

*RISE*

**Ezra Stiles College, Yale University**

Installation: March 30 – April 21, 2015

As much as it was a point to create and instill inspiration for all those who would view the wall installation, “*Rise*,” at the Ezra Stiles College at Yale University, it was I who became inspired throughout its entire working process. This project was a challenge for myself to do and be better than I had ever been before. First of all, the decisions on the final colors for this installation proved to be very difficult. I came to the wall design selecting and testing colors over and over again until I came to a specific place of resolve with the color. I wanted to consider as much as I could, all the while, be sensitive and considerate of the student body who would be living with this work on a day-to-day basis; all those studying, conversing, and pondering within its visual reach. I also wanted to consider the attitudinal nature of gender in my color selection. Without coming to any specific conclusion on this point, I came to understand qualities of the human condition that can be experienced through color. The most important condition I connected with in my color selection process was the idea of ‘*dignity*,’ considering this term relative to color gave me the opportunity to observe how this notion can activate itself in the work.

Color can convey the worth of a new day filled with inspiration, promise, and hope. It can also fill our minds and bodies with its force of presence and possibility. But color cannot do this without form. Color, like the energies of the day, needs purpose. Color needs structure, either directed or implied. In this installation, purpose begins with my wanting to place the wall painting in the Commons Room at Ezra Stiles College. I wanted to address the particulars of this building and add to an ongoing process of ‘opening-out’ to the community at large. The skylight windows were a significant aspect of consideration for my designs, which counters the initial feeling of enclosure fixed within the monochromatic coloring of dark wood found in the front part of this building. The skylight windows were simply stunning in presence and purpose. I came to understand the structural intention of the skylights as a passageway adding natural light into the Common Room, and allowing the energies from the interior of this building to move outward and co-mingle with life in the surrounding rubble masonry, pre-Gothic exterior of Ezra Stiles. Ultimately, the design, drawing, and color of my wall painting was made to give force and reason to this idea of rising upward and outward.

Odili Donald Odita

May 1, 2015