

For Immediate Release:

**Rahmon Olugunna: Oshogbo Tradition and Embracing the Orisha**  
**April 29 - May 27, 2011**  
**YEMA GALLERY**  
*Curated by Toni Thomas*

**Yema Gallery** is pleased to present two exhibitions that celebrate the Yoruba people of Nigeria and their traditions with a solo exhibition entitled **Oshogbo Tradition** featuring the work of **Rahmon Olugunna**, a Nigerian contemporary artist and a group exhibition of **Catfish Friday, Women's Art Collective** entitled **Embracing the Orisha**.

About the exhibitions:

**Rahmon Olugunna** is the 2011 recipient of the Indigenous Artist Initiative Award from **ARTETC**, the sponsor of Yema Gallery. The award recognizes an indigenous artist practicing a traditional art form that includes an art exhibition of their work. Rahmon Olugunna was selected based on his original painting style within the tradition of the Oshogbo Art Movement that originated in the town of Oshogbo in Nigeria. The Oshogbo Art Movement came to prominence in the 1950's from the work of artists like Yinka Adeyemi and Rufus Ogudele. The style incorporated elements from Western art fused with Oshogbo culture. The originators of the style taught the painting tradition to younger aspiring artists like Rahmon Olugunna. A student of Rufus Ogundele, Rahmon Olugunna is considered among the second generation of Oshogbo artists. Olugunna's work is of particular interest because of his approach to working with color and composition. He builds up his color using both brush and palette knife to create some interesting textural compositions. Among the works on view are colorful and monochromatic grey compositions. His colors are vibrant and complement his subjects however, both palettes work well within his particular style of painting. The works featured in this exhibit reflect both his love of his Nigerian culture and his respect for the Yoruba tradition.

**Embracing the Orisha** is a continuation of Yema Gallery's recognition of the 2011 UN resolution 64/169 designating this year as the year for people of African descent by paying tribute to the culture and traditions of the Yoruba people. This exhibit features the work of nine Catfish Friday artists using the Orisha, the name for the Yoruba deities, as their subject. Featured artists include **Adrienne Wheeler, Bisa Washington, Geraldine Gaines, Janice Anderson, Jodie Leight, Kathleen Heron, Lynn Presley, Shirley Panton Benjamin and Toni Thomas**. Each artist presents work that reflects their interpretation of the various orisha. Some have chosen to focus on the physical attributes or powers of the orisha. While others have selected to present a conceptual interpretation of what the orisha represents to them. All in all this exhibit will be an enlightening and educational experience as viewers get a glimpse into this ancient and honored spiritual traditional that is embraced and practiced worldwide with some powerful images by some insightful visual practitioners.

**Opening Reception: Friday, April 29 from 6 – 9PM with guest poet Dujuana Sharese at 8PM**

**Yema Gallery** is located at 540B Freeman Street in Orange, New Jersey 07050.

Gallery hours are Wednesday and Friday from 4 – 6PM and Saturday from 12 – 5PM and by appointment.

For more information about this exhibit and the gallery call: 973-699-3269 or email: [info@artsetcnow.org](mailto:info@artsetcnow.org)

**Yema Gallery** and **Catfish Friday, Women's Art Collective** is sponsored by **ARTSETC** a nonprofit arts organization dedicated to bringing art to communities and providing a community for artists. For more information about the organization and its programs visit [www.artsetcnow.org](http://www.artsetcnow.org)