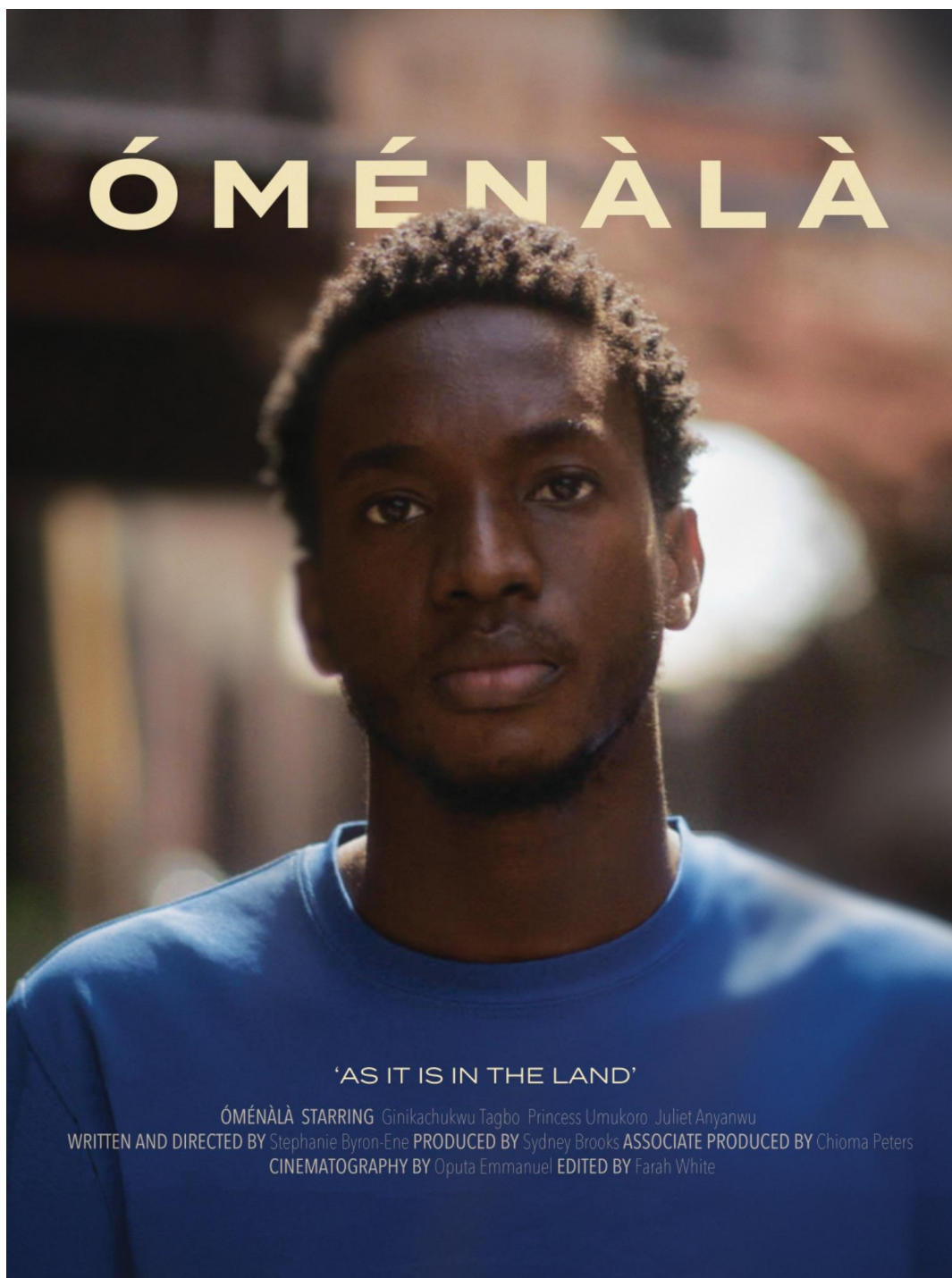


Óménàlà - PRESS PACK



ÓMÉNÀLÀ STARRING Ginikachukwu Tagbo Princess Umukoro Juliet Anyanwu
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY Stephanie Byron-Ene PRODUCED BY Sydney Brooks ASSOCIATE PRODUCED BY Chioma Peters
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY Oputa Emmanuel EDITED BY Farah White

TRAILER

Logline

An estranged first son must protect the legacy of his late father from his hard-headed uncle while navigating traditional Igbo burial rites.

Synopsis

Nnamdi is tasked with distributing the kola nut during the Ikwu Oku ceremony, where his father's death is formally announced to the family. While he represses his grief due to the pressure of being the first-born son, he is confronted with two opposing views from his uncles. Despite having support from his mother (Ezinne) and sister (Adanna), his ability to become the head of the household is brought into question. As the traditional Igbo burial rites progress, Nnamdi is faced with the difficulty of making a tough decision regarding his late father's assets.

Artist Statement

Stephanie Byron-Ene is the writer and director of *Óménàlà* (Oh-May-Nah-lah). She's Nigerian, from the Igbo tribe, and grew up in Lagos State before heading to the U.S. to study film. Her passion for filmmaking started early. At just 10 years old, she would join her father on Nollywood sets at 4 a.m.— often just to hold the actor's purse — but those experiences deeply shaped her love for storytelling.

Not long after beginning her film studies in the U.S., Stephanie realized that growing up in Nigeria was a deeply unique experience. Being around the incredible determination of Nigerian filmmakers, telling their stories for the world to see, inspired her to do the same. *Óménàlà*'s direct translation, "as it is in the land," refers to Igbo tradition. For this film, Stephanie decided to focus on the process of grief and how it differs depending on a family member's role in Igbo land. Inspiration for select scenes also came from *Rattlesnake* (1995), directed by renowned filmmaker Amaka Igwe (May her soul rest in peace). She was an inspiration to many, but especially to Stephanie as her Godmother.

As the eldest daughter in her family, this story is deeply personal. Stephanie relates to Nnamdi's journey of navigating the weight of expectation. But beyond its cultural specificities, this is a universal story about taking on responsibility when life throws the unexpected at you, and ultimately, how loss can mark the beginning of personal growth.









Director of Photography, Oputa Emmanuel, setting up a shot for the Ayo game scene



Producer Sydney Brooks (middle) and Director Stephanie Byron-Ene (right) at the monitor



Director



Director of Photography



Associate Producer Chioma Peters & Actor Eric Obinna



Masquerade