



MILITARY KEEP OFF! ZONE!

MRWADUUD

Art Pantheon Gallery
12D Bosun Adekoya Street,
Oniru, Lagos.

Gallery hours
Weekdays: 10am - 6pm
Weekends: 12noon - 6pm

Opening Day:
25th Feb. 2024
Time: 4pm - 9pm

Exhibition runs till
16th Mar. 2024



GALLERY STATEMENT

Art Pantheon is pleased to present a series of works by the eclectic MrWaduud. "Military Zone: Keep Off" is a solo exhibition charged at the human spirit as we resist the societal pressures that attempt to confine our curiosities and passion.

This exhibition delves into MrWaduud's exploration of the military phrase and their camouflage colours as a metaphor for the barriers or restrictions imposed by external forces that inhibit individuals from exploring their curiosity or pursuing their passion. The phrase "Military Zone, Keep Off" carries a psychological effect that invokes a sense of authority and seriousness, which lead people to perceive the area as off-limits or to be approached with caution and despite this warning, some individuals may feel intrigued or curious about what lies beyond the designated military zone, sparking a desire for exploration or discovery. This is the burden of what's on the other side of curiosity, the possibilities unexplored, in life, and the chaos of career.

The show takes on four paradigms: An Invitation to the Self, Stories Inside Me, Depth, and Acceptance, with the paradoxical intersection of these realms reflected in the show's setup. As individuals, we often navigate the labyrinth of our identities, striving to reconcile the authenticity of our existence with the expectations placed on us by the world around us. Society molds us with sets of beliefs, mannerisms, and perspectives, which in moments of introspection, we ponder on challenging the status quo and formulating our truths in the quest of seeking a foundation for the liberation of our true identities.

'An Invitation to the Self'

In this space, you'll find MrWaduud continued series of interrupted portraits that underscore the essence of self-awareness and the joyful influence of art on mental health. These thought-provoking pieces invite his viewers to interpretation. The compositions of which allow for multiple narratives to emerge, with each viewer bringing their own experiences and perspectives to the pieces.

'Stories Inside Me'

The space beckons you to contemplate the complexities of life, love and its chaos. Through interrupted compositions and willful lettering, this room delves into the struggle to stand out amidst chaos, reminders urging its viewers to embrace their own path and authenticity.

'Acceptance'

In this space, abstract pieces with minimalist lettering adorn the walls, acknowledging the weight of responsibility and the importance of embracing our emotions for internal peace and direction.

'Depth'

Fetching inspiration from over half a decade of practice as a Muralist, 'Depth' is where you'll encounter a melding of military palette murals and canvas pieces that reflect the theme of the exhibition and the evolution of MrWaduud as an artist defying societal norms. In there, his artistic style rebels against the notion of conformity, advocating for the freedom to explore curiosity without constraint.

'Military Zone: Keep Off' is more than just an exhibition—it's a philosophical journey through the human experience, inviting you to challenge societal expectations and embrace the full spectrum of human emotion and curiosity.

Nana Sonoiki
Art Pantheon Gallery



Abdulwaduud Afolabi (b. 1995) is a cross-disciplinary artist from Lagos, Nigeria, extending his expertise beyond the canvas into the realms of Art and the Creative Industry. Popularly called by his pseudonym MrWaduud, Abdulwaduud has seamlessly evolved into a connoisseur of art, as a voice of reason.

He stands as a creative advocate within the contemporary creative community, managing an Instagram page with over 100,000 followers where he curates content to promote art and encourage its exploration among fellow creatives. Utilizing his social media presence, Abdulwaduud generates thought-provoking content, fostering a mindset shift for artists and creatives. He passionately employs his platforms to inspire and support others in the art and design community.

Abdulwaduud's fervor for art and storytelling manifests in his conceptual works on walls, canvases, or floors. Employing various mediums and techniques, from acrylic to oil painting, to spray painting, charcoal and chalk, his creations are a visual feast.

As a visionary artist, Abdulwaduud stretches the boundaries of his craft to reflect the context of his surroundings. Heralded as a sought-after muralist, painter, calligrapher, and content creator, he has honed a unique style that blends dramatic portraiture, minimalism and pop colors. His works captivate viewers, challenging the obvious in a way that intrigues and holds attention.

Popularly known as Mr. Waduud, Abdulwaduud has undertaken large-scale projects for corporations like APM Terminal, Accelerex, Vesti, Pepsi, and a Lagos State Government initiative—the murals at the PEACE PARK in Lagos State, a peaceful appeal post-EndSARS protest. He has collaborated with interior designers, architectural firms, and contributed to the rebranding of containers for the upcycling brand WeCyclers.

Abdulwaduud's impact extends to television appearances, including the Art Express Show and Wake Up Nigeria Show on TVC, Art House on Channels TV, and News Central Africa. His arts have gained viral recognition on

Instagram, and his works were exhibited at Thought Pyramid's 'Undiscovered' group show in Abuja, 2023.

Based in Lagos, Nigeria, Abdulwaduud maintains an expanded studio in Ife, where he showcases his artistic skills. When he is not using his art to tell brand stories, the studio serves as a platform to connect with his audience, share his vision, and display his artistic prowess.

Abdulwaduud, an artist deeply rooted in the Yoruba culture, draws inspiration from the craftsmanship of his people, specifically the Aso-Oke weaving process. This memory grounds him with the mindset that beautiful things take time to create, as he continues to evolve and push the boundaries of his art.

ARTIST STATEMENT

As an artist, my fundamental purpose is to evoke emotion through my paintings. I employ distorted lettering in my abstracts and interruptions in my portraiture, because art should not only be visually striking but also thought provoking.

The intentional use of vibrant colors in my works stem from my conviction that color possesses the power to elicit emotion and stimulate the senses. I leverage color to breathe life into my pieces, creating an atmosphere that is both captivating and uplifting.

My artistic journey is one of continual exploration and discovery. The incorporation of lettering on my minimalist abstract pieces is not merely an artistic choice but a deliberate tool to invite my audience into interpretation, a composition of which allows for multiple narratives to emerge, with each viewer bringing their own experiences and perspectives to the piece.

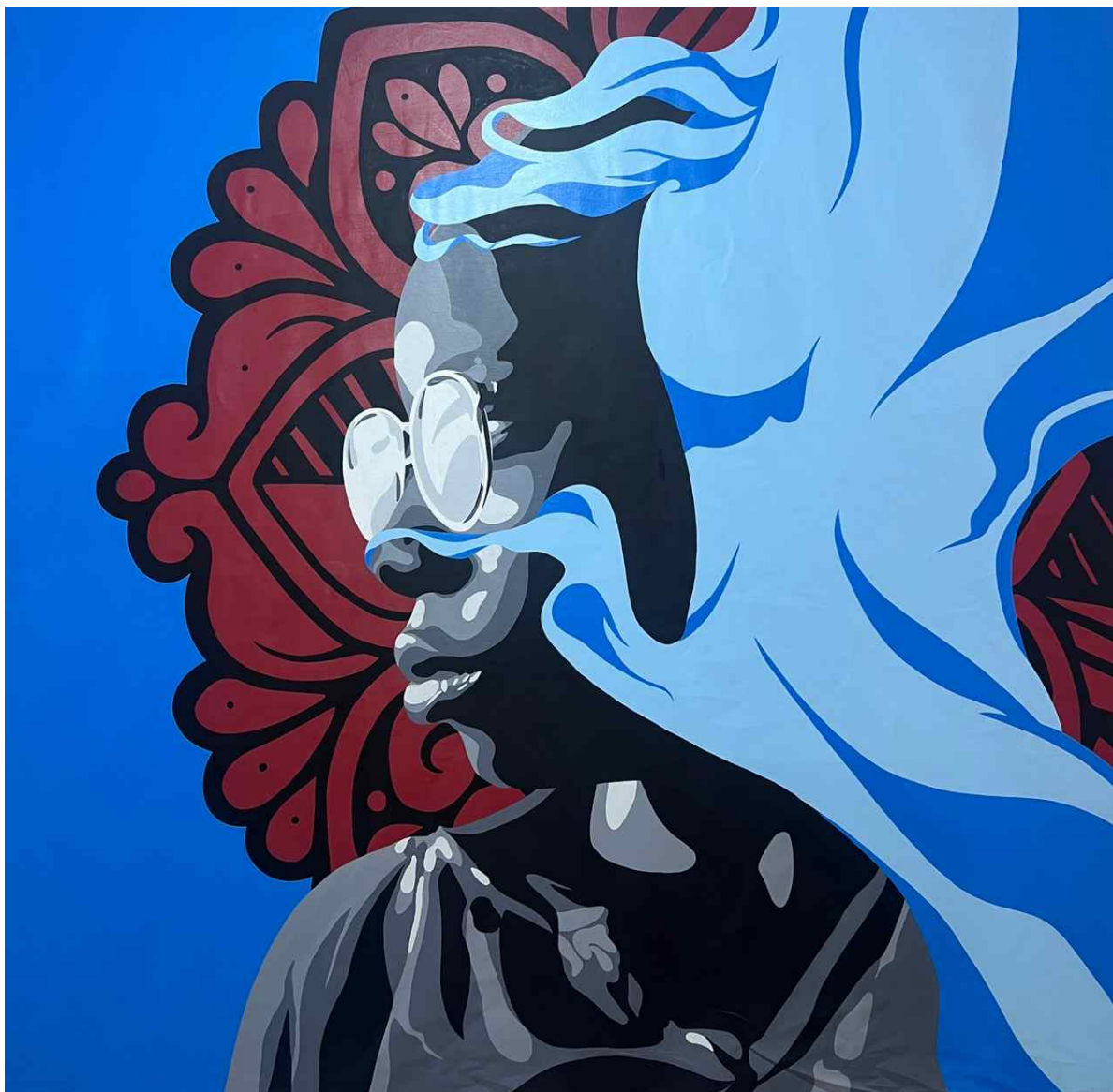
Through my arts, I strive to pique curiosity, suggesting a journey into their subconscious mind. If as Einstein said that imagination is the preview of life's coming attractions, then my canvas is the doorway into that realm.

With each piece of art I create, I challenge myself to push the boundaries of my creativity beyond the canvas, experimenting with various mediums such as acrylic, oil, charcoal, chalk, spray paints and whatever more medium the future affords me.



NARROW MOLD

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 60 x 60 in. (152.5 x 152.5 cm)



INNER DIALOGUE

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 60 x 60 in. (152.5 x 152.5 cm)



FRAGMENTS OF PERFECTION

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 60 x 60 in. (152.5 x 152.5 cm)



TELL THE WOLVES, I'M HOME

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 36 x 36 in. (92 x 92 cm)



BLINDLY INVESTED

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 36 x 36 in. (92 x 92 cm)



ELEDUMARE'S MASTERPIECE

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 36 x 36 in. (92 x 92 cm)



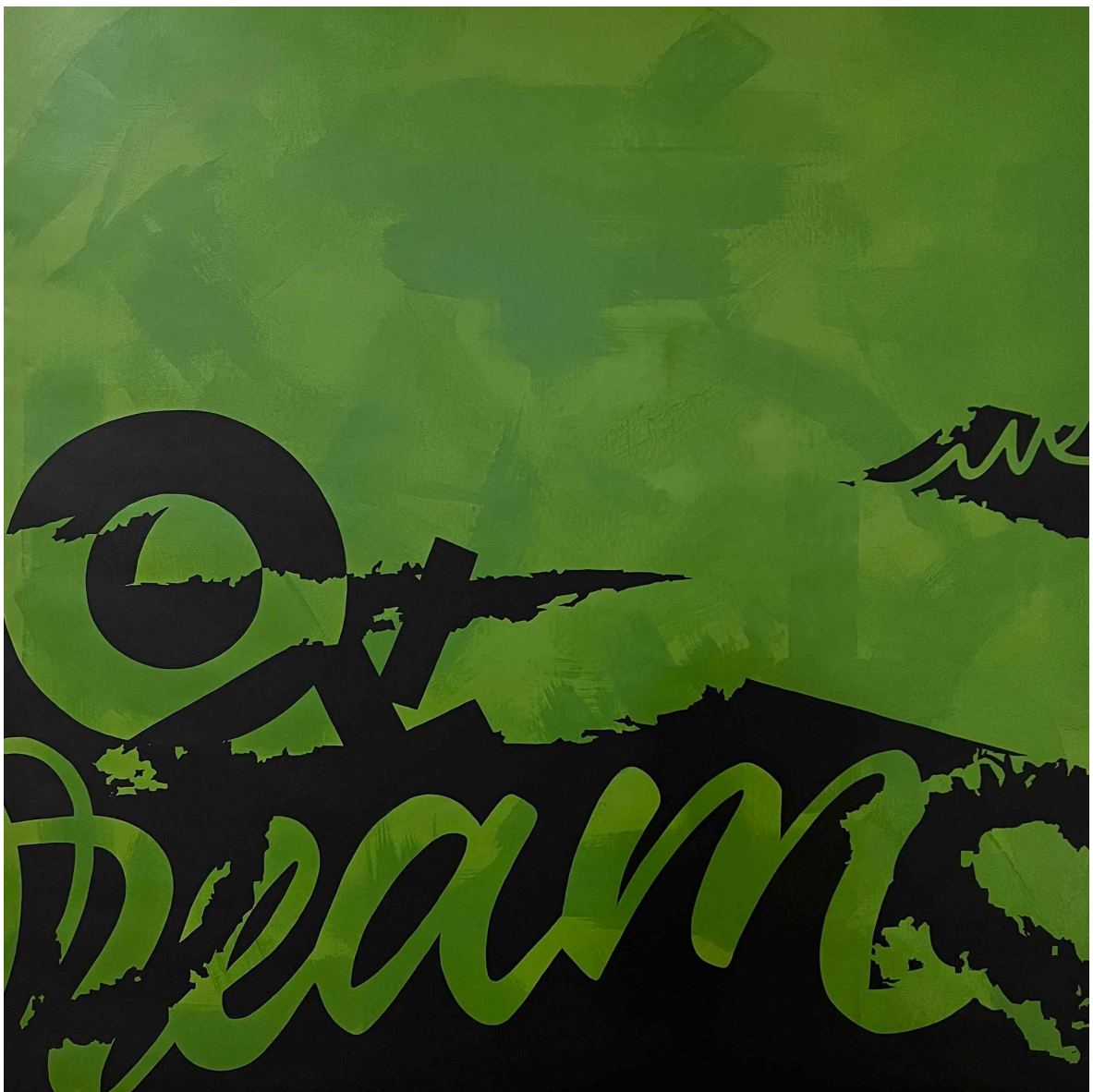
AMBITION I

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 28 in. (72 cm)



AMBITION II

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 28 in. (72 cm)



OLIVE DREAMS

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 48 x 48 in. (122 x 122 cm)



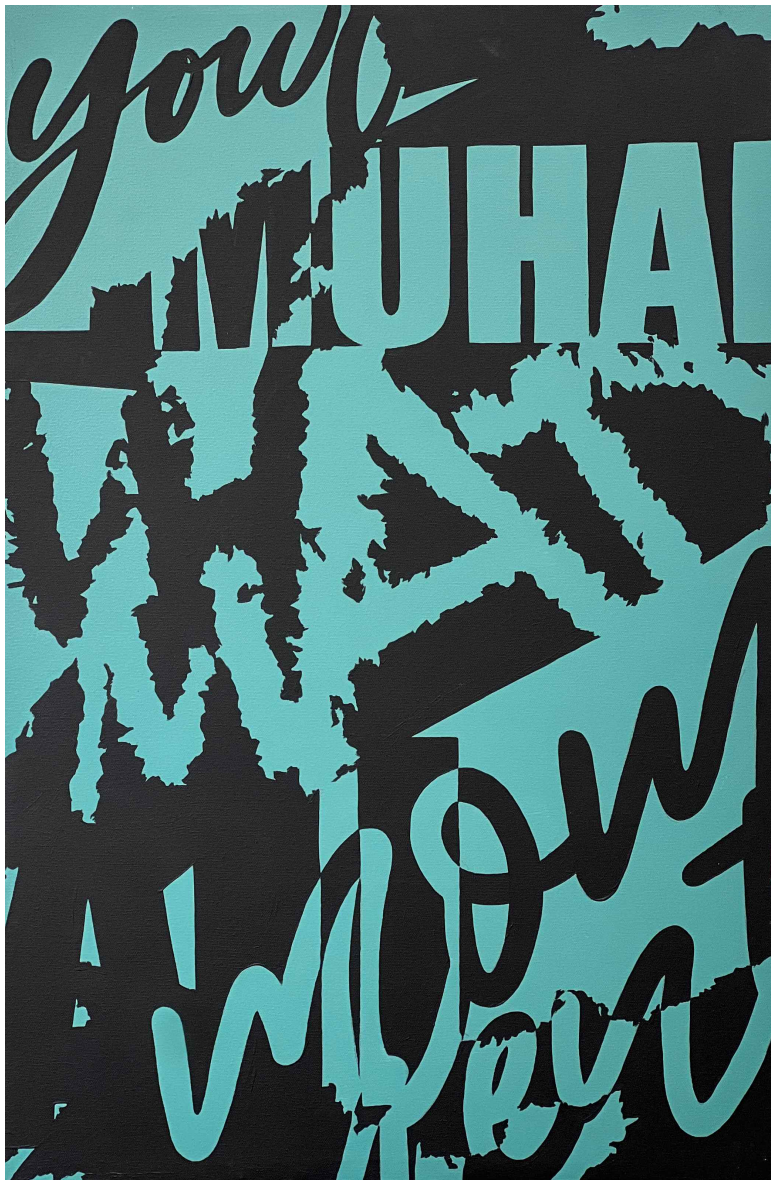
BAD TO THE BONE

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 48 x 48 in. (122 x 122 cm)



ONE BAD DAY AWAY

Acrylic on canvas, 2023, 24 x 36 in. (61 x 92 cm)



YOUR MUHAMMAD ALI MOMENT

Acrylic on canvas, 2023, 24 x 36 in. (61 x 92 cm)



WE ALL ARE CRAZY

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 24 x 36 in. (61 x 92 cm)



AND THEN SHE SAID DARLING

Acrylic on canvas, 2023, 24 x 36 in. (61 x 92 cm)



SILENCE ECHOES

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 24 x 36 in. (61 x 92 cm)



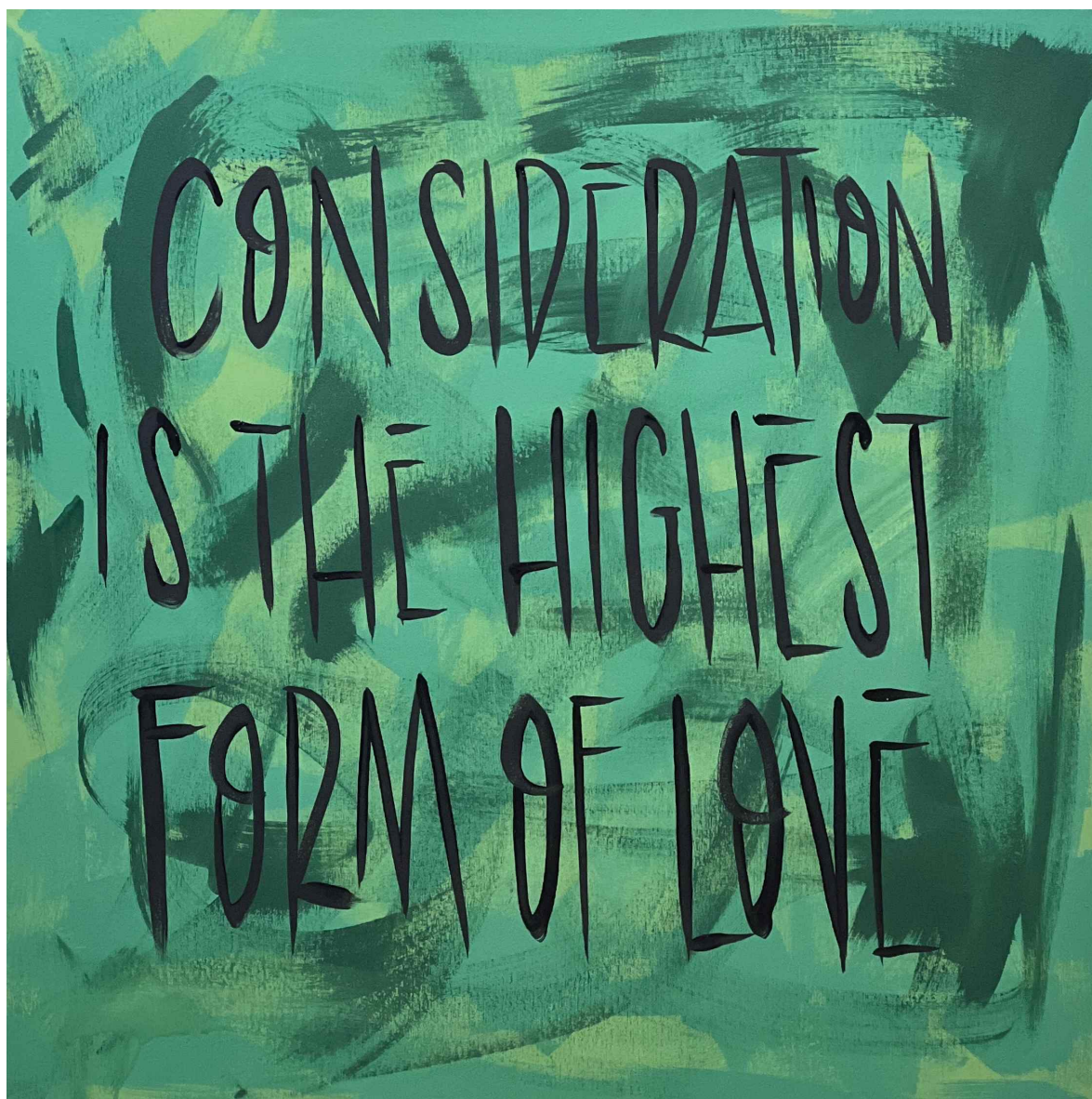
PRIVACY IS POETRY

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 36 x 36 in. (92 x 92 cm)



NO FAKE FLOWERS

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 36 x 36 in. (92 x 92 cm)



CONSIDERATION

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 36 x 36 in. (92 x 92 cm)



I CAN

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 12 x 12 in. (30.5 x 30.5 cm)



I WILL

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 12 x 12 in. (30.5 x 30.5 cm)



I MUST

Acrylic on canvas, 2024, 12 x 12 in. (30.5 x 30.5 cm)

