



# THIS GIRL IS ON FIRE

## LIVING ART

‘Through the art of weaving, we learn to embrace imperfections, as even the tiniest flaw can add character and uniqueness to a piece, reminding us of the beauty in our own imperfections.’

– Ngumpie Weaving.

**m**EET TEGAN MURDOCK, the founder of Ngumpie Weaving (Ngumpie is pronounced ‘numb-pie’). Tegan hails from the Barkindji/Maurara, Yorta Yorta/Duduroa nations and weaving is both a passion and an integrated part of her culture.

*Ngumpie*, meaning beautiful or lovely, is a cherished term she received from her grandmother, Nanna Shirl. Tegan named her business Ngumpie in Nanna Shirl’s memory.

Tegan’s mission is to weave her culture into the community with grace, connection, and creativity.

Ngumpie Weaving has already made waves, gaining recognition from various media outlets and organisations including *Vogue*, Channel 10, NITV, *Women’s Weekly*, *Sydney Weekender*, the Australian Museum, Sydney Opera House, SBS, Sydney Living Museum, the State of Victoria and *The Bachelorette*, among others.

ABOVE: The sacredness of drawing from Mother Earth. LEFT: Tegan Murdock with one of her many fabulous weave creations featuring signature earthly hues. Photos: Supplied by Ngumpie Weaving.

find the strength to weave your own path and uncover what is meant for you.

– Ngumpie Weaving.

Tegan Murdock was born on 11 October 1987 and raised in the small country town of Coomealla (25km north west of Mildura on the NSW-Victorian border) on the Namatjira Mission. As a child, her family moved around quite a lot as her father, Phillip, went where the work was, often picking fruit or taking on other labouring tasks as they came available, season-by-season. Tegan’s family eventually settled near Albury, where her father and grandfather built a family home from wood and tin collected locally.

“We didn’t have running water, or flushing toilets and we used an open fire place for a kitchen. We didn’t have much and life was simple. I often think back to those days with a sense of pride and happiness,” Tegan said.

“I am a proud member of the Barkindji tribe originating from Coomealla, Lake Victoria and the Mungo regions from my mother’s ancestors ... while also belonging to the Yorta



# The Mighty Wealth of the Asante Kingdom

Words: Isabelle Sowah & Manuela Taboada PhD.

Ananse, the spider, is not just a figure in tales but a cultural cornerstone in West African folklore. Renowned for his wit and cunning, Ananse once approached Nyame – the Sky God, holder and creator of all stories – in pursuit of wisdom. To obtain the revered wisdom, and the stories, Ananse embarked on a quest to bring to Nyame the required prize.

This legendary tale echoes the resilience and craftiness crucial to the founding of the Ashanti, or Asante, Empire.

The roots of this influential empire stretch back to the late 17th century, where a confederation of Akan-speaking people in present-day Ghana consolidated their power. Led by the legendary Osei Tutu, who is often likened to Ananse for his strategic prowess, the empire began to take shape. Osei Tutu forged alliances among various Akan states, uniting them under a centralized authority and established Kumasi as the capital of the new Empire. He also developed a constitution, reorganized and centralized the military, and introduced the Odwira festival, symbolizing the new union.

Osei Tutu collaborated with the spiritual leader, Komfo Anokye, and together created the ‘Golden Stool’ – which symbolized the ancestors of all Asante and legitimized his rule and that of the royal dynasty – a symbol of unity and power, tying the people to their heritage and establishing the foundation of the Asante Empire.

The Asante Empire thrived through a complex system of governance, blending both political and spiritual authority. Its military prowess and economic advancements, especially in the gold trade, bolstered its influence in the region. The empire’s strategic alliances and skilled diplomacy mirrored Ananse’s resourcefulness in navigating challenges.

Despite facing external threats, such as conflicts with British colonial forces in the 19th century, the Asante Empire maintained its independence for a considerable period. However, colonization eventually led to the demise of the Empire, as the British exerted control over the region.

Nonetheless, the legacy of the Asante Empire endures. Its rich cultural heritage, including vibrant art, intricate craftsmanship, and oral traditions, reflects the resilience and ingenuity of the Akan people. The tales of Ananse continue to be passed down through generations, carrying the spirit of wit, wisdom, and the enduring legacy of the Asante Empire.

From the fabled exploits of Ananse to the historical achievements of the Asante Empire, the narrative intertwines folklore with the tangible threads of history. Both stories showcase the indomitable spirit of a people, rooted in tradition yet adaptable to the changing tides of time.

The Asante Empire’s tale, much like Ananse’s adventures, remains an enduring testament to the triumphs and challenges that shape the vibrant tapestry of African history.

## Symbols of the Asante Empire:

### The Asantehene

At the top of Asante power structure sat the Asantehene (the King of all Asante). Each Asantehene was crowned on the sacred Golden Stool, the Sika ‘dwa. While this was a dynasty position, in the second half of the 1700 Osei Kwando changed the system to enable the appointment of central officials to the position of Asantehene according to their competences and abilities. As King, the Asantehene held immense

# Feature article

## Living FASHION

Words: Isabel Wetten,  
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 @thebellastylingco

Photography: CELGFX



# United Colours of Fashion

Where culture, experience, and hope converge to create not just clothing, but embody the richness of our global tapestry.

Model in Anannasa Lola Pink Dress.

# CREATIVITY OVERLOAD

## A Sweet Word

Words by Effie NKRUMAH

The other day I was thinking deep.

I was thinking deep about sugar.

Its history, its relevance its necessity  
and its ever-present presence.

There's a video I saw of a woman on TikTok, she was showing people how to drink water. She pulls out a phenomenal, huge, sippy cup, she pours in a little shovel's worth of teeny, tiny square ice-cubes and then fills it up with water. Brandishing a large box, she selects from several thin, brightly coloured sachets tightly packed in – the colour yellow – pineapple flavour.

She proceeds to pour the fine sandy contents of the sachet into her cup of ice cold, *cube-y* water, and heads swiftly to her 'water station' where she has a selection of at least 12 tall glass dispensers of flavoured syrups. She chooses coconut and promptly pumps one, two, three streams of the glossy liquid, telling us she's having a pina colada water. A few vigorous stabs into the pina ice water with her straw, a swirl and she is ready to drink her second water for the day.

Back to my deep sugar thoughts, that were prompted as I listened to an episode of a podcast called *With The Perrys* (presented by Preston Perry and Jackie Hill Perry). Jackie was talking about how important it is to just spend time in the Word, even when it doesn't feel particularly interesting.

She said, "We are so overly entertained, no one sits in the boredom." She shared how she intentionally listens to the Word when she is working out or bored, to fill in her time more usefully. It dawned on me, that the Word is like food – in fact, it is food – for our spirits. Man cannot live on bread alone, right?

Walk with me here... I considered palates, what kind of food we're told tastes good, what is marketed to children and how, as we grow, we are more likely to lean away from sweet, to savoury.

We learn how to mix the two and appreciate cultures where the cuisine strikes a balance.

I considered faith. And how there are many days when I would rather a sweet Word from the Lord, preaching that will centre me, my joy, my purpose, and how, due to increased availability, that is so easy to find. Sweet words, that make hearing an admonishment, a disciplining, a cold-hard reality cup of water, that is much easier to consume in my spirit. How so many of us want to be nice people, known for syrupy sweetness that masks reality?

I asked myself, if I am constantly seeking, reading, watching consuming only the sweet parts of the Word, of the messages and revelations God has entrusted certain people with the gift and bravery to impart, then what I am giving to the world? You are what you eat.

So deep in this thought I was when I was jolted straight to an answer – found in *Matthew 5:13*, and although all versions have their benefits, I choose to focus on the depth of the Message version:

"Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavours of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage."

If all I am consuming is sweet, if I cannot rest in the boring, the difficult or uncomfortable, how can I give people a chance to taste godliness, to taste the wonder, growth, balance, and maturity that having faith in Christ begets? The truth is – I can't, cos sweet at the expense of salt is useless.



Effie Nkrumah. Photo:  
Abdul Muhaimin, CineMin.

# Moroccan Gastronomy

Blending traditional and ancestral  
with a touch of modernity

Moroccan cuisine is a captivating tapestry of flavors and influences that invite you to embark on a sensory journey. The culinary heritage of Morocco, with its rich history and unique blend of spices, showcases a unique and diverse cuisine that's celebrated worldwide.

Delicious tajine cooked meal.  
Photo: Naim Benjelloun, Pexels.