

Reading: Between the Lines

By Beatrice Watson

Yisa Enjoys Success at Solo Exhibition

Does Winnipeg have a Michael Jackson type artist in the person of Yisa Akinbolaji? It would appear so from his outfit at the opening of his first solo exhibition "Dance of Injustice" in Canada from April 6 to May 14 at the Franco Manitobain Cultural Centre.

Yisa donned a luxurious Nigerian outfit with a regal headwear surrounded by strands of beads that obscured his face. He kept his face hidden for the duration of the evening. He was accompanied by his wife Catherine and their daughter Kemi wearing matching outfits. He did not unveil his face even for the television crews that covered the event.

Yisa said he wanted the audience to focus on his art and not be distracted by the artist. He called himself a conduit for inspired works that come to him sometimes in dreams.

The exhibition drew one of the largest crowds the Centre has seen in a long time at an opening.

His Nigerian and church communities came out in full force to the exhibition opening of some 35 works most of which were new works with titles such as Journey of Hope, Celebration of Peace, Dignity Security Rock and Hard Places reflecting the theme of the exhibition. A master at his craft, through Yisa's work one can feel sound and motion, strength, hope and the fears of his characters.

Yisa said that his message with this exhibition is that we should dance beyond the challenges that face us.

This is an artist to collect.



Artist Yisa Akinbolaji



Catherine and baby Kemi



Participants



Chrispin Ntungo, Community Leader and Yisa



Live to Tell - A woman who stared death down in the face

"In 1994, Rwandan native Ilibagiza was 22 years old and home from college to spend Easter with her devout Catholic family when the death of Rwanda's Hutu president sparked a



three-month slaughter of nearly one million ethnic Tutsis. She survived by hiding in a Hutu pastor's tiny bathroom with seven other starving women for 91 cramped, terrifying days. This searing firsthand account of Ilibagiza's experience cuts two ways: her description of the evil that was perpetrated, including the brutal murders of her family members, is soul-numbingly devastating, yet the story of her unquenchable faith and connection to God throughout the ordeal uplifts and inspires. This book is a precious addition to the literature that tries to make sense of humankind's seemingly bottomless depravity and counterbalancing hope in an all-powerful, loving God."

"The Crusaders," a true story of Thurgood Marshall as seen through the eyes of Jack Greenberg—a dedicated young lawyer who became the only white member of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and who fought side by side with Marshall in the courts to destroy segregation—is in the works .

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