

TIME

H A L E S

FRANK BOWLING

Naina Bajekal, Artists at Every Age, Time Magazine,
18 February 2019





THE
OPTIMISTS

ARTISTS AT EVERY AGE

A look at creativity
across the decades

PORTFOLIO BY DJENEBA ADUAYOM FOR TIME

HOW DOES AN ARTIST KEEP HER creative vision alive? It's a concern not just for painters and poets who have been at work for decades; an artist's vision can be tested at any point in life. For the nine people photographed in this portfolio by Djeneba Aduayom—from an 18-year-old poet to a 94-year-old actor—what keeps them at work is the possibility of connecting with others.

Finding new ways to forge those connections can be a challenge, though, since life rarely follows a straight line. That's something Aduayom understands all too well: after dancing with musicians like Prince and Tina Turner, Aduayom fell and injured herself while on tour in 2010. Hip and knee surgery marked the end of her dance career. "Imagine having what you love most taken away from you," she says. "I had to find something equally powerful."

Aduayom found that in photography. "When I was looking through a viewfinder, I was completely in the zone," she says. She invested in a camera and taught herself to shoot. "It helped me connect with people in a different way, through a lens rather than on the stage," she says.

Each portrait is an effort to understand the artist's creative process, Aduayom says. "All these artists have different realities. I wanted to capture something in their universe, how they see the world, and how it relates to their art." Sharing their art with the world is essential to their persistence: creation fosters optimism not only in the artist. It helps to spread it too.

—NAINA BAJEKAL

*"I don't ever stop painting in my mind.
**When I am in bed, unable to sleep,
I see paint moving across the ceiling**
and imagine it spilling and pouring as it
flows through the nooks and cracks."*

FRANK BOWLING PAINTER | 84

