



Buffalo Arts Studio

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Victoria-Idongesit Udondian, *Akaisang ye Beyong cages 1277, 1245*, 2020, photo courtesy of the artist

Buffalo Arts Studio presents *Nsinam me ke ndi Owo* by Victoria-Idongesit Udondian

On View January 23 – March 14, 2026

Opening Reception: Friday, January 23, 2026, 5:00 – 8:00 pm

Part of M&T Fourth Friday at Tri-Main

Buffalo, NY — Buffalo Arts Studio is thrilled to present *Nsinam me ke ndi Owo*, a solo exhibition by international artist Victoria-Idongesit Udondian. Featuring a multisensory installation of mixed-media works spanning textile, sculpture, video, and sound, the exhibition will be on view from January 23 through March 14, 2026. An opening reception will be held on Friday, January 23, from 5:00 to 8:00 pm as part of M&T Fourth Friday at Tri-Main.

Drawing from her experiences growing up in Nigeria—a nation shaped by post-colonial exchange and inundated with castoffs from the West—Udondian interrogates cultural identity, migration, and the legacies of global trade systems that govern the movement of goods and people across borders. The exhibition immerses viewers in a dimly lit gallery populated by suspended shrouds of repurposed fabric, cast from human forms and hovering above beds of flowers and life-cast hands reaching upward toward their spectral silhouettes. These floating bodies are animated by projected video of ocean waves and enveloping sound, scattering light across their forms.

Central to the exhibition is *How Can I Be Nobody*, a 10-minute, three-channel video created in collaboration with immigrant communities in the New York area where Udondian lives and works. The work weaves together

personal testimony, news media, and archival footage to examine migration, labor, and post-colonial histories. Its title originates from a collaborator who, fearful that sharing her story might endanger those in her home country, asked, "How can I be nobody and tell you my story?" The exhibition title is the Efik (Nigerian language) translation of this quote, which attempts to relate acts of translation to visibility. Her question captures the anxieties many immigrants and refugees carry into unfamiliar places, shaped by precarity and a lack of institutional protection. Together, the installation elements evoke both presence and absence while addressing the lived realities of migrant communities amid rising intolerance, fear, and displacement.

As a whole, *Nsinam me ke ndi Owo* asks viewers to reflect on the often-unrecognized contributions of immigrant populations in the face of growing nationalism across the United States and Europe. By bridging direct community engagement with contemporary art practice, Udondian fosters shared historical understanding and creates space for marginalized voices to reclaim agency, visibility, and collective re-empowerment.

About the Artist

Udondian's work is driven by her interest in textiles and the potential for clothing to shape identity, informed by the histories and tacit meanings embedded in everyday materials. She engages with repurposed materials to create large-scale sculptural elements and interdisciplinary projects that examine the intersection of migration, labor, and global trade systems. In 2020, Udondian was awarded a Guggenheim. She has participated in numerous residencies, including Fountainhead (Miami, FL), Instituto Sacatar (Brazil), MASS MoCA (North Adams, MA), Fine Arts Work Center (Provincetown, MA), Villa Strauli (Switzerland), and Fondazione di Venezia (Italy). Her work has been exhibited at The Armory (New York, NY), the British Textile Biennial (UK), Bronx Museum (New York, NY), the Children's Museum of Manhattan (New York, NY), the National Museum (Lagos), the Whitworth Gallery (Manchester), the South London Gallery (UK), and Museo Textil de Oaxaca (Mexico). Udondian received an MFA in Sculpture and New Genres from Columbia University, NY, and a BA in painting from the University of Uyo, Nigeria. She is a Visiting Associate Professor at University at Buffalo, NY.

About Buffalo Arts Studio

Buffalo Arts Studio (BAS) connects diverse communities through visual arts, offering inclusive exhibitions, educational programs, mentorships, and public art initiatives. BAS provides vital resources for visual artists, including affordable studio space and paid opportunities. Through its programs, BAS serves as a catalyst for self-empowerment, innovation, and regional enhancement.

This exhibition is generously supported by The Cameron and Jane Baird Foundation, Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, DownRoot Fund, part of the Crossroads Community Fund, Erie County Cultural Funds, M&T Bank, Ovation Stand for the Arts, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and through the New York State Council for the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature.

Buffalo Arts Studio is located in Suite 500 of the Tri-Main Center at 2495 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14214. For media inquiries, interview requests, or high-resolution images, please contact Sydney O'Shei at sydney@buffaloartsstudio.org or 716-833-4450 x 114.