



# IMO NSE IMEH

Visual Artist | Art Historian

[WWW.IMOIMEH.COM](http://WWW.IMOIMEH.COM)

## PERSONAL PROFILE

I am a Nigerian-American visual artist and scholar of African Diaspora Art. I leverage my practice of visual art and research in art history to investigate historical and philosophical issues around the black body and cultural identity.

## ART IN NOTABLE COLLECTIONS

### **Petrucchi Family Foundation Collection of African American Art**

Work Acquired: "Feeding the Veins of the Earth (Grounded Angel)," 2020

### **University Museum of Contemporary Art**

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Works Acquired: "Breathe," 2020, "Butterfly Girl" (Artist Reproduction), 2017

### **Danny Simmons Collection of Art**

Work Acquired: "Wisdom Becoming" Diptych, 2019

## CONTACT DETAILS

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## EDUCATION

### **Yale University**

Doctor of Philosophy, Art History; May 2009

Master of Arts, Art History; May 2005

### **Columbia University**

Bachelor of Arts, Art History; May 2002

## EMPLOYMENT

### **Westfield State University**

Associate Professor of Art & Art History

September 2009 - Present

## RECENT FEATURES/INTERVIEWS

Recent features with Dr. Imeh about his current studio projects "in his name" and "BENEDICTION," his inspiration, and art process.

### **Connecting Point - New England Public Media**

"With 'in his name' Artist Reflects on the 2021 Insurrection"

Link: <https://connectingpoint.nepm.org/in-his-name-artist-imoimehs-reflection-on-the-2021-insurrection-debuts/>

### **Orion Magazine (Video Feature), January 2021**

Link: <https://orionmagazine.org/2021/02/video-dr-imo-nse-imeh-artist-in-motion/>

### **PBS News Hour: Art Canvas**

"This Painter's Work-in-progress Resonated after George Floyd's Death," by Ross Lippman, New England Public Media | Link:

<https://artscanvas.org/arts-culture/this-painters-work-in-progress-resonated-after-george-floyds-death>

## RECENT GRANT AWARDS

### **ValleyCreates Artists: Project Evolution Grant (2022)**

Funded Project: BENEDICTION/in his name

(Source: MASS MoCA, The Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts' Valley Creates Program)

### **Holyoke Cultural Council Grant (2022)**

Funded Project: in his name

(Source: MassCultural Council)

### **Springfield Cultural Council Grant (2021)**

Funded Project: BENEDICTION

(Source: MassCultural Council)

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

### **Visible Man: Art and Black Male Subjectivity**

Fine Arts Center Galleries, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, September – November 2021,  
Curator: Dr. Micheal D. Harris

### **Another American's Autobiography: Selected Works from the Petrucci Family Foundation Collection of African American Art**

Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society's Sigal Museum, November 19, 2021 – July 2022

### **Clarion Call: Poems and Paintings by Danny Simmons; Angels of 17 Years Boy by Imo Nse Imeh**

Mariposa Museum, Oaks Bluff, MA, May – October 2021

### **We Are For Freedoms**

University Museum of Contemporary Art, Umass Amherst, Amherst, MA, March - October 2021

### **Noir, Noir: Meditations on African Cinema and its Influence on Visual Art**

Prizm Art Fair, November – December 2020

### **Breaching the Margins**

Urban Institute for Contemporary Art, Grand rapids, MI, May–August 2019

### **I Dreamed My People Were Calling But I Couldn't Find My Way Home**

Rush Arts Gallery, NYC (Chelsea). Curated by Danny Simmons, November 2012 – January 2013

## SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

(Forthcoming)

### **The Hope of Radiance**

Donor's Lounge, August Wilson African American Cultural Center (AWAACC), Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, October 2022–  
April 2023

### **and i'll be there with you**

Pulp Gallery, Holyoke Massachusetts, January 15–February 6, 2022

### **Ten Little Nigger Girls**

Rush Arts Gallery, Philadelphia, PA, January–February 2020

### **Suicide Girl and Her Nine Sisters**

Western New England University Art Gallery, Springfield, MA, February 2019

### **17 Years Boy: Epilogue**

Readywipe Gallery, Holyoke, MA, January–March 2019

### **17 Years Boy: Images, Sounds, and Words Inspired by the Life and Death of a Young Black Boy**

Time-based Live Painting and Multimedia Installation, Catherine Dower Center for the Performing and Fine Arts,  
Westfield State University, Westfield, MA, January 2018

### **Forgotten Girls: Black Heroines on the Edge of Darkness and Hope**

Von Auersperg Gallery, Deerfield, MA, January–February 2018

### **Ten Little Nigger Girls**

Arno Maris Gallery, Westfield State University, Westfield, MA, February 2016

### **Ten Little Nigger Girls: Works-In-Progress Exhibition**

Art For The Soul Gallery, Springfield, MA, November–January 2016

## NOTABLE PROJECTS

### **BENEDICTION**

My current studio project, **BENEDICTION**, tells the story of a group of angels that have been cast down to earth, and bound to the skins of black boys and men. Their task is to serve as witnesses to the traumas and triumphs that they experience while in this guise. I consider this series as my personal response to the global pandemic, and the many horrific realities of black existence that the darkness of this plague has elucidated for the entire world to witness.

### **17 Years Boy: Images, Sounds, and Words Inspired by the Life and Death of a Young Black Boy**

This project is an ephemeral portrait painting, and time-based, multimedia installation that is inspired by the life and untimely death of Trayvon Martin. The project speaks to the issue of Black boy subjugation in the United States, but also to the question of the black male spectacle in the public space.

### **Ten Little Nigger Girls**

This series of large-scale drawings is a retelling of the 1907 children's book and nursery rhyme, *Ten Little Nigger Girls*, by Nora Case, which features a cast of ten black girls who are eliminated from the story one-by-one, sometimes in horrific ways (for example, one is burned alive, another is eaten by a bear). My project features contemporary black girls in various states of danger, to examine the language, history, and realities of race in America, and the unsettling ways in which black children specifically have been imagined in the American social economy over the past century.

### **5 Takes on African Art/ 42 Flags of Fred Wilson**

University Museum of Contemporary Art

Guest Curator, Curatorial Advisor

As a visiting curator and advisor for this exhibition, I worked with graduate students and the director of the UMCA to imagine and organize this remarkable exhibition of the Charles Derby Collection of African Art, and Fred Wilson's 42 Flags series of paintings. I also served as "Editor-In-Chief" of wall labels, text panels, and exhibition brochure entries.

## PUBLICATIONS

"Feeding the Veins of the Earth," Essay contribution for *Shifting Time: African American Artists 2020-2021*, The Petrucci Family Foundation Collection of African American Art, ed. Klare Scarborough and Berrisford Boothe, forthcoming 2022

"The Hope of Radiance," Exhibition Catalogue Essay for *Another American's Autobiography: Selected Works from the Petrucci Family Foundation Collection of African American Art*, at the Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society's Sigal Museum, ed. Claudia Volpe, 2021

*Daughters of Seclusion: The Revelation of the Ibibio "Fattened Bride" as the Icon of Beauty and Power* (Peter Lang Publishing, 2012)

"Hip Sistas in Flux: Globetrotting Maidens, Black Diaspora Shifts, and the Visual-Lingual Braid in Victor Ekpuk's 'Mbobo Series'" in *African Graphics, Signs and Cultures: The World of Victor Ekpuk*, ed. Falola, Toyin (2018)

"The Dynamics of Cultural and Aesthetic Expansion in Cross River Networks," A Review for *Purchasing Culture: the Dissemination of Associations in the Cross River Region of Cameroon and Nigeria*, by Ute Röschenthaler (Africa World Press, 2011), in *African Arts*, Volume 49, Issue 1, Spring 2016

## ADDITIONAL RECOGNITION, PRESS, ARTICLES

### **The Greenfield Recorder**

Jan 28, 2022. Feature Article: "An Artist Responds to Insurrection," by Allen Woods | Link: <https://www.recorder.com/Col-woods-ImehExhibit-44689525>

### **New England Public Media**

June 1, 2020. Requested Commentary: "Rioters Need Our Prayers and Activism—Not Our Criticism," written and delivered by Imo Imeh | Link: <https://www.nepm.org/post/rioters-need-our-prayers-and-activism-not-our-criticism#stream/0>

### **Black Art in America**

Jan. 22, 2020. Feature Article: "A Voice for the Voiceless: The Artwork of Imo Nse Imeh," by Gina Beavers | Link: <https://www.blackartinamerica.com/index.php/2020/01/22/a-voice-for-the-voiceless-the-artwork-of-imo-nse-imeh-2/>

### **New England Public Media (NEPM)**

Feb. 12, 2018. Feature Story about 17 Years Boy: "Public Painting of Trayvon Martin Sparks Conversations about Racism on Campus," by Jill Kaufman. | Link: <https://www.nepm.org/post/public-painting-trayvon-martin-sparks-conversations-about-racism-campus#stream/0>

### **AISLIN Magazine (Cover Story, Cover Image)**

Spring 2019, Issue 005, The Color Issue

Cover Story: "Dr. Imo Nse Imeh: Exploring the Invisibility of Black Children Through Art"

Cover Image: Ovation, 2018 | Link: <https://www.aislinmagazine.com/imo-imeh>

### **Valley Advocate**

Feb. 6, 2018. "Forgotten Girls: Lives in Peril," by Gina Beavers. Review of Imo Imeh's solo exhibition Forgotten Girls: Black Heroines on the Edge of Darkness and Hope | Link: <https://valleyadvocate.com/2018/01/23/forgotten-girls-lives-peril/>

## SELECTED TALKS

Artist Talk, "In Conversation: Imo Nse Imeh." Part of programming around the exhibition "Another American's Autobiography: Selections from the Petrucci Family Foundation Collection of African American Art," Northampton County Historical & Genealogical Society, Sigal Museum, Easton, PA., April 2022

Artist Talk & Musical Performance, "in his name: An Artist Talk on New Work by Dr. Imo Nse Imeh." Springfield Museums, Springfield, MA, April 2022

Panelist, "BIPOC Artists: A Conversation on Advocacy and Equity in the Arts and Culture," part of series Community Conversations at Westfield State University. Panel includes: Dr. Imo Nse Imeh (Art), Dr. Felicia Barber (Music), Jose Rivera (Theatre), and Rosemary Tracy Woods (Arts Advocate), March 2022

Conference Speaker, 2022 National Conference of Black Political Scientists. Theme: "Visions of Black Futures at a Crossroads," Virtual Studio Talk: BENEDICTION/in his name: Locating Ourselves in America's Stories, Revised and Untold," March 2022

Conference Speaker, 2021 Virtual Summit on Racism. Theme: "Reigniting Racial Equity in Our Community," Organized by Society for History and Racial Equity, Kalamazoo, MI. Virtual Studio Talk: "BENEDICTION/in his name," November 2021

## SELECTED TALKS CONTINUED

Alumni Research Forum, History of Art, Yale University

Talk: "Benediction: a Studio Talk with Dr. Imo Nse Imeh," March 2021

Guest Speaker, Men of Excellence Club, Springfield College

Talk: "Dr. Imo Nse Imeh's Current Studio Projects and the Importance of Finding Your Voice," April 2021

Guest Speaker, Social Justice Scholars Talk, Loyola University-New Orleans (Guest Speaker)

Talk: "Benediction: a Studio Talk with Dr. Imo Nse Imeh," April 2021

Opening Address, 100 Males to College Annual Retreat, Springfield Public Schools

Talk: (Virtual Art Tour & Message) "Find Your Voice, Leave Your Mark," April 2021

Conference Speaker and Artist, 2021 State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit. Organized by UConn Health Disparities Institute (HDI).

"17 Years Boy: Images, Sounds, and Words Inspired by the Life and Death of a Young Black Boy," Campus Scholarship Showcase Talk, Westfield State University, 2018

"Ten Little Nigger Girls, New Works by Imo Nse Imeh," Brown University, 2017

"Igbo Maiden Spirit Masks: Considering Agbogho Mmuo and the persistence of the 'Maiden Spirit' in Southern Nigeria," Art Institute of Chicago, 2014

"Mechanisms in Uyai: Rewriting Her Body with Accoutrements of Beauty and Power," Panel: The Arts of Africa, Recent Issues and Trends, CAA 2010, 98th Annual Conference, Chicago, 2010