



# TAIRE AVBOVBO

Retail entrepreneur.  
Africanist.  
Superhusband.

COMPILED BY GARRETH VAN NIEKERK



**I am a creator and Odrin** is a result of that. Creating something that pushes the world forward. Odrin is a shopping solution/experience that takes the guesswork out of shopping. **I grew up** in Benin City and Lagos, Nigeria. **My favourite memory of those years** is the camaraderie of my time as a boarder at Igbinedion School. It helped me form lots of great friendships. I eventually left Nigeria for the US to go to college, first the University of Houston to study engineering, and then to Harvard in Boston to do my MBA. **I loved** the Rice Village in Houston – there were great coffee shops to study and hang out. **I left the corporate world** to build something that forms part of the world that I want to see. **I wanted to be** part of the solution of this continent. **I felt like I could only do that** by being an entrepreneur. Living abroad for those years taught me to be open-minded. It gave me a different perspective.

**I'm not really** a fashion designer. I'm a retail entrepreneur. As a retail entrepreneur I make beautiful things, but I play matchmaker between people and their perfect products. **My love for fashion** started from my early childhood; my mom

was a fashion designer and being exposed to the sound of sewing machines, garment patterns and witnessing garments being created. My father also used to read a lot of fashion magazines.

**Manufacturing in Africa** was a big part of the reason I started Odrin, but it's also been one of the biggest challenges we have faced as a company. With that said, the most exciting changes in the African fashion scene since we started have been access to better manufacturing. **A good suit should** be comfortable and easy to maintain.

**Odrin recently** popped up in Lagos to expose the brand to a different demographic. **My dream destination for the next pop-up would be** Morocco. **Style for me personally must be** practical. **I started my store at 44 Stanley** because it's a unique and inspirational environment that has a lot of character and is also accommodating and welcoming.

**My favourite purchase at 44 Stanley** is the food and coffee from Bean There. **To escape I read** coffee table books. **I just got** *Winkreative Design Stories*, by the agency responsible for Monocle magazine. **I also love** magazines like *Luxe Noir* (about

contemporary African art and design) and *Monocle* is a ritual for me.

**My hidden gems in the city** are ReTrend and The Mødernist. **My perfect weekend** is Netflix and chill with my wife. **My dream dinner party guests** are Steve Jobs, King David (from the Bible), Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie, Trevor Noah and Kanye West. **My favourite artworks in my home** are the pictures that I've taken over the years. **Recently I took a series** in Makoko, a fishing village in Nigeria. **I'm reading** *Shoe Dog* (Simon & Schuster) by Phil Knight, which has been hugely inspiring. Nike was started by normal people who just kept pushing. **And I'm currently listening to** *III* by The Lumineers. **Oodrin.com**



**THIS PAGE, FROM LEFT**

Taire Avbovbo, owner of Odrin; a belt from his range; current music *III* by The Lumineers; *Winkreative Design Stories*.