

Artwork Project : Kente Souls (Slave Ship).

Kente Souls (Slave Ship) is a monumental/large-scale new work by Ghanaian artist Seyram Agbleze, measuring 360cm x 780cm (H×W). Created from Ghana's iconic Kente cloth, this large-scale textile art piece was crafted in collaboration with Ewe Kente weavers from the Agotime-Kpetoe community in the Volta Region of Ghana.

The woven human figures, or motifs, represent the enslaved victims of the transatlantic slave trade, while the background artwork evokes the 'slave ships' that carried them on their inhumane journey. The use of Kente cloth is deeply symbolic, highlighting Africa's rich cultural heritage and the skills and knowledge that enslaved people took with them to the Americas.

This work serves as a poignant reminder of one of humanity's darkest periods, emphasizing the importance of learning from the past to guide our future. The human figure motifs (Kente Souls) in the artwork draw inspiration from the artist's earlier work, Sankofa Reflections, 2023 (refer to 2nd PDF) which explores the Adinkra symbol (Sankofa) for learning from the past. Sankofa is a powerful reminder of the importance of remembering and reflecting on our history. This artwork brings history and culture together.

Artist Bio

Seyram Agbleze is a Ghanaian textile artist whose works explore identity, indigenous knowledge systems and historical narratives of Africa. His art practice is inspired by traditional African textiles such as Kente, Asafo flags and Adinkra. He is known for striking textile artworks which also employ handwoven textiles for visual storytelling. He is the author of Journey of West African Textile Traditions (2020) and notable art projects such as: A Forgotten People, Still Here (also a body of work, 2023), Sleeping Giant Africa series (2024) and Glorious Ghana (2025) amongst others. He has been part of numerous exhibitions. He has collaborated in past projects with weavers/cultural practitioners in different regions of Ghana and beyond. Agbleze is regarded a leading textile artist in Ghana

In 2019 he received a Thetis Blacker Award from Temenos Academy in London (Patron: King Charles III) which also supported his artistic research in African textiles. He is the first recipient of the prestigious Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa/MIASA Art Fellowship (2023) sponsored by the

German Federal Ministry for Education and Research with co-funding from the University of Ghana. He is also the first non-postdoctoral fellow to be awarded a MIASA Fellowship. He has also contributed to other notable fellowship projects like the University of Bristol's Brigstow Institute 'From Ghana to Bristol project' (2025). He was nominated in 2023 for the Africans Rising Awards Artists Category. Undocublack Network (USA) named him as one of their Black Personalities of Choice for the 2022 Black History Month for his work in the arts. He is also the founder of Love For Humanity Initiative - a community empowerment project in Ghana.

Full work displayed on a park





Measurement



Woven human figure motifs





Workers trying to make a setup/display artwork on a building.





A picture taken whilst work was ongoing at the community.

