

# Ade Adesina

10 – 27 May 2017

John Martin Gallery



*Tic-Toc*, 2016, linocut  
Edition of 30, 78 x 58 cm, 30¾ x 22¾ ins

I first saw the work of Ade Adesina in the Royal Academy Summer show of 2015. I was exhibiting in the same gallery and working in the identical medium of linocut. I suppose I was checking out the opposition despite the fact I am supposed to be beyond the point of ambition and jealousy. Ade's print "The Question", a prize winner was by far the largest relief block print and also the most striking and thought provoking. I suggested to my A'level students that they should visit the gallery and look at the work of this young Nigerian artist. It was no surprise that several of the young men returned to the Drawing Schools determined to write their A level dissertation about relief printmaking with particular reference to the work of Ade Adesina.

At Eton College we run an artist in residence scheme and it seemed logical that if an artist connects with your students it can only be prudent to recruit that inspirational individual. I established contact with Ade and he seemed to very much like the idea of the residency. It transpired that at that time Ade was working at Asda stacking shelves at nights so that he could afford a studio and continue with his artistic practice. Ade's time at Eton was a huge success and it benefitted both staff and students in terms of technique and on a very individual approach to creating an image with relief printmaking.

The first thing to say about Ade's working process is that he is obsessive and will work for twelve hour sessions only breaking for brief food breaks. The other most obvious trait is that he is the epitome of the artist who does not have a definite outcome. In the approximate words of Picasso if you know what a picture looks like at the beginning, what's the point of painting/printing it. Ade has an initial idea and then lets it develop organically, one image dictating the next step in the composition. The imagery often references his African roots with the regular appearance of the baobab tree. Ade grew up on a farm in Nigeria and this could be the reason why he is so aware of the environment and ecological issues that are a major theme in his prints. He could have lived in London but prefers Aberdeen, the city where he studied, and he ultimately would like to live on Harris in the Hebrides where in his own words "you can smell the peace". During his time at Eton David Mach RA and June Cary RSA visited the Drawing Schools as both are collaborating with Ade on future projects which I feel is an indication from quality artists about Ade's future prospects and potential. In my mind Ade Adesina is a very exciting young artist who is extremely open to new ideas and techniques. In this time when we are bombarded with digital imagery it is so refreshing to see prints that show a high degree of craft and technical skill. Most impressive to me is the total disregard of art style or art fashion and a truly independent voice and vision. Whales, trees and solar panels coexist with humming birds, architecture and antique gramophones in Ade's surreal mental landscape.

Ian Burke, Drawing Master, Eton College



*The Questions* 2015, linocut  
Edition of 30, 110 x 180 cm, 43¼ x 70¾ ins



*Wild Awake* 2016, linocut  
Edition of 30, 110 x 160 cm, 43¼ x 63 ins

To say there is a lot to Ade Adesina's prints would be an understatement.

There's so much in the way of detail, so much history, geography, engineering and architecture, so much of the natural world and all this existing together at the same time and in the same space in fantastic yet readable and believable vistas. You feel they could be packed in some sort of rocket and shot into space by some earthly authority in the hope they'll be found by an alien race light years away, read and viewed as if they were explanations of this planet with its conglomeration of cultures. I've no doubt that alien civilization would revere Ade's work the way we revere the Bayeux tapestry or the Dead sea scrolls or a slab of Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Ade's prints have that kind of authority.

They are epic, they contain evidence of life and they've been carried out with great skill. An alien race looking at these works for the first time would consider they were made by a Master. All of this relies on the skills of the printer of course and Ade's skills as a printmaker are phenomenal, I don't know anyone else who uses needles to cut lino. He takes this method of printing to a new level. His attention to detail allows him to mix baobab trees with skyscrapers, flying whales with light houses, helicopter landing pads with desert landscapes and a plethora of other images all in a workable perspective and in an atmosphere and an air that seems to work fluidly like a liquid throughout each print. This is not an easy thing to achieve in a lino cut and is testament again to the artist's skills and makes Ade's draughtsmanship and command of perspective considerable and the light that plays through each of his prints something many a painter should be jealous of.

Always good fun to make a painter jealous.

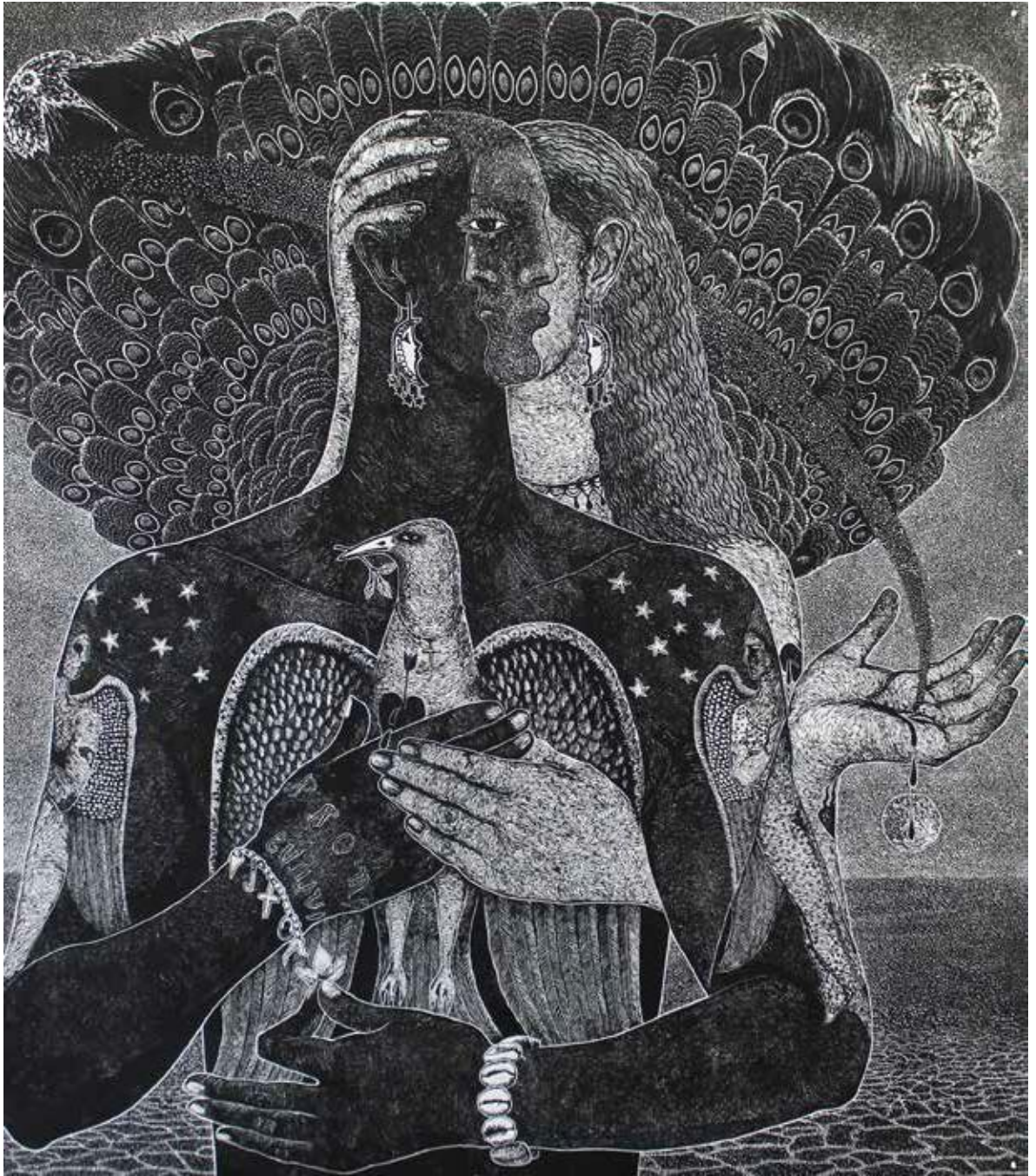
Ade and I are about to embark on a collaboration, something that for me has never been easy, if I'm truthful practically a non-existent activity. Our separate works cross over each other so much however and I know from our discussions that we already have so many joint ideas, a pool of ideas in fact using each of our familiar terrains that will take both of us into new uncharted territory to produce a set of prints combining our imagery, imagination, skills and ambition. To say I am excited about that would be the second understatement in this essay.

I'm going to learn a lot from this young artist.

David Mach RA



*Ade Adesina working with David Mach on  
Sign of Life (work in progress), linocut. 2017.  
Edition of 50, 110 x 180 cm, 43¼ x 70¾ ins*



*An Offer of Love*, 2016, linocut  
Ade Adesina and June Carey  
Edition of 40, 87 x 78 cm, 34<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 30<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> ins

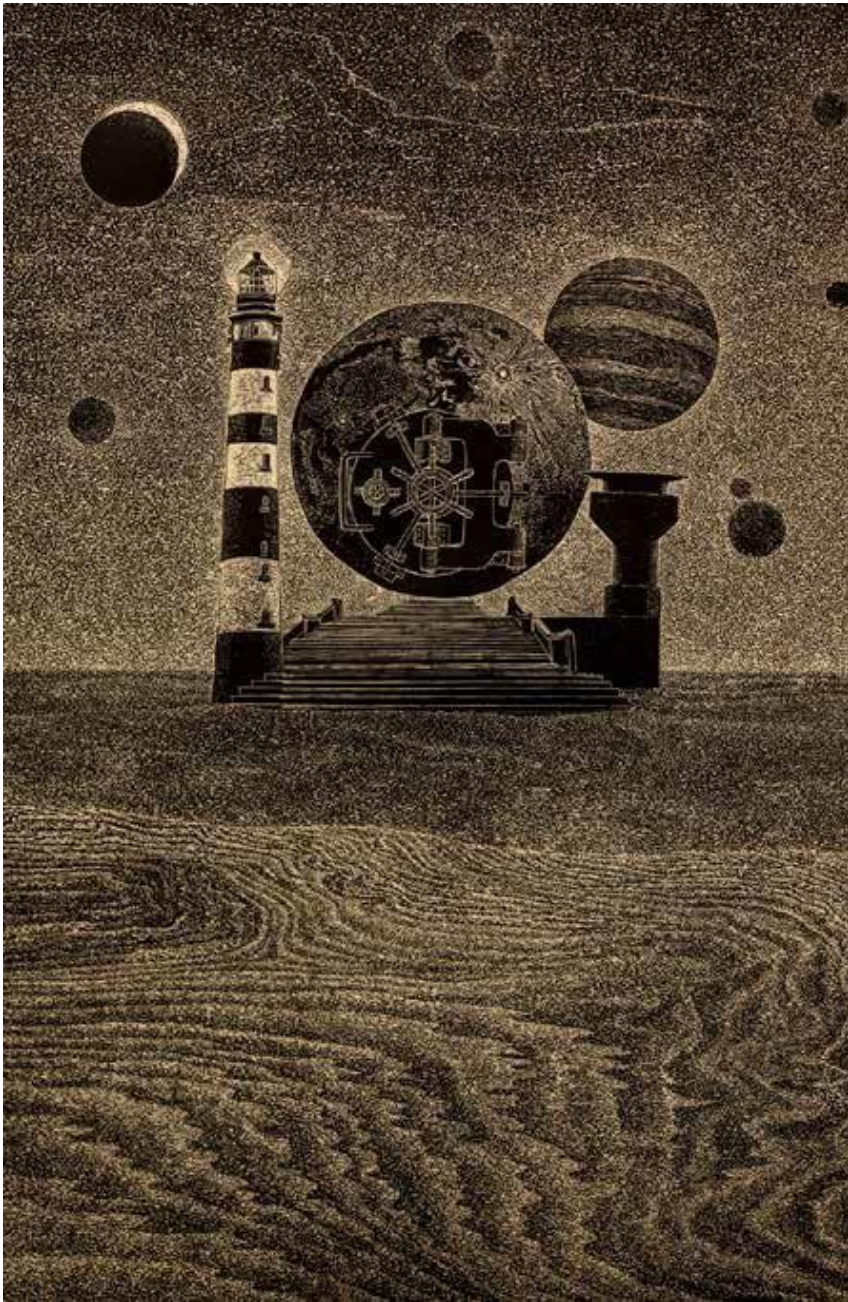




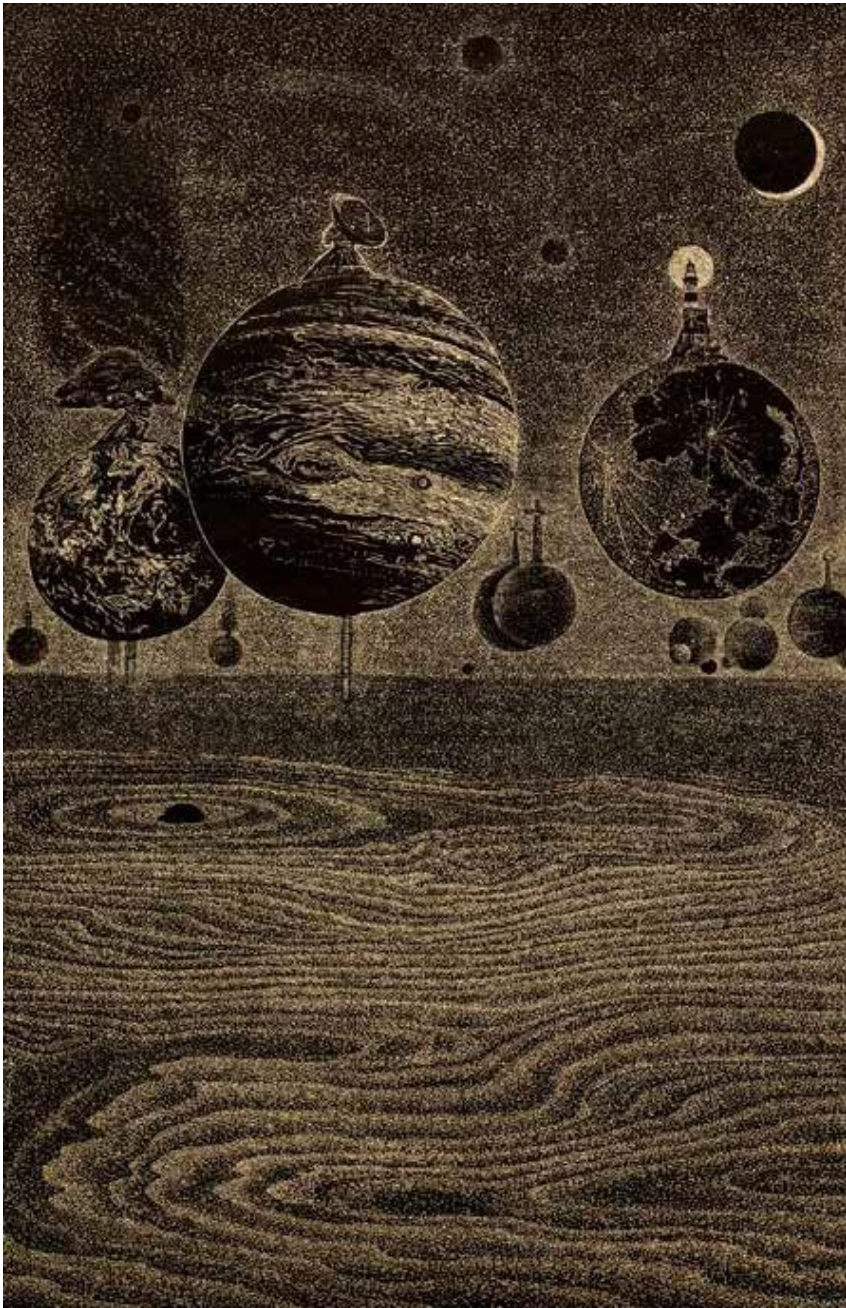
*Ade Adesina and Tomasz Wrobel*  
*Grotto 1 and 2, 2017, linocut*  
Edition of 30, 84 x 104 cm, 33 x 41ins



*Gravity*, 2016, woodcut  
Edition of 30, 92 x 61 cm, 36¼ x 24 ins



*Secrets of the Sand*, 2016, woodcut  
Edition of 30, 92 x 61 cm, 36¼ x 24 ins



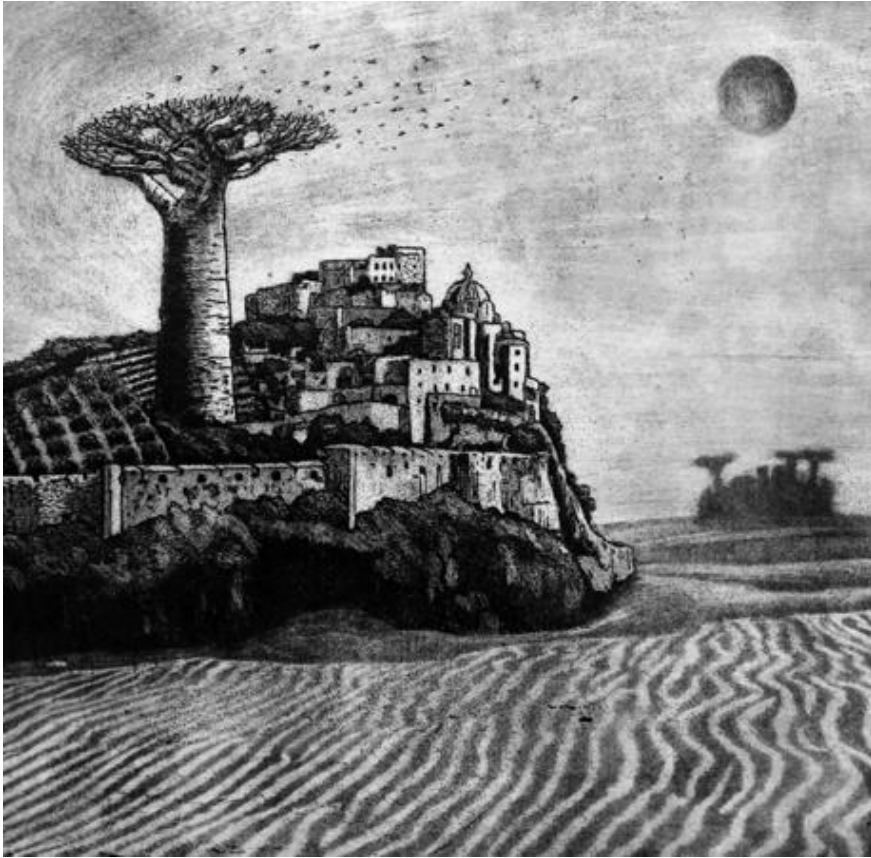
*Twenty Sixteen*, 2016, woodcut  
Edition of 30, 92 x 61 cm, 36¼ x 24 ins



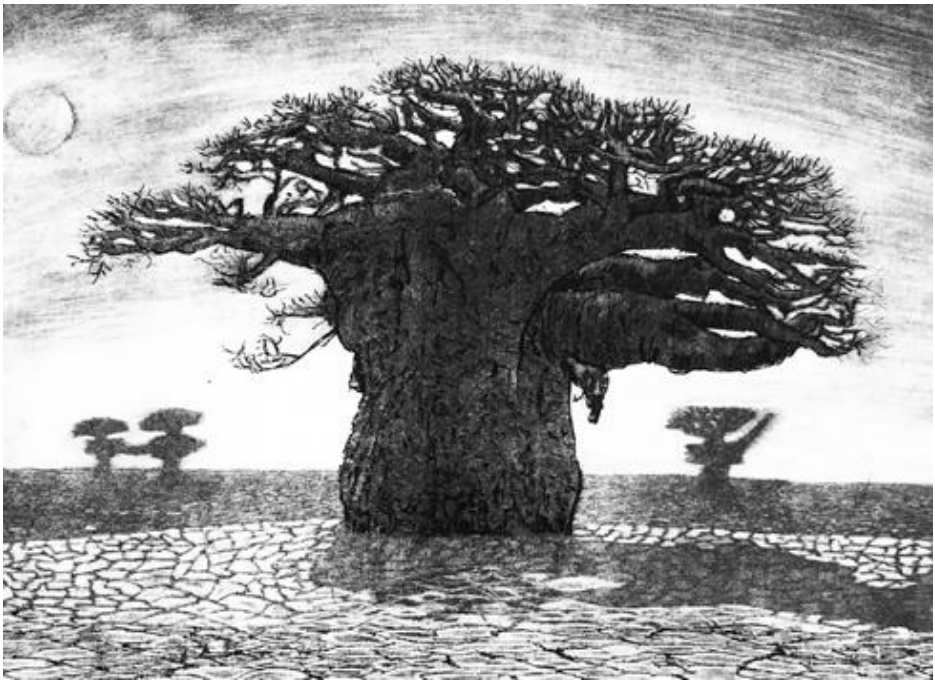
*Honey* 2017, linocut  
Edition of 30, 78 x 58 cm, 30¼ x 22¾ ins



*Definition* 2013, etching  
Edition of 30, 76 x 112 cm, 30 x 44 ins

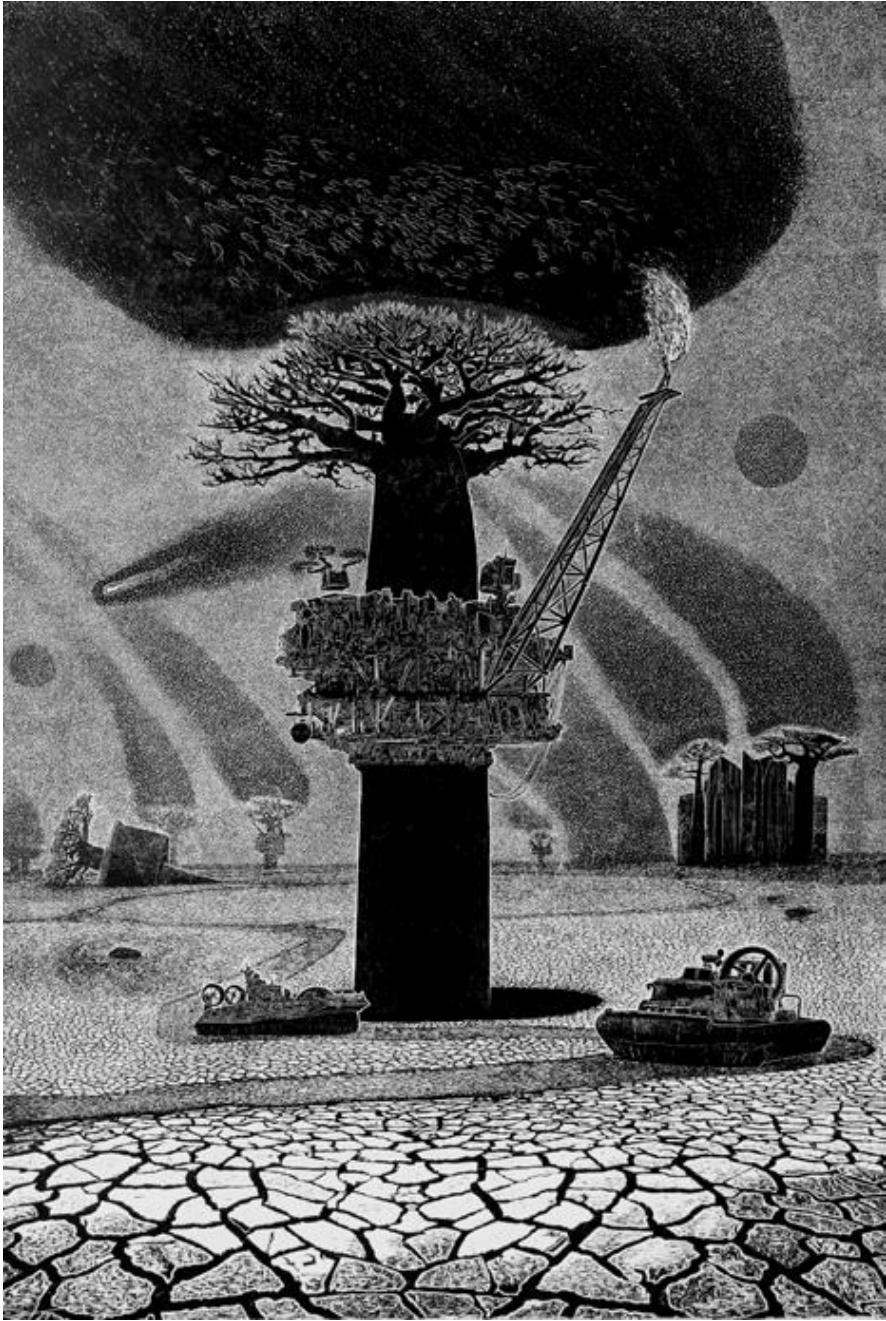


*Isolation*, 2016, etching  
Edition of 30, 26 x 26 cm, 10¼ x 10¼ ins

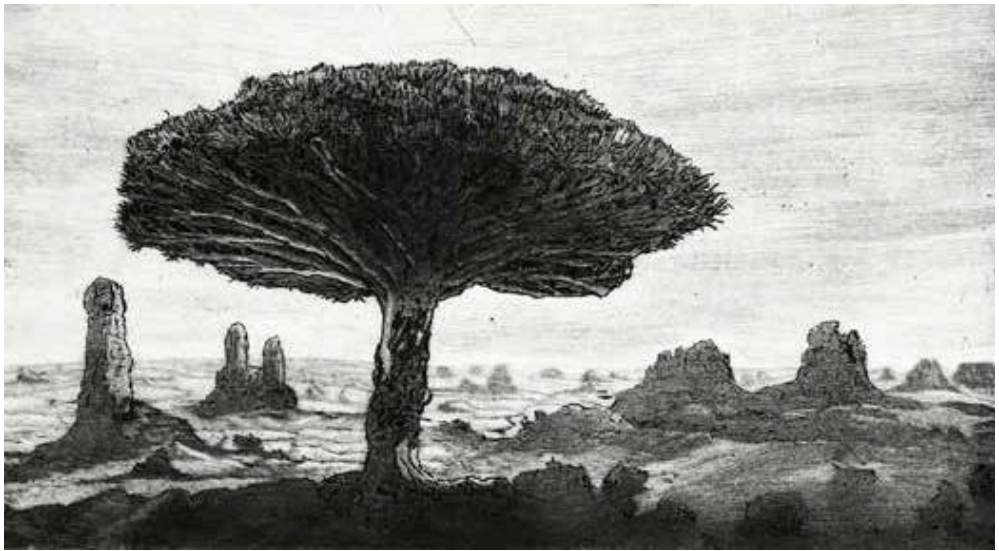


*Reflections* 2016, etching  
Edition of 30, 23 x 21 cm, 9 x 8¼ ins





*Miles*, 2016, linocut  
Edition of 50, 112 x 76 cm, 44 x 30 ins



*The Long Walk II, 2015*  
Edition of 30, 30 x 17 cm, 11¾ x 6¾ ins



*There will be Light*, 2015, linocut  
Edition of 30, 76 x 56 cm, 30 x 22 ins



*Nowhere*, 2016, etching  
Edition of 30, 23 x 21 cm, 9 x 8¼ ins



*Contradiction* 2014, etching  
Edition of 30, 105 x 75 cm, 41¼ x 29½ ins

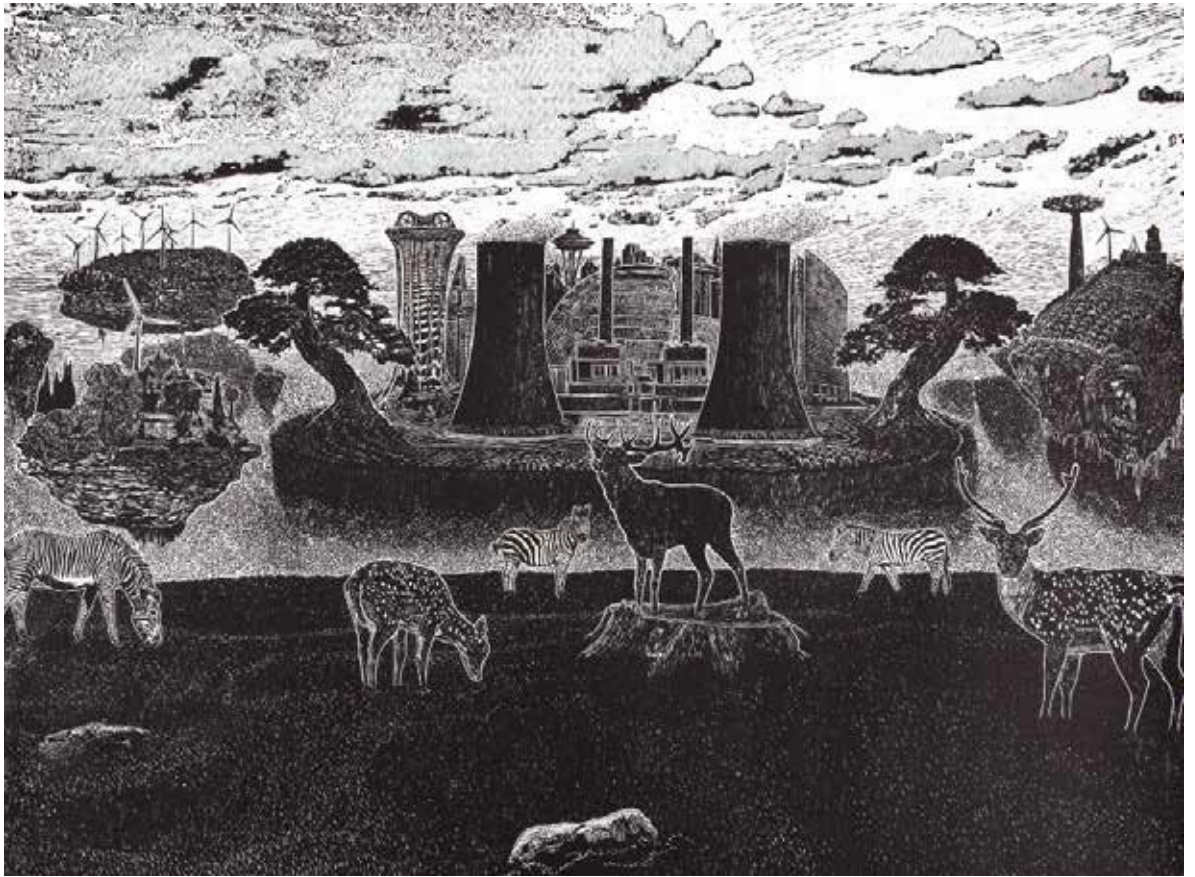


*The Long Walk, 2015*

Edition of 30, 30 x 21 cm, 11¾ x 8¼ ins



*Road to Riches* 2015, linocut  
Edition of 30, 76 x 112 cm, 30 x 44 ins



*Disengage* 2014, linocut  
Edition of 30, 76 x 56 cm, 30 x 22 in





*Light House*, 2016, etching  
Edition of 21, 20 x 21 cm, 7¾ x 8¼ ins

Ade Adesina, born in Nigeria in 1980, is currently a full time printmaker who lives in Scotland having studied printmaking at Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen from 2008 to 2012. Ade's work is a visual commentary on ecology and how the human footprint is affecting our planet. Ade mostly works with linocut, etching, and oil paint combining his African cultural roots with British culture and producing work that reflects on the past, present and the future.

#### RECENT EXHIBITIONS + AWARDS

- 2017                    Secrets of the Sand. The Suttie Arts Space, Aberdeen. Solo
- 2016                    Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Art Open Exhibition. Torrance  
 Memorial Award.  
 Society of Scottish Artists, Annual Open Exhibition.  
 The Deloitte Prize.  
*Beyond the Light*, Eton College. Eton. Solo Exhibition.  
 Artist In Residence, Eton College  
 National Original Print Exhibition, Bankside Gallery, London  
*Just Before the Light*, The Gallery Tweeddale Museum. Peebles.  
 Linocut Today 2016, Stadtische Galerie, Bietigheim, Bissingem, Germany.  
 8th International Printmaking Biennial of Douro 2016, Portugal.  
*Awake*, Newave Gallery, Aberdeen. Solo Exhibition.  
*The Long Walk*, Highland Print Studio, Inverness. Residency Exhibition  
 Aberdeen Visual Artist and Craft Makers Award.  
*There Will Be Light*, Edinburgh Science Festival, Summerhall.  
 Artist in Residence, Highland Print Studio, Inverness. 2015-2016
- 2015                    Royal Scottish Academy Open Exhibition, Wasps Residency Award.  
 National Original Print Exhibition. London.  
 National Original Print. Hawthorn Printmaking Supplies Award.  
 Tribuna Graphic 2015. Romania.  
 The 2ND Global Print 2015. Portugal.  
 Royal Academy of Art, Arts Club Trust Award.  
 Royal Academy of Art, Summer Exhibition. London.  
 Nature's Footprint, BP Atrium Gallery, BP Headquarters, Aberdeen  
 Glasgow print studio. Solo Exhibition.
- 2014                    Day Watchers, Peacock Visual Art, Aberdeen. Solo Exhibition.  
 The Royal Scottish Academy, Generation 2014  
 Rise of the Sun. Grampian Hospitals Art Trust, Aberdeen. Solo Exhibition.  
 Royal Academy of Art, Summer Exhibition. London  
 Woodend Barn Gallery, Banchory. Solo  
*Heal the World*, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen. Solo Exhibition.
- 2013                    The Royal Scottish Academy, Resident 13  
 Linocut Today 2013, Stadtische Galerie, Bietigheim, Bissingem, Germany.  
 The Aberdeen Artists Society, Wellhead Electrical Supplies Prize.  
 The Royal Scottish Academy, New Contemporaries  
 Hard Ground, Peacock Visual Arts, Aberdeen  
 RSA Artist in Residence, Glasgow Print Studio  
 The Royal Scottish Academy, New Contemporaries Awards  
 Walter Scott Global Investment Award
- 2013                    David & June Gordon Memorial Trust Award

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