

## Le Miroir Magazine Interview



**Aïda Touré**

Cultural figure of Central Africa in the US

Just like other fellow country men who exhibit their talents abroad, Aïda Touré, a Gabonese Muslim excels in sacred arts in the USA where she lives since 1995. She has granted us this interview.

### **Why did you move to the US?**

I moved to the US to study music, more precisely sound engineering, but through music other arts appealed to me which led me to realize that arts do merge beyond their conventionally imposed divides.

### **What is your professional background?**

My passion for arts allowed me to pursue different endeavors including web design, graphic design. I also collaborate with musicians on music videos scripts. In the painting universe I am self-taught. I have published three collections of Sufi poetry in English in the US and Canada: "*Unmanifest Poems*", "*The Sublime Sphere*" and "*Nocturnal Light*" which eventually inspired me to take up painting. I have exhibited my art work in New York, Soho and Harlem through the African United Congress. Recently I was featured in a textbook published in the US and Canada as a cultural figure of Central Africa.

### **What is your source of inspiration and what is the specificity of your works?**

I am inspired by African culture and by Sufism, the spiritual way of Islam which encourages the quest for and the meeting with The Divine within ourselves. Thus my paintings are the metaphors of my poems or their visual expression.

### **What are the difficulties that you have encountered so far? Do you make a living of your art?**

The difficulties I have encountered are linked to the time the creation of these works demands, I had to learn to be more organized with my activities. Even though these paintings have generated a certain interest for which I thank The Divine, I do want to take the time that is necessary to explore other aspects of my art for, solely love for what we do, patience and hard work can reward.

### **Are you still attached to Gabon in spite of the distance? What are your plans for the future?**

I remain firmly attached to Gabon, my motherland whose perfumes and colors always transpire throughout my creative process. My heart particularly leans toward our children and our youth, thus I am a member of the N.G.O TERRE D'ESPOIR to which I lend my expertise for the different social projects it leads in Gabon. I would also like to organize workshops with other painters for our talented youth who aspires to pursue a career in fine arts.

