

PRESS RELEASE:

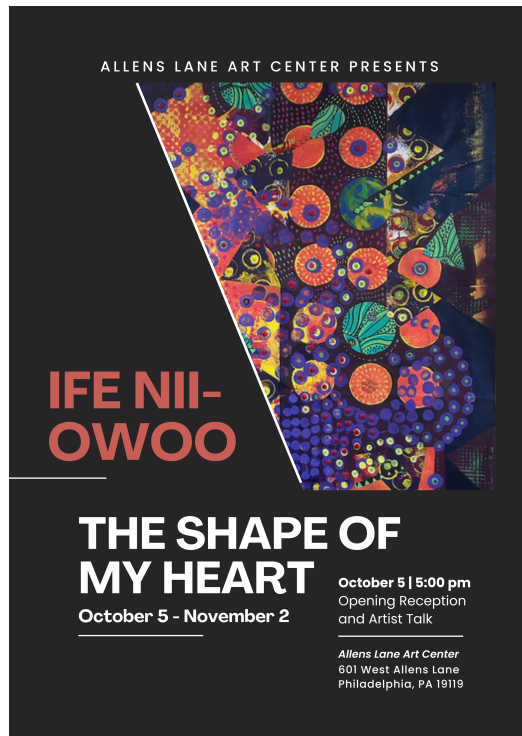
Ife Nii-Owoo: The Shape of My Heart

Exhibition Dates: October 5th – November 2nd

Opening Reception: October 5th, 5 -7 pm

Artist Talk: October 5th, 5pm

Contact: Vita Litvak: vita@allenslane.org



Allens Lane Art Center is thrilled to present the work of Ife Nii-Owoo in her solo exhibition, *The Shape of My Heart*. The exhibition draws heavily on recent works completed in 2023-24. These are contrasted with several earlier works, which help to tell the story of her evolving aesthetic that has developed over the last 40 years of her career.

Utilizing hand-painted and printed papers, photo transfers of family images, markings of African writing scripts, and symbolism, Nii-Owoo constructs layered, complex, and captivating works of collage, painting, and mixed media sculptures. The saturated and rich color, and the carefully composed and balanced pictorial space found in her work evokes a range of emotions.

Nii-Owoo's work is an ongoing investigation of history's influence on our lives, the power of myth and symbol, and the complexity of family dynamics and ancestry. In 1978, during her graduate studies at the Institute of African Studies in Accra, Ghana, she began to explore and incorporate into her work various traditional African spiritual symbols and written scripts. These continue to resonate and have become a part of her works spiritual vocabulary.

The new works in the exhibition weave together grief and hope; are radiant and full of deep shadows, with forms and symbols cascading across the picture plane, at once chaotic and perfectly balanced. It is as if we are trying to hold the whole world of emotions in one gaze, creating a mesmerizing effect on the viewer. These works truly feel as the artist intended: *"My work is the embodiment of joy, meditation, and prayer."*