

TORLOWEI

PATIENCE TORLOWEI

Patience Torlowei is the founder and creative director at TORLOWEI, a lingerie-inspired luxury ready-to-wear brand based in Lagos, Nigeria.

Patience - who has a background in textile design - places fabric and the manipulation of textiles at the core of her design process at TORLOWEI, combined with the use of jewel tones and abstract shapes influenced by her Nigerian heritage. TORLOWEI's collections are created to be timeless and long-lasting, to be passed down from generation to generation, respected as the pieces of "wearable" art they were created to be.

Born in Enugu, Nigeria, in 1964. Her life saw her survive a brutal civil war when she was a toddler, grow up helping on her family's farm, excel in the arts, graduating at the top of her class at the Yaba College of Technology, where she studied textile, raise 2 children as a stay-at-home wife, before finally deciding to pursue her passion for fashion once they had grown and with much encouragement from those around her.

Ms Torlowei launched her first line in 2006 with Patience Torlowei BVBA, a bridal wear company. Within two years the brand was supplying wedding and cocktail dresses to over six countries within Europe alone, produced from her converted garage in Belgium. In 2008, in response to a scarcity of wedding lingerie and high customer demand, the brand was preparing to add bridal lingerie to its offerings.

Fuelled by a combination of rapid expansion, high production costs, and a desire to return home to transfer knowledge and create jobs, Patience decided to move her atelier and all her production to Lagos, Nigeria, where she registered Patience Please Nig. Ltd in 2008, Nigeria's first registered lingerie manufacturer.

In 2014, one of Ms Torlowei's most renowned productions, "The Esther dress", officially joined the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC's permanent collection. It was the first couture piece to have ever been accepted by the National Museum of African Art. The dress went on display in June, 2019, as part of the museum's first all-female exhibit, "I Am..." Contemporary Female Artists of Africa.

On the 10th anniversary of her return to Nigeria, and having gone through many losses and victories in the process of rediscovering a country she had left behind for 20 years and had changed very much, Patience finally felt comfortable enough to come out of her period of internal growth and reflection and finally take her craft global, hence the birth of Torlowei in 2017.

The brand has since dressed dignitaries including Her Excellency, Mrs. Rebecca Akufo-Addo (Ghanaian First Lady), DJ Cuppy Otedola, André Leon Talley, Opal Tometi, Naomi Campbell and many more. And we have great plans to stand alongside fashion industry giants who have come before us, whilst paving the way for more black talent who will still be around after us.

TORLOWEI NIG. LTD.

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