Ochre and Ash

Press release

Laterite

Adaeze Nwosu

17 October 2026 to 13 December 2026. Main gallery, ground floor.
Opened Friday 16 October 2026.

Six new paintings made from the red earth of the Nsukka escarpment, the white clay of Udi and the ash of a kitchen fire.

Stand close to Laterite I and the surface stops being a colour. It becomes grit: particles of iron-rich soil, unevenly milled, caught in a binder that has dried with the faint gloss of a road after rain. Step back to the far wall and it turns again, into a field of rust with a pale horizon pressed into its lower third. Adaeze Nwosu wants you to make that walk, and she has hung the main gallery so you have to.

The six paintings in this exhibition began as earth. Nwosu collected laterite from road cuttings on the old Enugu to Onitsha road, kaolin from the banks of a stream near Udi, and charcoal from the cooking fire in her mother's yard. In the studio she mills each one by hand, sieves it three times and binds it into acrylic medium. The canvases are worked flat on the floor and never stretched until they are finished; the folds and creases of their making stay in the weave.

It would be easy to call these landscapes, and Nwosu does not mind if you do. But the titles say something else. Each painting is named for the place its material came from, which makes every canvas a kind of receipt: proof that a particular hillside gave up a particular weight of itself. Laterite IV (Nsukka road) holds close to forty kilograms of soil. It is, quite literally, a piece of the road.

There is grief in the work too, quietly. Kaolin, in many Igbo households, is the white of blessing and of mourning, rubbed on the face at births and at burials. In Kaolin field (Udi) Nwosu lays it over charcoal in thin, patient coats until the black shows through only at the edges, like a memory you have decided to keep.

Notes to editors

Ochre and Ash, 7 Alexander Avenue, Ikoyi, Lagos. Open Tuesday to Sunday, free entry.
Press images and interviews: press@ochreandash.ng, +234 908 555 0142.
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