

The Art House

Tonye Ekine

When the Dawn Delays, We Rise Anyway

6 September – 6 November 2025

One of Britain's Rising Art Stars Debuts New Major Exhibition at The Art House



Image © the artist

The Art House is proud to announce **When the Dawn Delays, We Rise Anyway**, a landmark exhibition by Tonye Ekine – recently named one of Britain's top 40 rising art stars by the Royal Society of British Artists and featured as “the artist to watch out for.”

Opening on 6 September 2025, the exhibition unveils a bold new series of Ekine's distinctive paintings alongside his first major body of sculptural work, created on-site at The Art House. Together, these works explore powerful narratives of identity, resilience, and belonging.

Alongside this growing recognition in Britain, Ekine remains dedicated to reshaping perceptions of African art and widening horizons for African artists both locally and globally.

At the heart of Ekine's practice lies the recurring motif of the Ife bronze mask, evoking the ancient Yoruba city of Ife. The mask becomes both a personal and cultural vessel, carrying stories of memory, emotion, and endurance while connecting the artist to his Nigerian heritage.

For the first time, Ekine expands beyond painting into sculpture, developing a striking new series that centres on the motif of the coin – a fading artefact that raises questions about how societies assign value and whose histories are preserved.

Around the gallery, women wearing the lfe mask stand as quiet yet powerful figures of resilience, recalling those who sustained families and communities often without recognition. Ekine shines a light on the absence of such women from coins and notes – symbols of value and power – and extends this reflection to the present day.

His sculptures speak to the overlooked labour of women, as well as diaspora, migrant, and minority communities, whose contributions have long been essential yet undervalued.

Tonye Ekine: When the Dawn Delays, We Rise Anyway is a major moment in the career of one of Britain's most exciting emerging artists, and a powerful reflection on heritage, identity, and value. This exhibition is not to be missed.

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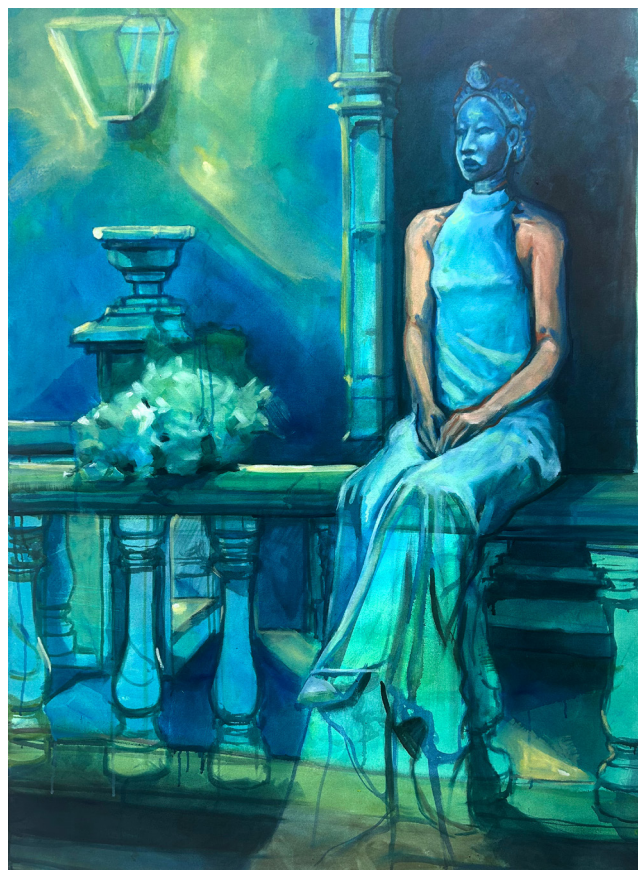


Image © the artist

Notes to Editors

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The Art House

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Social

Twitter: @TheArtHouseUK
Facebook: /theartouse.wakefield

Opening Times

Monday: Closed (appointment only)
Tuesday: 09:30 – 16:00
Wednesday: 09:30 – 16:00
Thursday: 09:30 – 16:00
Friday: 09:30 – 16:00
Saturday: 09:30 – 16:00



About The Art House

The Art House provides time, space and support for artists, makers and creative businesses to develop their practice. It is a place where artists and audiences of all kinds are welcome to experience contemporary visual art and learn about the practice of being an artist through a year-round programme of exhibitions and events.

Established in 1994 by a group of disabled and non-disabled artists, The Art House is both a visual arts development agency and registered charity. Alongside a programme of training, mentoring, residencies and commissions, The Art House develops a range of projects designed to engage audiences in the artistic process and contribute to an essential discourse around diversity in contemporary visual arts practice. The Art House's three Maker Spaces (Print Studio, Darkroom, and Ceramics Studio) host a year-round programme of workshops and courses, supporting both the public and members in their artistic development. As well, the Maker Spaces are utilised to support a Learning programme that is targeted at both pupils and teachers to develop their skills, as well as team development for organisations.

The Art House is the recipient of The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's second annual Award for Civic Arts Organisations 2022. It is the UK's first Studio of Sanctuary, a role which sees them engage Wakefield's Asylum Seeker, Refugee, and Settled communities in creative projects, and was awarded Gallery of Sanctuary in 2023.

About The Artist

Tonye Ekine (b. Nigeria, lives and works in London) is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice spans painting and sculpture. Rooted in storytelling, his work explores identity, resilience, and belonging, often drawing on personal memory, ancestral inheritance, and postcolonial histories.

A recurring motif within his practice is the Ife bronze mask, evoking the ancient Yoruba city of Ife and acting as a vessel for cultural resilience, memory, and emotion. Through this symbol, Ekine connects with his heritage while addressing wider questions of history, representation, and value.

Ekine has been recognised as one of the top 40 rising art stars by the Royal Society of British Artists and was recently profiled by The 49th Street as "the artist to watch out for." His work has been exhibited in the UK and internationally, and his bold, narrative-driven practice continues to attract growing critical attention.