

Emamoke Ukeleghe

Textile designer Emamoke Ukeleghe has exhibited her work in New York and London and uses influences from a range of heartfelt stories in her beautifully decorative fabrics.



Designs on her future
New York, London and the rest of the world is the route Emamoke is taking with her textiles.

Fashion & Lifestyle

Which part of Nigeria are you from?
Delta State, I was born in Benin City.

What's your earliest memory of it?
Unfortunately I don't really have any visual memories about Nigeria; I left Nigeria to come to England with my mum, brother and sister when I was 3 years old. But I do remember the smell of the earth.

When was the last time you were there?
My family and I went in 2000, which was also the first time that I went back since I came to England.

How would you describe what you do as a designer?
As a designer, I create decorative textiles that tell a story. Sometimes they are stories from my childhood or the stories of others. I also explore the themes of displacement and identity and use my fabric to communicate with the viewer and provoke an emotional connection with my prints.

Is creativity a natural or a learnt skill in your opinion?
In my opinion, the ability to create is natural; we all possess it. However this innate ability gets honed through the skills that we learn, whether it be cooking or drawing.

What or who are your designs inspired by?
My faith in Jesus Christ, my friends and family and



'The ability to create is natural'

people I walk past on the street, or issues that I read about in a newspaper. These all inspire my prints.

You also work for the organisation African and African-Caribbean Design Diaspora (AACDD). What does this involve?

AACDD is a three-year initiative organised by the British European Design Group (BEDG). The aim is to celebrate and promote creative talent within the diaspora. I'm on the organisation team, so my role involves me sourcing designers, locations for exhibitions and connecting with people within the community. I'm enjoying the role. It's definitely challenging, but it has been great meeting new people.

What's on your 'to do' list for your creative career?
The world! Right now though, I'm going to keep working towards developing my interior products line.

Three words you'd use to describe Nigeria?
Family, cultured, developing.

What do you think Nigeria should be celebrating in its 50th year of independence?
The people, especially all those who have come before me and have made a positive contribution to the country, despite all the challenges that the country has faced over the years.