

Emeka Ogboh

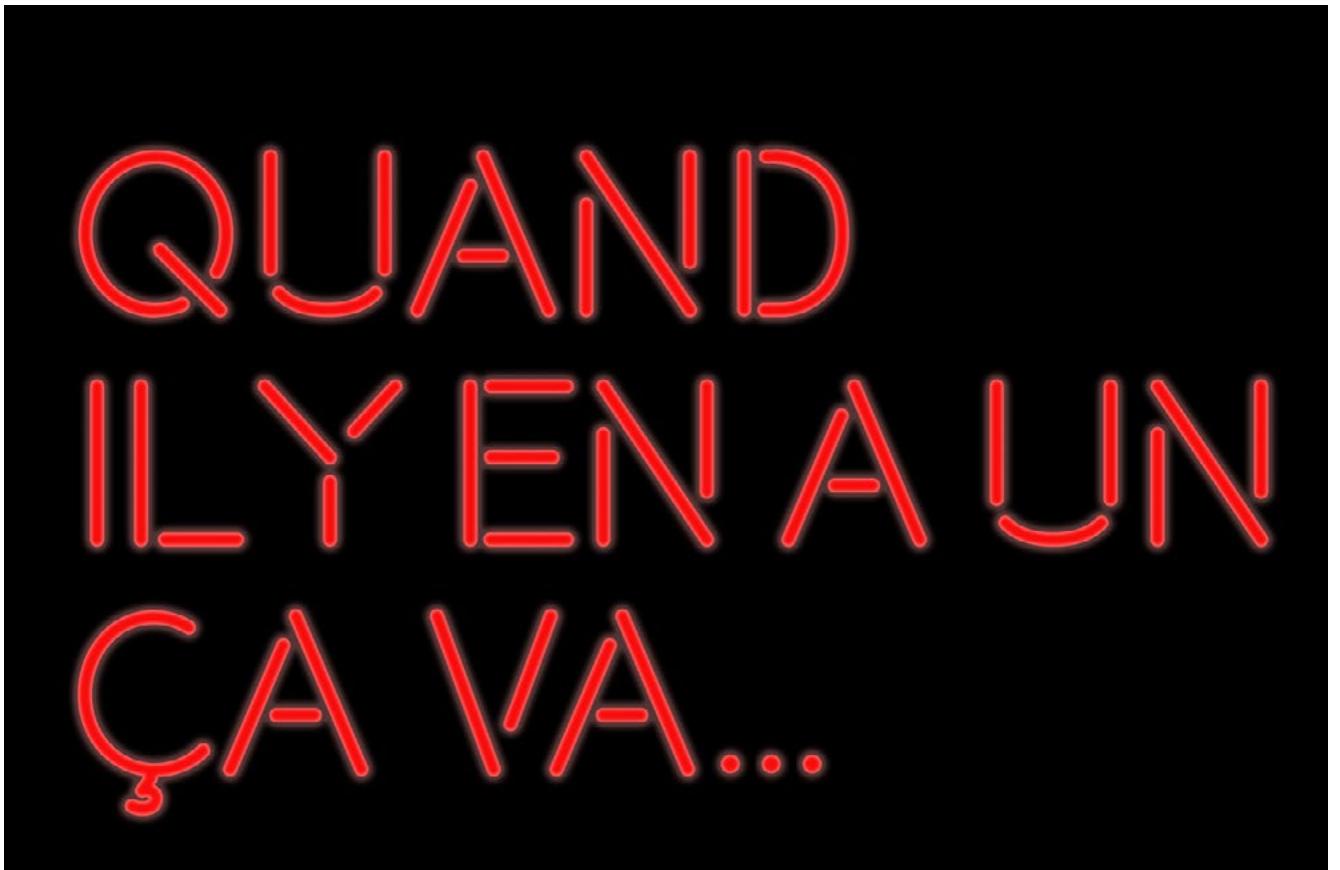
Quand il y en a un, ça va...

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41 rue Mazarine, Paris 6^e

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Imane Farès Gallery is pleased to present *Quand il y en a un, ça va...* the second solo exhibition of Emeka Ogboh.

Born in 1977 in Enugu, Nigeria, Emeka Ogboh lives and works between Berlin and Lagos, where he explores the impact of sound and the different senses on the experience of the world around us and uses his work to address current issues such as immigration, globalization, and post-colonialism.

The starting point of this exhibition is a long-term craft beer project called *Sufferhead Original* inspired by food tastes and the experiences of Africans living in Europe. Through creating a new beer recipe and its associated brand image, the artist questions certain preconceived ideas and a priori assumptions about immigration and integration policies that are generally associated with the destinies of expatriates in Europe.

A publication including a text by curator N’Goné Fall accompanies the exhibition.

Sufferhead is an unusual creation that disrupts established codes: in Germany, the beer production process is strictly regulated so as to ensure its purity and the *Reinheitsgebot* (the Law on the purity of beer) that came into force in 1516 in Bavaria and was extended to the whole country in 1906 is still applicable. By subverting the list of authorized ingredients, Emeka Ogboh questions, tongue-in-cheek, part of Germany's heritage and, through a century-old recipe, the idea of the purity of a culture.

(...) In 2019, Emeka Ogboh created a Parisian edition of the beer, as well as a series of group portraits. With a soundtrack added in 2022, the ensemble titled *Quand il y en a un, ça va...* quotes a declaration from Brice Hortefeux, French Minister of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-development in President Nicolas Sarkozy's government (2007-2009). For Paris, *Sufferhead* includes touches of chocolate, coffee and macaroon in reference to France's worldwide reputation in pâtisserie (oh la la!). This pastry-style stout beer has a bitter/sweet taste that reflects the complicated status of French citizens of African descent and the feeling of rejection and exclusion they too often experience.

The images, part fashion photography and part advertising posters, are all taken in front of Parisian monuments that are emblematic of the relationship between France and its old colonies in the Caribbean and Africa. (...) Young black people are portrayed, full of self-confidence and with defiance in their eyes, in those sites whose past remains largely unknown. They wear t-shirts that feature some of the bellicose declarations of French politicians, such as *Quand il y en a un, ça va...* ("as long as there's only one, it's OK"), *L'Afrique débarque* ("Africa is disembarking"), *Ruée sauvage* ("wild rush"). A soundtrack featuring electronic music and excerpts from French politicians' speeches about immigration and from African leaders on the relationship between France and Africa completes the project.

(...) *Quand il y en a un, ça va...* questions the situation of minorities in France and a colonial past that has not yet been properly discussed. With this multimedia installation, Emeka Ogboh sheds light on the backyard of a country that is obsessed by its own reflection and, despite the rhetoric, struggles to embrace cultural diversity.

—N'Goné Fall, excerpt from the exhibition's publication



Photo © Michael Danner

Emeka Ogboh connects to places with his senses of hearing and taste. Through his audio installations and gastronomic works, he explores how private, public, collective memories and histories are translated, transformed, and encoded into sound and food. These works contemplate how sound and food capture existential relationships, frame our understanding of the world, and provide a context in which to ask critical questions on immigration, globalization, and post-colonialism.

Recent exhibitions and public installations include *Der Kosmos – Things Fall Apart* (Humboldt Forum, Berlin, 2021), *Song of the Union* (Edinburgh Art Festival, 2021), *Stirring the Pot* (Friche La Belle de Mai, Marseille, 2020), *Àmà, the Gathering Place* (Cleveland Museum of Art, 2019), *The Song of the Germans* (The Power Plant, Toronto, 2018), *If Found Please Return to Lagos* (Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, 2017), and *Market Symphony* (Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington DC, 2016). Emeka Ogboh has participated in numerous international exhibitions including the 56th Venice Biennale (2015), documenta 14 in Athens and Kassel (2014), Skulptur Projekte Münster (2017), and Dakar Biennale (2014).

For more information about Emeka Ogboh, please visit: <https://imanefares.com/en/artistes/emeka-ogboh/>

Images available for Press

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Sufferhead Original (Paris Edition) #3 - Palais de la Porte Dorée, 2019.
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag, 100x150cm.
Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès, Paris



Sufferhead Original (Paris Edition) #7 - Au Planteur, 2019
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag,
150x100cm. Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès, Paris



Sufferhead Original (Paris Edition) #2 - Monument à la mission Marchand, 2019.
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag,
150x100cm. Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès, Paris



Sufferhead Original (Paris Edition), 2019. Installation view.
Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès, Paris.
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