



B I R I M I A N

institut
FRANÇAIS
de la
MODE

AFRICA,
THE NEW CREATIVE
AND FASHION
FRONTIER

BIRIMIAN SHINES LIGHT
ON THE NEW AFRICAN CREATIVE
VANGUARD, WHICH IT SUPPORTS
THROUGH A UNIQUE
ACCELERATOR PROGRAM
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
INSTITUT FRANÇAIS DE LA MODE

OCTOBER 2021



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GHANA

DESIGNER BIO

AISHA AYENSU IS THE FOUNDER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED LUXURY FASHION LABEL, CHRISTIE BROWN.



Named after another inspiring female, her grandmother, the brand represents a taste of true neo-African culture in a chic modern and classic style. Mrs. Ayensu holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Ghana, Legon and embarked on the journey to creating the brand in her final year. She had her training in fashion from Joyce Ababio College of Creative Design. With years of experience in the industry spanning over a decade, Christie Brown has garnered global coverage by magazines such as Harper's Bazaar, Vogue Italia and Marie Claire. Aisha represented the Ghanaian fashion industry at the Africa Economic Forum hosted by Columbia University on the "African Fashion Going Global" panel as a respected voice in business. She also served as a Global Shaper of The World Economic Forum, under the Accra Hub. Aisha is an IVLP alumnus under the U.S. State Department and a member of IWF Ghana.

BRAND STORY

Founded in 2008 by Creative Director Aisha Ayensu, Christie Brown is a luxury fashion brand for the global citizen. Named after Aisha's grandmother, Christie Brown is proudly Made in Africa and shares its heritage through its aesthetic and design. Aisha reimagines and interprets traditional artisanal techniques and incorporates them into modern silhouettes.

Christie Brown stands uniquely as a women's apparel and accessories manufacturer and retailer, with pieces ranging from statement ready-to-wear pieces to innovative accessories to bespoke creations. Christie Brown is for the bold, confident, and adventurous woman who appreciates intricate details, a fusion of colour and culture, and a fit that is flattering yet comfortable. Christie Brown is more than just clothes; it's a unique experience designed to compliment the amazing personality of the woman who wears her.

The brand's mission is to define the aesthetic of high achieving women globally by providing garments/pieces that are steeped in true African heritage expertly crafted to celebrate their individuality.

◆ OFFER

Women's RTW

◆ CATEGORY

Shirts, Pants, Dresses, Tops, Jackets

◆ SOURCING

Africa/Ghana, Europe, Asia

◆ MADE IN

Africa (Ghana)

◆ DISTRIBUTION

Digital

WEBSITE

www.christiebrownonline.com

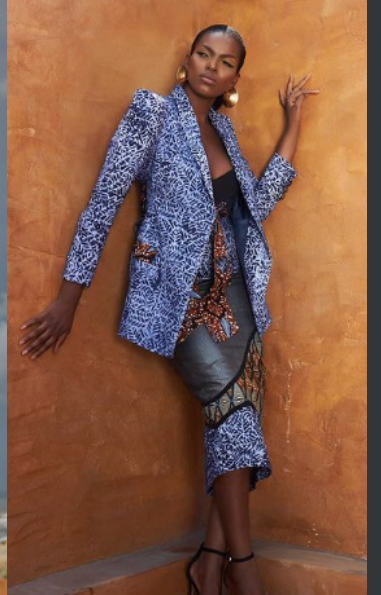


90K
FOLLOWERS



36,9K
FOLLOWERS

CHRISTIE BROWN LOOKBOOK



IFM-BIRIMIAN ACCELERATOR X AFRICA



CÔTE D'IVOIRE

DESIGNER BIO

ARISTIDE LOUA, FOUNDER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF KENTE GENTLEMEN IS FROM CÔTE D'IVOIRE. HE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT SO MANY THINGS, SUCH AS WRITING, PHOTOGRAPHY, FASHION, HISTORY, MUSIC, AND TRAVEL.



In 2017, he created Kente Gentlemen brand; a platform in which he can exist and express himself in these areas.

The brand is much bigger than one person. At the core, they are three: Aristide, Sydney Bagrou (Chief Financial Officer) and Cyprien Mvunda (Chief Technology Officer). And collectively, they work to sincerely provide a platform inside which they can tell stories and share emotions through clothes, photographs, texts, ideas and concepts.

BRAND STORY

In an interconnected world, Kente Gentlemen is a mean to discover, value, celebrate, and foster Aristide diverse sociocultural heritage and identities through fashion, aesthetics, photography, and other visual arts. It's only fair that he and his team embrace and portray those rightful attributes to the global village we all belong to.

The first name in Kente Gentlemen praises the Kente cloth, a landmark textile and cultural icon of Africa, originating from the Ashanti Kingdom, land of their forefathers. Each of their clothing tells a story of local craftsmanship and sartorial poetry.

Kente Gentlemen is first and foremost a brand that offers elegant and edgy clothing, each tailored in unique style and contemporary design. Every finished product is fitted, cut, and sewn from fabrics made in Africa, with high respects paid to the rich textile heritage and local craftsmanship.

The quality of their product and its social impact will forever be essential to Aristide. As he remains committed in involving a community of hand-weavers, tailors, artisans, and vendors as to provide opportunities for the local economy and share the beauty of Africa to consumers around the world.

◆ OFFER

Women and men RTW

◆ CATEGORY

Apparel

◆ SOURCING

Africa

◆ MADE IN

100% made in Africa

◆ DISTRIBUTION

Digital and physical

WEBSITE

www.kentegentlemen.com



10,7K
FOLLOWERS



1,8K
FOLLOWERS

KENTE GENTLEMEN LOOKBOOK

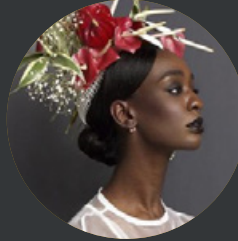




CÔTE D'IVOIRE

DESIGNER BIO

BORN IN BRAZIL AND RAISED BETWEEN CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND THE UNITED STATES, LOZA HAS BEEN CREATING SINCE AGE 13.



She graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Animation at the University of the Arts of Philadelphia in 2006 and took on several internships with New York City's top designers before starting her name sake brand, Loza Maleombho , which was established in New York City in 2009.

She relocated to Côte d'Ivoire in 2012, where the brands production now takes place.

BRAND STORY

Loza Maléombho, the brand, is best described as a fusion between traditional culture and contemporary fashion.

The brand bridges Pan African traditions and urban influences with silhouettes that celebrate the paradox of traditional and futurism.

Loza Maléombho collaborates with artists and artisans so as to promote a culture of knowledge exchange instead of knowledge imperialism.

The brand is committed to challenge industry's status quo, leverage Africa's history & heritage, collaborate with artists & artisans, so that together we can impact the design and structure of an ideal Luxury Industry in Africa.

◆ OFFER

Women's RTW Accessories

◆ CATEGORY

Shirts, Pants, Skirts, Dresses, Shoes, Belts, etc

◆ SOURCING

Africa (Ivory Coast)

◆ MADE IN

Africa (Ivory Coast)

◆ DISTRIBUTION

Digital and physical

WEBSITE

www.lozamaleombho.com



21K
FOLLOWERS



20K
FOLLOWERS

LOZA MALEOMBHO LOOKBOOK



millecollines



RWANDA

BRAND STORY

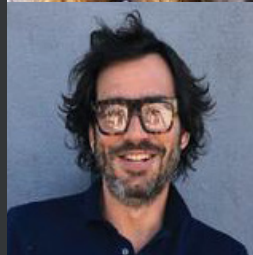
The mille collines story begins in Kigali in 2008 when the paths of two passionate women crossed: Antoinette, a Rwandan seamstress who owned an atelier and Ines, a Spanish design student.

They both shared the same vision; a belief that uniting talents would lead to creating groundbreaking products in Africa. Antoinette opened her atelier and team of artisans to Ines so she could create a first apparel collection that would become her university thesis. Soon after, Ines's friend and designer Marc joined her in Rwanda and together they worked on developing the idea further.

In 2009 the brand was co-founded by Marc and Ines. mille collines' journey has been unique, as it has taken them through Rwanda, Kenya and South Africa. This is one of the brands' defining features – a staple of their design aesthetic, as every country they produce in continues to influence their brand and designs.

Today the brand's headquarters are based in Cape Town, and they produce between Rwanda, Kenya and South Africa. What has remained constant since the start is their commitment to only producing their products in Africa.

With a focus on traditional craftsmanship combined with unexpected materials, mille collines believes in honoring the artisans behind the brand and celebrating the inspiration and heritage found throughout the continent.



◆ OFFER

Women ready to wear

◆ CATEGORY

Apparel & accessories

◆ SOURCING

Africa (South Africa, Madagascar, Kenya)

◆ MADE IN

100% made in Africa

◆ DISTRIBUTION

Digital and physical

WEBSITE

www.millecollinesafrica.com



23,1K

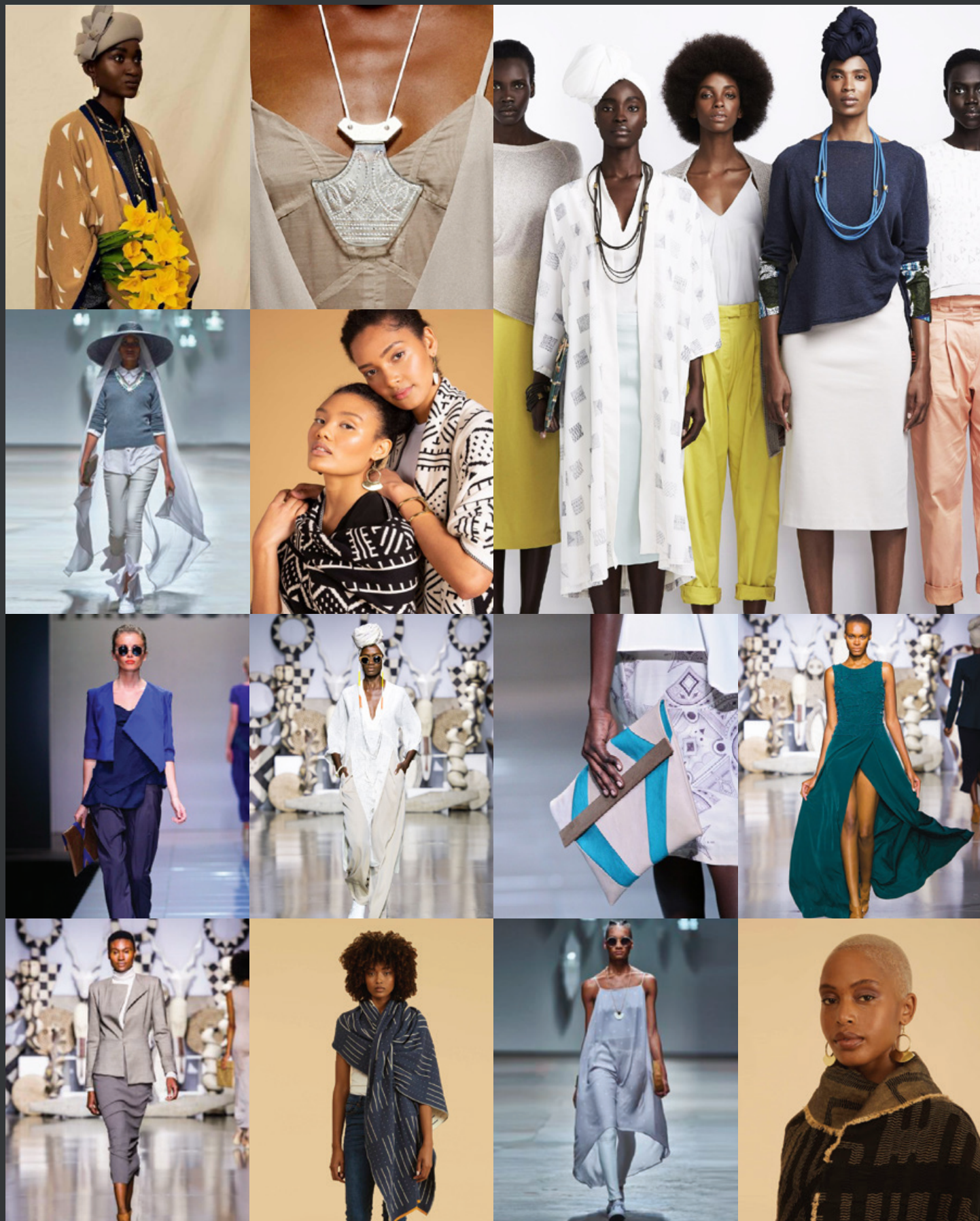
FOLLOWERS



10,1K

FOLLOWERS

MILLE COLLINES LOOKBOOK



MMUSOMAXWELL



SOUTH AFRICA

DESIGNER BIO

BORN AND RAISED IN JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, MMUSO & MAXWELL GAINED A NATIONAL DIPLOMA FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA, BEFORE JOINING THE DESIGN TEAM OF DAVID THLALE (SOUTH AFRICA'S PREMIERE LUXURY BRAND).



After spending two years with the team, they decided to join forces in the creation of a brand new namesake brand, Mmuso Maxwell.

BRAND STORY

MMUSO MAXWELL is a fashion brand based in Johannesburg South Africa, founded in 2016 by Maxwell Boko and Mmuso Potsane. The duo met through an internship program, having similar interest, views and aesthetic relating to design, they decided to join forces to strengthen their aesthetic and amplify the voice of their brand.

At the core, MMUSO MAXWELL is a ready to wear high end women's-wear brand. Ethically creating garments inspired by African heritage and contemporary culture with a particular emphasis on tailoring to complement the modern woman. Accentuating detail, practicality and wearability through a well considered and sustainable design process that gives a sense of value and quality.

For the longest time, Africa has been viewed and perceived by the world often through a stereotypical lens. Through creating MMUSO MAXWELL, the brand wanted to challenge that narrative and dismantle the idea of what African inspired fashion should be or look like.

The nuances of the Xhosa and Sotho cultures are tacitly reflected in signature details, from border patterns to asymmetric illusion layering while retaining a modern echo.

They produce collections in-house with their expert tailor, the slow fashion approach to modern luxury provides room for the early experimentation that shapes the brand's sustainability approach. Each season they collaborate with local artisans from bead workers to hand weavers.

◆ OFFER

Women's RTW

◆ CATEGORY

Tee shirts, pants, shirts, jackets dresses, tops

◆ SOURCING

Africa (South Africa)

◆ MADE IN

Africa (South Africa)

◆ DISTRIBUTION

Digital and physical

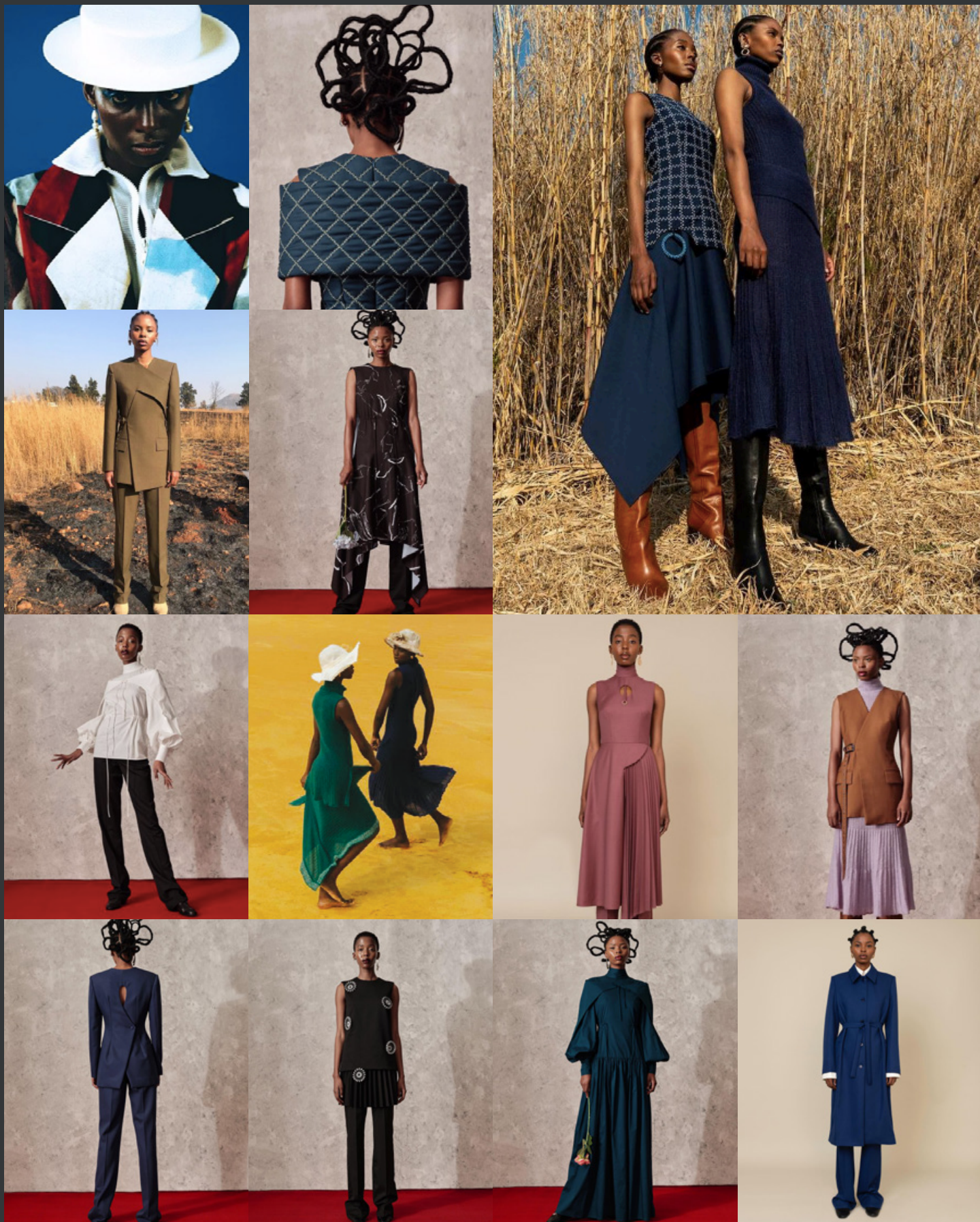
WEBSITE

www.mmusomaxwell.com



12,2K
FOLLOWERS

MMUSO MAXWELL LOOKBOOK



POST-IMPERIAL

DESIGNER BIO

NIYI IS A NIGERIAN/AMERICAN DESIGNER, BORN IN LAGOS AND RAISED IN HOUSTON, TEXAS. NIYI STUDIED FASHION DESIGN AT PARSONS THE NEW SCHOOL OF DESIGN.

Before establishing his fashion brand Post Imperial, he worked in both menswear and womenswear for prestigious brands such as Oscar de la Renta, Patrik Ervell, Yigal Azrouël. He has also worked on projects such as BMW/MINI & Engineered Garments. In 2020, he received Fashion Group International (FGI) Rising Star Awards in the mens category.



NIGERIA

BRAND STORY

POST-IMPERIAL is an aesthetic expression of mythmaking, evaluating cultural futures through the lens of Fashion. Founded in 2012, this expression is rooted in the African diaspora, the theory theory of humanizing materials to establish ethical responsibility and the creative collaboration between artisans, matter, and the environment. Post-Imperial—the name itself—means ‘after old regimes’. Post-Imperial collections are designed as opportunities to set a new standard of design without over romanticizing the past.

Post Imperials desire to design alternative new worlds stems from a worldview focusing on empathic and considered design. The inspirations and concepts resonate from people with transdisciplinary and decolonizing principles such as Francis Kere, Kerry James Marshall, and Natsai Audrey Chizea.

The brand uses the age-old dye technique Adire, to present its designs. Adire is a novel hand dyeing process developed by the Yorubas in the Southwest region of Nigeria. Prior to dyeing, the artist, hand paints patterns using a cassava starch paste or wax to acts as the resist dye. Due to the nature of the process, each final product varies in uniqueness giving them a one-of-a-kind artisanal feel. The focus at Post-Imperial is to evolve an old world technique into a new form of empathic design. This design variant enables the utilisation of domestic and deadstock textiles in a thoughtful process and understanding of the spirit of each fabric while reducing waste. Post Imperial has partnered with the Adire Lounge an NGO certified organisation to help promote and improve the wellness of the Adire Community in Nigeria.

◆ OFFER

Men's RTW

◆ CATEGORY

Tee shirts, pants, shirts, jackets

◆ SOURCING

Africa (Nigeria, Kenya, Morocco)

◆ MADE IN

Morocco and Kenya

◆ DISTRIBUTION

Digital and physical

WEBSITE

www.post-imperial.com



9,1K
FOLLOWERS



2,5K
FOLLOWERS

POST IMPERIAL LOOKBOOK



RICH MNISI

DESIGNER BIO

UPON COMPLETION OF HIS BACHELOR OF ARTS IN FASHION DESIGN & BUSINESS MANAGEMENT FROM THE LISOF SCHOOL OF FASHION & DESIGN IN SOUTH AFRICA, RICH MNISI BEGAN WORKING IN COMMUNICATIONS, SALES, MARKETING AND ART DIRECTION, BEFORE HE FINALLY FOUNDED HIS NAMESAKE BRAND IN 2015.



SOUTH AFRICA



BRAND STORY

RICH MNISI is a South African based contemporary multi-disciplinary brand founded in 2015 by the Essence Best in Black Fashion Awards' Emerging Designer of the Year for 2019, Forbes 30 under 30 Class of 2019 inductee, Rich Mnisi.

Initially, a creative outlet for Mnisi, hoping to unearth Africa's hidden treasures while also being youthful, contemporary, and modern, the brand was born from Mnisi's yearning to connect deeper with his unique culture and heritage and tell a compelling story through his art – a story of a mysterious past, intriguing present, and reimagined future.

Each RICH MNISI collection and offering presents a distinct point of view, celebrating culture, heritage, and the common human experience. All this packaged in extremist yet minimalist structures which are rooted in innovative design and superior craftsmanship.

The brand is the artistic manifestation of a bold vision – a vision inspired by sources outside of the realm of fashion, including film, music, art, and nature. It is completely immersive while being pointedly measured, traversing almost seamlessly between the known and unknown, constantly seeking to evolve.

At RICH MNISI, the possibilities are indeed limitless as the brand continues to innovate and pioneer in its quest for full artistic expression.

◆ OFFER

Womens and Mens RTW

◆ CATEGORY

Tee shirts, pants, shirts, jackets dresses, tops

◆ SOURCING

Africa (South Africa)

◆ MADE IN

Africa (South Africa)

◆ DISTRIBUTION

Digital

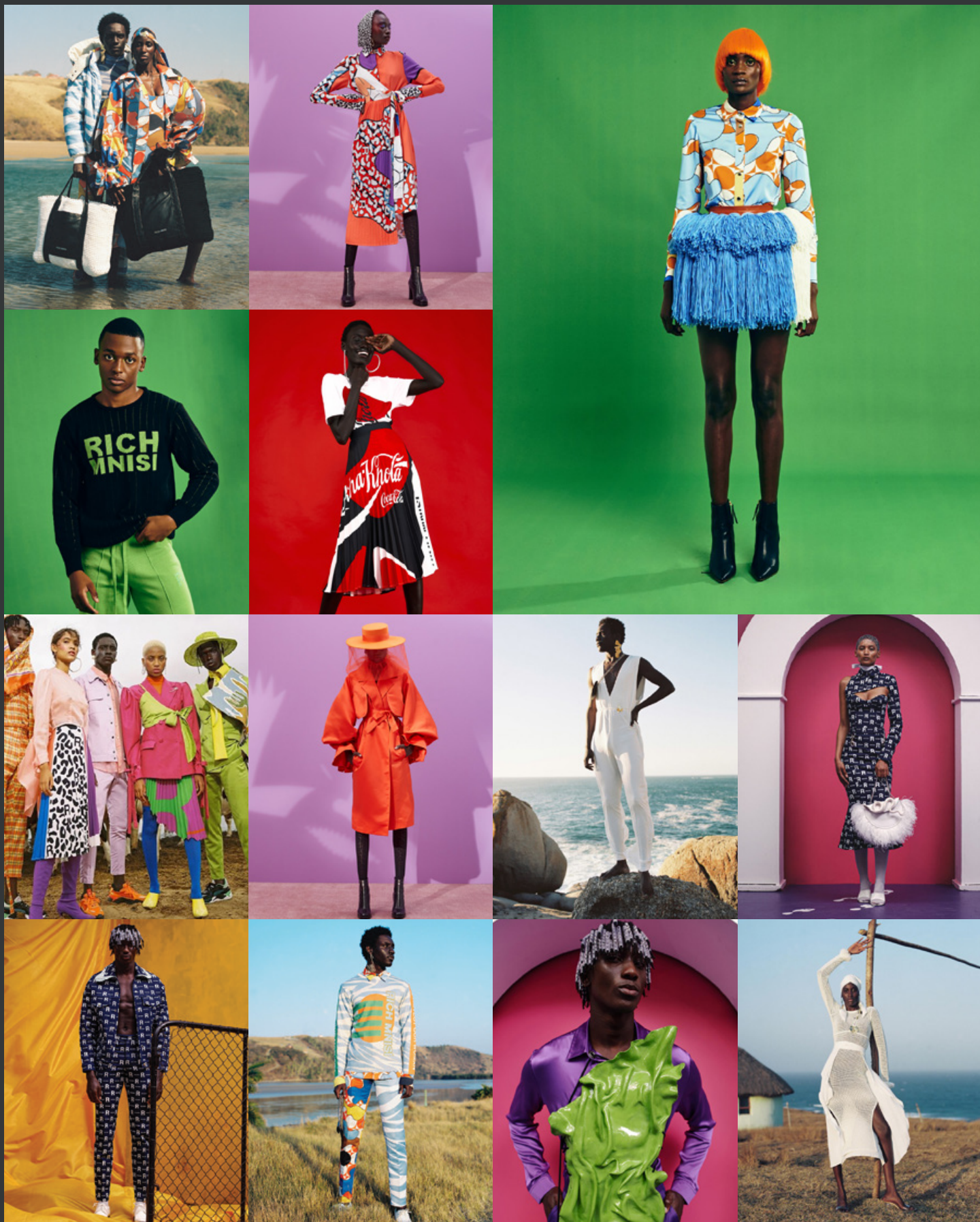
WEBSITE

www.richmnisi.com



133K
FOLLOWERS

RICH MNISI LOOKBOOK



SHEKUDO



NIGERIA

DESIGNER BIO

AKUDO IHEAKANWA IS THE CREATIVE DIRECTOR AND CO-FOUNDER OF SHEKUDO.

Born in Australia to a Nigeria father and Australian mother, Akudo relocated to Lagos in 2017 to contribute to the footwear manufacturing sector. Shekudo was officially launched in 2018.



BRAND STORY

Shekudo, founded in Sydney, Australia, began as a women's clothing brand - drawing on heritage, life experiences and a wearable art aesthetic.

Now under the sole creative direction of Akudo Iheakanwa, the brand relaunched into footwear and accessories moving its base across the Indian Ocean to commence production in Lagos, Nigeria.

With this move, the brand hoped to shed more light on the local artisan and craftsmanship scene whilst integrating some of the age old techniques and overlooked local resources into its own contemporary aesthetic.

Shekudo has gone from a team of 4 to 14 artisans and master craftsmen in just over a year. The brand works hard to make sure that the majority of its raw materials can be found or produced locally (such as its shoe heels, recycled insoles as well as the upper and lining fabric for the shoes).

The brand currently includes local leather and traditional Aso Oke/ Akwete cloth for its shoe uppers, local cotton for the dust bags, as well as wood, brass and silver for the earrings.

◆ OFFER

Women's Accessories

◆ CATEGORY

Flats, Heels, Jewelry, Bags

◆ SOURCING

Africa (Nigeria)

◆ MADE IN

Africa (Nigeria)

◆ DISTRIBUTION

Digital and physical

WEBSITE

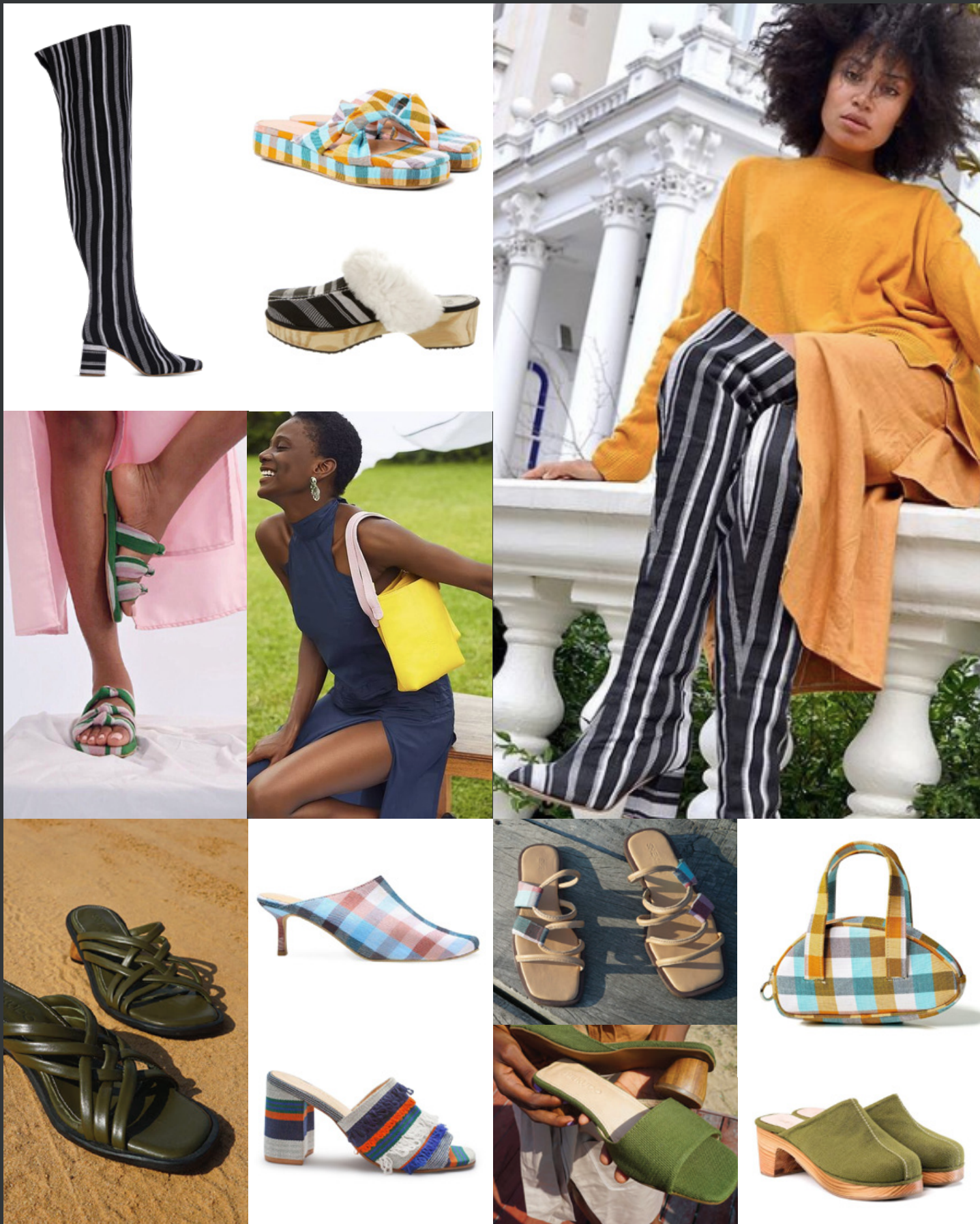
www.shekudo.com



8,6K

FOLLOWERS

SHEKUDO LOOKBOOK





THIS IS US

DESIGNER BIO

OROMA COOKEY GAM IS A FASHION AND RETAIL EXPERT, CREATIVE DIRECTOR, AND DESIGNER WITH A TRACK RECORD OF BUILDING SUCCESSFUL CREATIVE ENTERPRISES AND LUXURY RETAIL EXPERIENCES.



NIGERIA

She is co-founder and creative director of This is us Nigeria limited, a design and manufacturing company that uses home-grown materials to deliver fashion and lifestyle products. Following stints as Retail manager of Africa's leading luxury retail destination, ALÁRA, and the Ermenegildo Zegna flagship store in Lagos, Oroma founded creative business consultancy, OCG Consulting to help fashion and lifestyle retailers in emerging economies build productive value chains.

Osione Iteboje is public policy consultant, communications expert, creative director and artist with a track record of designing solutions to corporate communications challenges for multinationals and leading public sector organisations. Osione is founder and has been chief designer of Lagos-based communications design studio, lightdesignlagos.com since March 2014. He is also co-founder of This is us Nigeria Limited, a design and manufacturing company that uses home-grown materials to deliver fashion and lifestyle products. Osione's professional career includes stints at Time Warner Cable in Texas, Morgan Stanley Capital Index in New York, Reboot.org in New York, as a manager for the World Bank's Niger Delta Social Accountability Programme.

BRAND STORY

THIS IS US™ was founded with one simple desire, to show that Nigerian design can be of a really high quality that everyone in Nigeria and abroad can be proud of. The brand is designed based on the context around them, seeking always to use local materials, talents and processes to create cool and functional design objects.

The journey started with Funtua cotton, with the founders being really curious about Nigerian fabric that was indigenous and synonymous with Nigeria but also that could be sustainably and professionally made locally. The result is the most beautiful indigo dyed fabric that's woven in Funtua, Katsina, and hand dyed in Kano at the centuries old Kofar Mata Dye pits.

◆ OFFER

Womens and Mens RTW

◆ CATEGORY

Tee shirts, pants, shirts, jackets dresses, tops

◆ SOURCING

Africa (Nigeria)

◆ MADE IN

Africa (Nigeria)

◆ DISTRIBUTION

Digital

WEBSITE

www.thisisus.ng



4,6K

FOLLOWERS

THIS IS US LOOKBOOK





FRANCE - BURKINA FASO

BRAND STORY

Umòja, means “unity” in Swahili, is an approach that combines artisanal expertise and textile innovation in an attempt to provide green alternatives in a very opaque textile industry. To look for solutions and bridge the gap between the different skills and expertise.



The Umòja adventure began in 2017. At the time, Dieuveil was a student at the University of Brest and Lancine an insurance executive in Paris. In search of meaning and solutions to their consumption patterns, they were already aware, with great concern, that they were very (too much) influenced by the codes of industrial overproduction with actors left on the sidelines.

With this in mind, they decided to leave everything behind to embark on an adventure in an environment that they, two former university students, did not master. *“When we left our professional lives, we had no idea of the great financial and social sacrifices involved in this new adventure.”* This was all the more striking for Lancine, who was giving up a career and a comfortable salary for a project that might not see the light of day. *“Naively, we set ourselves the mission of experimenting with an alternative economic model that would allow all the actors in the production chain to be paid a fair price, while respecting the ecological and social issues of our time.”*

The objective was clear: to ensure a production that respects their environment (ecological, economic, human) in every way.

◆ OFFER

Unisex sneakers

◆ CATEGORY

Shoes

◆ MADE IN

Burkina Faso (cotton),
France (linen and hemp)
and Vietman (hevea milk)

◆ DISTRIBUTION

Digital and physical

WEBSITE

www.umoja-shoes.com



8.3K
FOLLOWERS



8.7K
FOLLOWERS

UMOJA LOOKBOOK



OUR ORIGINS

BIRIMIAN IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCES OF GOLD AND DIAMONDS IN AFRICA

Birimian's origins stem from a paradox: while more than 50% of diamonds and gold sold internationally come from Africa, most of the value is captured outside the continent reflecting how little local communities benefit from their contribution.

Like in the extractive industries, Africa is rich in talent, ingenuity, and creativity. African designers and creatives are another form of rough diamonds who with the aid of financial, strategic and operational support will propel internationally and shine globally.



OUR MISSION

To transform our continent's creatives into powerful entrepreneurs, sustainable enterprises and brands generating long-term value for the continent.

OUR VISION: BECOMING THE REFERENCE INSTITUTIONAL PARTNER DEDICATED TO AFRICAN CREATIVES AND DESIGNERS

Our unique selling proposition is our ability to connect talented African designers taking their roots and inspiration from the continent with key strategic stakeholders in the global fashion and creative scene.

We have built a support network of experts with significant track records in sustainable value creation working with independent labels and international brands.

Through our rich and unique network, our brands will benefit from long-term opportunities for expansion (collaboration, distribution, exposure, access to key industry events etc.)

Birimian aims to accelerate the emergence of African inspired designers on the international scene by positioning itself as their key strategic partner in 4 segments:



FASHION & APPAREL



ACCESSORIES



BEAUTY & COSMETICS



GOURMET

BIRIMIAN'S AMBITION IS TO SUPPORT BRANDS WITH A SIGNIFICANT UPSIDE POTENTIAL THROUGH THREE LEVELS:

1

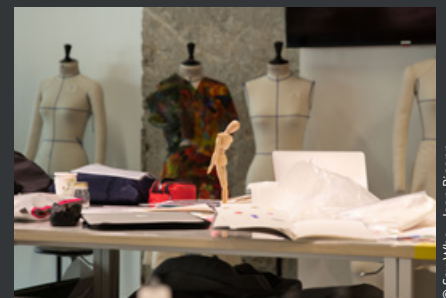
DEVELOPMENT

Strategic and operational support of brands wishing to rely on an institutional partner, not necessarily an investor, to sustain its regional and international growth.

2

TRAINING, COACHING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

complementary to our development and investment activities, training programs designed for our brands in collaboration with Institut Français de la Mode, our key strategic partner.



© Say Who - Jean Picerni

3

INVESTMENT

Incubation, acceleration, capital growth in heritage brands.

INSTITUT FRANÇAIS DE LA MODE

Institut Français de la Mode is a higher education institution, a training center for apprentices, a provider of executive education, as well as a center of expertise for the textiles, fashion and luxury industries.

It offers 16 educational programs at vocational, Bachelor, Master, Executive MBA and doctorate levels, which prepare students for all the professions in the fashion industry in the fields of management, design and craftsmanship.

Based in the heart of Paris on a new 9,000 m² campus, Institut Français de la Mode welcomes

more than 1,000 students of some fifty nationalities - managers, designers, technicians, entrepreneurs - encouraging meetings, collaborations and cultural effervescence.

Institut Français de la Mode is a member of HESAM Université, of the Conférence des Grandes Ecoles and of the International Foundation of Fashion Technology Institutes (IFFTI). It is supported by the French Ministry of Economy. It is recognized by the French Ministry of Higher Education.

www.ifmparis.fr/en



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AESTHETICISM - TRADITION - HERITAGE - EXCELLENCE - CREATIVITY

ATHEEC AS OUR ETHOS



Laureen Kouassi-Olsson
Founder & CEO



Céline Gainsburg-Rey
Head of Strategy & Marketing



Olufunke A. Faweya
Head of Brand Operations



Zara Odu
Brand Lead - Sourcing,
Development & Elevation



Laura Baude
Brand Lead - Sourcing,
Digital Edge & Distribution



Magali Amany
Investment Analyst



B I R I M I A N