

THE BREAST HANDBAG DESIGN

INSPIRATION BEHIND THE BREAST HANDBAG DESIGN

“The Breast Handbag Design” is a sculpture which is created in different edition and variations to represent different racial ethnicities. The Artwork raises awareness in regards to issues affecting women such as Breast Cancer, Breast Ironing Practice, Breast Feeding, Women and Sexuality, Sexualization of Women, Women and body shaming and many more.



THE BREAST IRONING PRACTICE

“Breast ironing” which is the Cameroonian custom of massaging young girl’s chests with hot tools—spatulas and pestles being the most common—in an attempt to flatten their developing breasts. This is done with the intention of postponing their first sexual relationships by making their bodies less attractive to men. Parents often fear that the girls won’t finish their education if they meet a man and become pregnant. For the most part, the flattening is carried out by female family members, either at home or with the assistance of a healer. The process begins as soon as the girls hit puberty—for some, that means as early as eight years old. The consequences of this can be disastrous for the victims’ health—cysts, breast cancer, and breastfeeding issues are all common, not to mention the abundance of psychological consequences linked to the practice.

WOMEN: SEX, SEXUALITIES AND SEXUALIZATION

For women and girls, the right to control their own bodies and their sexuality without any form of discrimination, coercion, or violence is critical for their empowerment. Without sexual rights, they cannot realize their rights to self-determination and autonomy, nor can they control other aspects of their lives. Indeed it is the attempts to control women’s and girls’ sexuality that result in many of the human rights abuses they face on a daily basis, including gender-based violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and limitations on their mobility, dress, education, employment, and participation in public life.

BREAST CANCER

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among U.S. women. Each year, about 30% of all newly diagnosed cancers in women are breast cancer. Approximately 13% (about one in eight) of U.S. women are going to develop invasive breast cancer in the course of their life. There are currently more than four million women with a history of breast cancer in the United States. This includes women currently being treated and women who have finished treatment. In the United States, less than 1% of all breast cancers occur in men.



REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Many women are persecuted for making choices and many more are prevented from making any choices at all. Governments are trying to dictate who we can kiss, who we should love, how we must dress, how we identify ourselves, when we have children, and how many we have. Sexual and reproductive rights mean you should be able to make your own decisions about your body and: get accurate information about these issues, access sexual and reproductive health services including contraception, choose if, when and who to marry, decide if you want to have children and how many. They also mean our lives should be free from all forms of sexual violence, including rape, female genital mutilation, forced pregnancy, forced abortion and forced sterilization

BREAST FEEDING

When breastfeeding in public women are challenged by shared concerns around unwanted attention, coping with an awkward audience and unsuitable environments. Women want to feel comfortable when breastfeeding in a public space. How women respond to situations where they are uncomfortable is counterproductive to what they share would be helpful, namely seeing other mothers breastfeed. Themes reveal issues beyond the control of the individual and highlight how the support required by breastfeeding women is a public health responsibility

WOMEN AND BODY SHAMING

Most women of different shapes and sizes are bullied all over the world. Women should feel comfortable and confident with their bodies shaming a woman (or anyone) for making a decision about her own body, you are, essentially, telling her that her thoughts, emotions, and opinions about herself are invalid or superficial

WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION

Often, women are the subject of gender based discrimination in the workplace. One way of illustrating this is to look at the gender pay gap. Equal pay for the same work is a human right, but time and again women are denied access to a fair and equal wage. Recent figures show that women currently earn roughly 77% of what men earn for the same work. This leads to a lifetime of financial disparity for women, prevents them from fully exercising independence, and means an increased risk of poverty in later life

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment means any unwelcome sexual behaviour. This could be physical conduct and advances, demanding or requesting sexual favours or using inappropriate sexual language. Sexual violence is when someone is physically sexually assaulted. Although men and boys can also be victims of sexual violence, it is women and girls who are overwhelmingly affected.



CHRISTINE KATO BIOGRAPHY

“Christine Zigwai Kato (b. 1994, Kaduna, Nigeria) is a Nigerian Artist, Designer, inventor and a Feminist; she creates innovative Art and Designs, and statement pieces.

She is the Creative Officer of House of Christine Art and Designs. She is mostly known for her invention: The Breast Handbag Design a design which stirred controversies.

Christine earned a B.Sc. in Sociology/Psychology from the University of Abuja, Nigeria; she has no formal training in Art and Design. Her designs are unconventional and highly provocative and tell stories; reflection of the society; garnering attention to people about causes that are otherwise forgotten; a form of one expressing himself; an essential ingredient for empowering hearts of people; as well as therapy to convey memory.