



A New Dawn

*It's a patchwork of Remembrance,
a continuing deja vu.*

Boy, Brother, Friend

Kenneth Ize surrounded by reporters



The 'Longer Throat' series by Bunmi Augusto

Kenneth Ize understands movement. His life - growing up in Vienna before moving back to Lagos - and much of his work - producing his clothing between Kwara, a North-central part of Nigeria and Italy in Europe - accurately embodies that.

For the 31-year-old, this intimate understanding of movement is a vital tool to growing into a state of consistent exposure not just as a person, but also as an artist and one of Africa's most celebrated fashion designers. In his own words, "[Travel] just gives you more awareness."

And as an African fashion designer known best for elevating the ancient craft of aso-oke through his elegantly designed clothing, - collaborating with Karl Lagerfeld, being worn by Naomi Campbell on the runway amongst other achievements - that kind of exposure continues to be of great advantage.

It is 11 am in Lagos. The morning is warm and I am sitting, staring at a zoom screen from where Kenneth's voice is spilling out from a small, blank icon. Our cameras are off, and Kenneth, who at this time is in Milan, working on a new collection, is talking me through the inspiration behind his last collection titled "New Dawn." We also talk about the concept of movement, what it means to represent and capture his African heritage on a global stage, the thrill and pride of showing at Paris fashion week for the fourth time, and the place of women in powering the creative industry.

Boy.Brother.Friend: What inspired the theme of your latest collection?

Kenneth Ize: I had taken so much interest in many things. Gen Z culture, how we as black people experience the story of the Cape Coast, in Ghana, the difficulty of living through the pandemic. And for me, these experiences sounded like something that seemed new and fresh, but also not so new, if that makes sense. This is really to say that this is how the idea of a "new dawn" came about.

BBF: What was it like showing at Paris Fashion Week as one of the few Africans on the rooster this year?

KI: It does not really come with any specific feeling, because at the end of the day,

"If I think about the role women play in fashion, I think about the role so many women play in terms of craftsmanship, and the work being done by the women who weave the fabrics that defines my brand."

you're doing your job. But you do know you while you're doing this job, you're doing it not just for yourself, but to also celebrate the craftsmanship and the stories that you have around your brand.

Also, this feels like a celebration for me, particularly because I get to explore even more and I get to deliver something that I've been thinking so heavily about. It's also very important for me to be able to show in

Paris, because, honestly speaking, that's where fashion as a business really stands as a strong art.

BBF: How do you attempt to interrogate the place of women in furthering the creative industry?

KI: If I think about the role women play in fashion, I think about the role so many women play in terms of craftsmanship, and the work being done by the women who weave the fabrics that defines my brand.

BBF: As someone who has lived between different countries and moved around, what does migration and the idea of movement mean to you?

KI: It honestly means more exposure. And it just gives you more awareness to be.

Honestly, good clothes. Just feeling like you carry what you have in your closet in a tiny space makes me feel the most confident.

BBF: So speaking about places, where is your most preferred place to be? At any given time?

KI: That's a hard one because I am always on the move. But I love all the places that I go to. I get to meet different people, and have different kinds of friends. For example, when I'm going to London, I look forward to seeing my black friends and, maybe in Vienna, I'll be with my white friends. So it creates a sort of balance because I wouldn't say I prefer one more than the other.

BBF: As we are constantly heading towards a borderless world, how do you hope fashion can advance that?

KI: I think we have actually already started achieving that. This is why you're doing

this interview. For example, in Nigeria, what I've noticed about what social media has done, mostly Instagram, and Snapchat is that it's actually pushed the country forward, it pushed us far beyond what we could actually expect. So I believe that these platforms are really pushing the boundaries and we need them.

BBF: Who do you envision wearing the pieces from your latest collection, and what do you hope that they understand from what you're trying to do with the design?

KI: I wish for every black person to be wearing it. And I hope that this collection gives so much pride to a black person wearing it. While I was building the collection, I thought about the gestures of the person wearing it, and how I want them to feel, and look. I want them to feel like royalty, and have a deep sense of pride.

BBF: And lastly, what have you been up to in the past few months?

KI: Well, right now, I am working on a new collection. I started right after my show, which is kind of like, okay, slow down. But I'm having fun working on this collection and I am excited.



Amya Powell

Boy.Brother.Friend



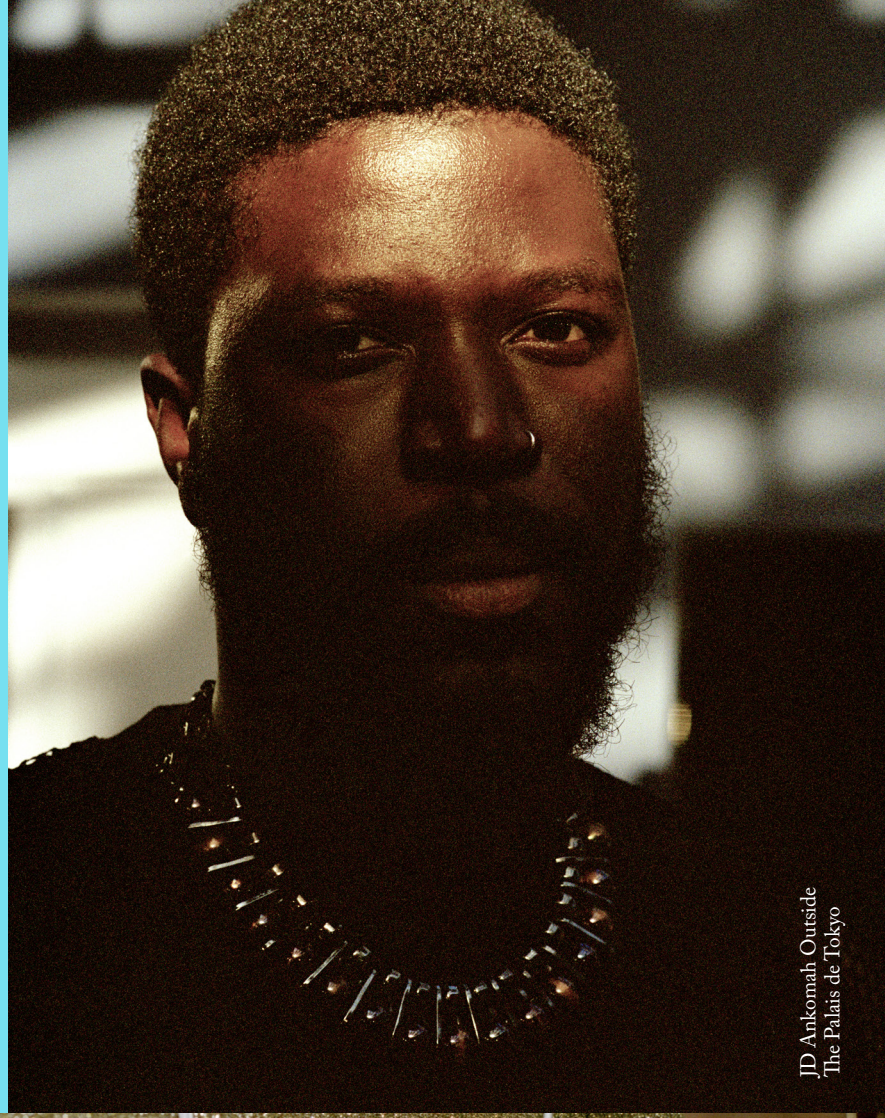
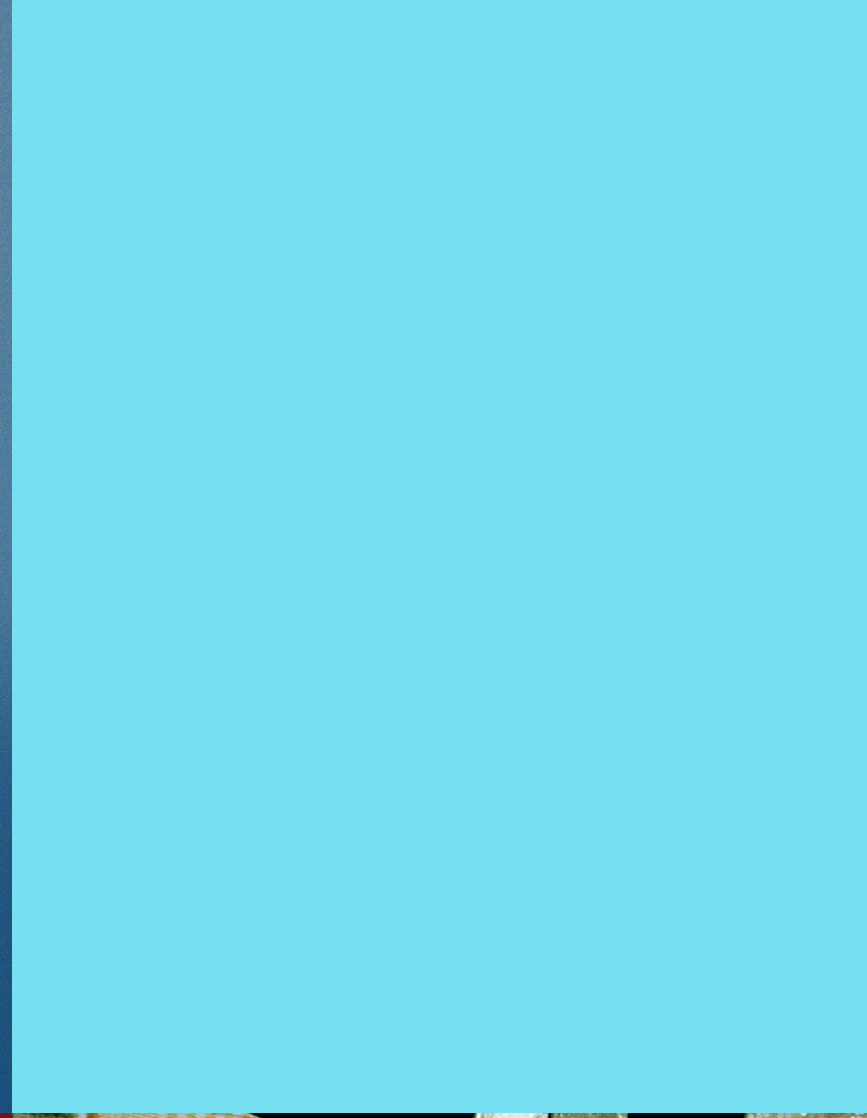




Clerrt Outside The Palais de Tokyo



Jibril Olow



JD Arakomah Outside
The Palais de Tokyo



Adit Priscilla



Yami Turchi







Boy, Brother, Friend
Abdoul Gonçalves



Malick Bodian

HAIR STYLIST Yann Turchi
MAKE-UP ARTIST Fara Homidi
SETTLE ADVISOR Carine Rothfeld
MODEL MLiban, Ali, Senem, Sema Tawf, Zanzam, Mima, Pe
CASTING Julia Lange and JD Ankomah
MODELS Anya Powell, Anyiel Majok, Ckrl Jibril Ollow, Adir Priscilla,
Yann Turchi, JD Ankomah, Caren Jekkenel, Otorwa Kwami, Takfarines
Bengama, Moustapha Sy, Abdoul Gonçalves, Malick Bodian



LEFT TAKFARINES BENGANA
RIGHT OTTOVA KWAMI
MUSTAPHA SY

