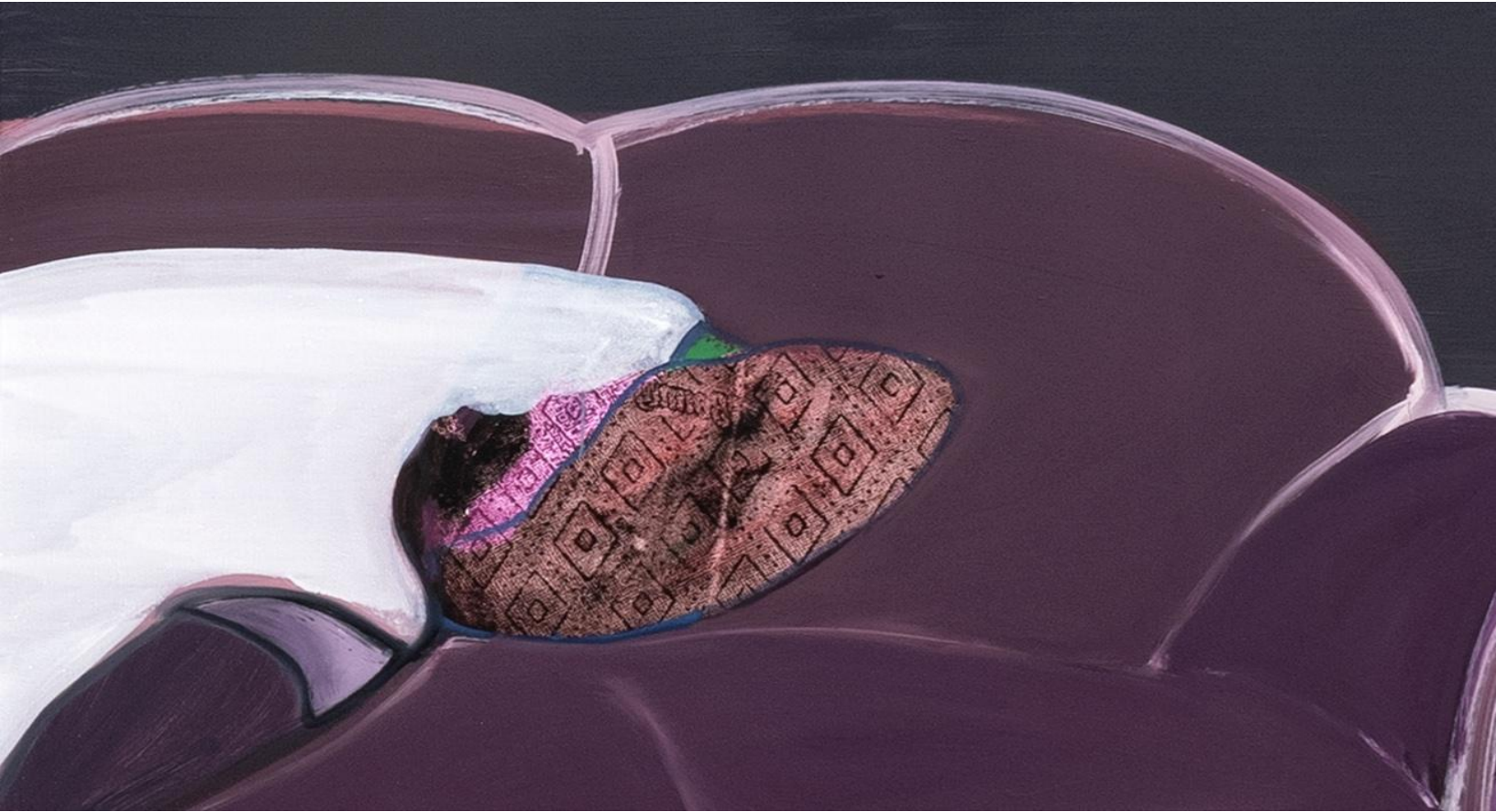




Osaretin Ugiagbe, *Green Table*, 2020, Oil on canvas. 48x48 in. \$ 10,500



Osaretin Ugiagbe, *Floater*, 2020, Oil on canvas. 48x48 in. \$ 10,500



Above: Osaretin Ugiagbe, *Floater*, 2020 (detail)
Right: Osaretin Ugiagbe, *Green Table*, 2020 (detail)





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Osaretin Ugiagbe, *Moby Dick*, 2020, Metal clamps, acrylic, print ink on layered paper, 25x27.5 in. \$ 7,500





Osaretin Ugiagbe, *Leilis Gaze*, 2021, Oil on canvas, 48x48 in \$ 10,500

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Osaretin Ugiagbe, *Picasso's hand*, 2021. Oil on canvas. 48 x 48 in \$ 10,500



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Osaretin Ugiagbe, *Blur Line*, 2021, Metal clamps, acrylic, acrylic ink and print medium on paper, 29 × 22 × 3 in
\$ 7.500

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Osaretin Ugiagbe, Bounty 3, 2020, Oil on canvas 16 × 20 × 1 in. \$ 4,000



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When

Thur, April 21, VIP Preview
Fri and Sat, April 22–23,
11am–7pm
Sat, April 23,
11:00am–7:00pm
Sun, April 24, 11am–5pm

Where

Fashion Industry
Gallery
1807 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75201

More works are available upon request.

Please visit Artsy for the online viewing room.

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