

diptyk



Hassan Hajjaj
Morocco's
"Andy Warhol"

**What to collect
at the fair:**
Our selection
of 15 artists

1-54 London
A Limitless
Retelling of
History

SPECIAL ISSUE: 1-54 LONDON

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EDITOR'S NOTE

A partner of the 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair since its first London edition in 2013, *Diptyk* is now proud to present its very first issue in English. As an African publication alive to the present day realities of Moroccan life, our bimonthly magazine has been documenting the contemporary art scene on the continent since 2009. We are proud to be an instrumental vehicle for the growing recognition of African art and for its rising market value. In February 2018, after testing the strength of the market for African artists in London and New York, 1-54 opened in Marrakech for the first time in Africa, spearheaded with courage and determination by Touria El Glaoui. This event revealed the capacity of African buyers to respond to and engage with artists on a local level. *Diptyk* was in the hands of almost every visitor there and helped expose a foreign audience to the vitality of contemporary art in Africa.

Now we have come to London, and we hope this marks yet another chance for *Diptyk* to discover a new readership that doesn't know all that's happening in Marrakech, but that can see at Somerset House that African contemporary art is not a passing trend. By the strength of its creativity and the universality of its struggles, it has now taken its rightful position on the world stage.

Meryem Sebti

Director and Editor-in-chief

diptyk

Rue Mozart, Résidence Yasmine,
quartier Racine, Casablanca 20000,
Morocco

+212 5 22 95 19 08/15 50

diptykmag@gmail.com

www.diptykblog.com

Director and Editor-in-chief

Meryem Sebti

Artistic Director

and Graphic Designer

Sophie Golddryng

Project Manager and Copy Editor

Marie Moignard

Administrative Manager and

Commercial Back-Office

Nadia Berrada

Translator

Jake Wiener

Sub-Editor

John DeWitt

Contributors

Rym Abouker

Julia DeFabo

Marie Moignard

Emmanuelle Outtier

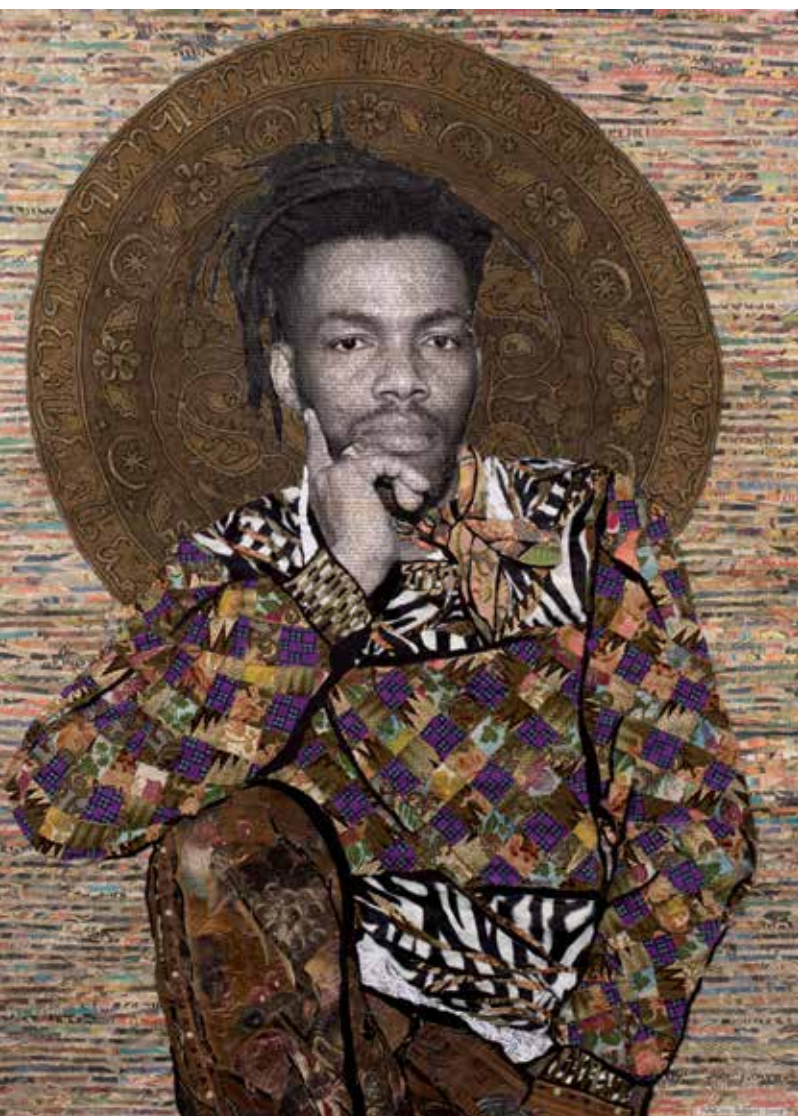
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Couverture: Hassan Hajjaj,
Hindi Kahlo, 2011/1432.
Courtesy of the artist



1-54 LONDON, A LIMITLESS RETELLING OF HISTORY



As the leading international art fair dedicated to contemporary African art, 1-54 helps stimulate ongoing dialogues between practices and traditions, and illustrates the breadth of the field.

Julia DeFabo

Marion Boehm,
Gastineau, 2018
 Courtesy of the artist and ARTCO
 Gallery



Anton Kannemeyer, *In God We Trust*, 2018 Courtesy of the artist and Huberty & Breyne Gallery



Shiraz Bayjoo, Detail from *Porthole* (Triptych), 2017, Acrylic and resin on board, with reclaimed wooden frame, 35 x 50 x 3 cm (each panel)

Courtesy of the artist and Ed Cross Fine Art

Yinka Shonibare, *Material I*, 2017, Hand-painted bronze, 70 x 99 x 76 cm

Courtesy of the artist and James Cohan



Special Projects showcase the fair's commitment to opening up conversation around contemporary African art to include multiple diasporic perspectives from the so-called "periphery".

As 1-54 returns to London to celebrate its sixth consecutive year at Somerset House, this year's fair features more than 130 artists from 21 countries representing Africa and the diaspora presented by 43 exhibitors. Notable returning galleries include Galerie Cécile Fakhoury (Abidjan and Dakar), MAGNIN-A (Paris), Vigo Gallery (London) and the Gallery of African Art (GAFRA, London). According to C. Bendu Cooper, director of the Gallery of African Art (GAFRA, London), they are exhibiting at 1-54 London for a third year specifically because "it presents a great opportunity for artists and galleries to get exposure to a wider international market." This global focus is evident in the fair's growth. Since inception of the London edition in 2013, 1-54 has added editions in New York and Marrakech to its roster.

There are 12 exhibitors showing at the London fair for the first time, including galleries such as Yossi Milo Gallery (New York), MOV'ART (Luanda), Loft Art Gallery (Casablanca), James Cohan (New York) and Retro Africa (Abuja). "It's important to bring together the voices of African artists who have more international careers with those who are under-represented in the United States," notes Jane Cohan, whose first 1-54 London booth includes works by Elias Sime and Yinka Shonibare MBE. The presence of art world heavyweights like Shonibare at 1-54 helps to contextualize emerging artists within the field and the market. Highlights include Angolan photographer Keyezua who unveils her latest work *Floating nightmares*, American multi-disciplinary artist Derrick Adams and Mozambican painter Nelly Guambe.

RE-PRESENTING CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART

The extended Special Projects program reveals an optimistic retelling of contemporary African art. Perhaps the most anticipated project of 1-54 is the Courtyard Commission. For this year, 88-year-old Sudanese painter Ibrahim El-Salahi discloses his first-ever sculpture project. The artist has created a forest of sculptural trees inspired by the Haraz acacia tree, greeting visitors with themes of growth and individuality. Although El-Salahi typically works in 2D, his reputation as one of the most important pioneering African and Arab Modernists makes for a compelling prospect.

Mauritian artist Shiraz Bayjoo's design for the 1-54 Lounge brings together archive-based works in glass display cases to

explore indigenous histories and European colonialism in the Mascarene Islands and Madagascar. It should be noted that Mauritius, Bayjoo's home country, was once colonized by the British and that 1-54 places this project in the heart of the British capital. Bayjoo sees the project as "a space to contemplate the enormity of these stories, to step in and explore the countless possible retellings."

The South African artist Athi-Patra Ruga will be showing in Somerset House's Terrace Rooms from October 2018 up until January 2019, as part of 1-54 and the Charles Russell Speechlys exhibition series. He will display three celebrated bodies of work, that explore identity in relation to South Africa's colonial past and to his position as a queer Xhosa man. Ruga is in good company: solo exhibitions of photographers Hassan Hajjaj (see pages 24-29) and Malick Sidibé took place in the Terrace Rooms during past editions of the fair.

Other Special Projects showcase the fair's commitment to opening up conversation about contemporary African art to include multiple diasporic perspectives from the so-called "periphery". A mixed-media installation by rising star Larry Achiampong explores communities of the diaspora living in the West and their relationship to religion and domesticity. A duo exhibition by emerging Jamaican artists Leasho Johnson and Monique Gilpin focuses on Caribbean identity. It is curated by Suzie Wong Presents and 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning, a partnership that aims to "strengthen transatlantic relationships and increase Caribbean visibility." Finally, newly-discovered paintings by the Haitian artist Robert Saint-Brice (1893-1973) make their debut at the fair, displaying Saint-Brice's interpretations of his dreams and religious experiences as a vodou priest.

Bringing together artists from the perceived "periphery" and showing their work in London tells another side of the story. It allows for a reframing of power relations that resonates throughout the fair, with artists such as Omar Victor Diop, who inserts himself in photographic self portraits that reimagine historical events, and Bodys Isek Kingelez whose dream-like miniature cityscape models quite literally present an alternate story of Kinshasa. Both artists are presenting with MAGNIN-A. These limitless retellings of history read like a declaration that contemporary African art is not a trend but a fixture in the global art market.



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TOURIA EL GLAOUI, SERIAL ENTREPRENEUR

She has become a key figure in the contemporary African art scene, and is its most fervent ambassador. Here's the story of a career that was far from predestined.

Emmanuelle Outtier



“Touria is African at heart,” attests MACAAL director Othman Lazraq.” She was at the forefront of this movement and is now one of the great ambassadors of the African cultural scene.

Ask anyone in Touria El Glaoui’s entourage and they will all say the same thing: “She’s got energy!” It’s true, the career of this multilingual art entrepreneur is impressive. Over the past five years, the daughter of the famous painter from Telouet who passed away last June at the age of 94, has pursued an ambitious goal – increasing the visibility of contemporary art from Africa – and made it a tangible reality through the creation of a new art fair, which has been welcomed with great fanfare and enthusiasm in London, New York and Marrakech. “She’s determined,” admits André Magnin, the art dealer who as early as 2013, was on board with this young woman about whom he knew little else except perhaps her illustrious family name. As so often happens in such success stories, she benefited from a few “shortcuts”. Touria El Glaoui grew up in Rabat, in what she calls “a normal family” with a French mother and a Moroccan father. It was thanks to Hassan El Glaoui, in whose studio she used to play as a child, that Touria first developed a taste for art, and was able to learn the codes of the art world. “Hanging around while he negotiated with galleries or museums undoubtedly helped me understand the art scene.” But it wasn’t a vocation quite yet. “I’m the least creative of my four sisters,” Touria confesses. And her family didn’t push her into it either. “My father was conscious of the fact that it would be hard for us to step out from under the shadow of his reputation as a painter. We would always hear references to his work, and that’s not what he wanted for his daughters.” Instead, Touria decided to get a degree in finance, “as a good way of gaining [her] independence.” She chose New York, though her parents would have preferred Paris. “They threatened not to pay for my education... But I went for it anyway!” One can still sense her Anglo-Saxon efficiency and entrepreneurship. She acts fast! Just like when, much to everyone’s surprise, she opened 1-54 in New York, only two years after a first test run in London.

“PEOPLE WANTED TO SEE IT, BEFORE BELIEVING IT.”

Touria’s career in the United States set the foundations for her interest in African art. Her position at a technology firm meant a lot of business trips, and she traveled all across Africa.

Something clicked. “When I returned to Europe or the United States, I was always amazed that none of the art I had discovered while traveling was on exhibition.” Ideas started to come together, and in late 2011 she dropped everything and headed to London to set up her project for a contemporary African art fair. Her journey across the desert was just beginning. “It can feel lonely when you’re the only one who believes in what you’re trying to achieve,” especially when it hasn’t been done before. “People wanted to see it, to believe it.” Still, a few generous patrons were willing to bet on her crazy dream: her first sponsor was none other than Othman Benjelloun of the BMCE (Moroccan Bank of Foreign Commerce). “He believed in me, even when it was just a fledgling notion,” Touria says. The Anglo-Ghanaian architect David Adjaye designed the scenography of the first edition and referred her to Koyo Kouoh. Laetitia Catoir, the director of BlainSouthern, introduced her to a new network. This strong early support emboldened Touria El Glaoui to pursue her mission, and when she dared to knock on the door of Somerset House... bingo!

But sponsors and galleries were still too few and far between. The watershed moment came when Anna Somers Cocks, the Editor in Chief of *Art Newspaper*, offered to announce the creation of 1-54 in the Frieze Art Fair a whole year before its first edition in London. “I still have the one page ad framed and hanging on my wall!” Touria says jokingly. From then on it was full steam ahead...

“Touria is African at heart,” attests Othman Lazraq, the director of MACAAL (Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden, Marrakech). “She was at the forefront of this movement and is now one of the great ambassadors of the African cultural scene.” “She has crafted a meaningful, coherent story,” adds Cécile Fakhoury, starting with a strong fair in London, taking it to New York, and finally using that momentum to set up 1-54 on the continent. Bringing it to Marrakech just makes a lot of sense. Now is the time for things to come from Africa.”

It is through this international scope that Touria El Glaoui, once “the daughter of,” has managed to make her own name.

TOURIA EL GLAOU

"I AM A FIRM BELIEVER IN COLLABORATION AND EXCHANGE TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES"

From London to New York via Marrakech, Diptyk magazine takes the pulse of the African contemporary art market with the founder of 1-54.

Interview by Meryem Sebti



NIC Kay
performing
at 1-54 New
York 2018, at
Pioneer Works,
Brooklyn.

© Katrina Sorrentino



View of 1-54 Marrakech
in February 2018, at La
Mamounia.

© Adnane Zemmama

In 2013, contemporary African art was hardly visible in the international art scene. What is this market like now, 5 years after the launch of the first London edition of 1-54?

Contemporary art from Africa and the diaspora is not only more visible on the international art scene, it's also slowly driving a change in the narrative and attitudes that have often held it back and prevented it from reaching its full potential. This has resulted in a market that has only grown, strengthened and instilled collectors and buyers with confidence.

You initiated 1-54 Marrakech last February. This edition was particularly symbolic as it was connecting a market built in London and New York with its continent of origin. What were its challenges?

The Marrakech edition was a milestone for the fair. Ever since 1-54 started in 2013 it has naturally been an essential and primary objective to have a fair on the continent. When choosing where on the continent would be best to have presence, we considered access, infrastructure, social and cultural relevance and historical legacy, to ensure an affirmative reception. Of course there were challenges, but I am a firm believer in collaboration and exchange to overcome challenges and that is what we did. We worked with institutions, foundations and spaces across Marrakech to ensure the fair was supportive and accessible to artists, galleries, collectors and the public alike.

Can we say that it was a successful African edition?

For sure, the inaugural edition in Marrakech brought together 17 leading galleries specializing in contemporary African art from Europe, Africa and the US. The fair showcased the work of more than 60 emerging and established artists from over 20 countries and their work was seen by 4,000 local and international visitors. We also had several Special Projects and an educational program called FORUM, both of which partnered with local institutions across Marrakech, including the Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL), Le Musée Yves Saint Laurent, Comptoir des Mines Galerie, Fondation Montresso, LE 18 and Riad Yima, among others. Throughout the fair there was just a brilliant buzz of discussion and activity, I cannot wait to be a part of the atmosphere in our next Marrakech edition in February, 24-25, 2018.

We do not buy the same things in New York, London or Marrakech. What are the buying trends in each of these significant artistic hubs?

I find talks about trends can be misleading and often built on unstable grounds, especially since the three cities we are based in attract such a diverse audience. They are melting pots with multiple legacies, contemporaries and complex relationships to art from Africa and its diaspora. We always encourage and support as many mediums as possible at each of the fairs, from paintings, to performance and photography. Likewise, we support galleries from across the world that present artists living globally so that there's always something for everyone at the fair to engage with.

Organizations, events and auctions around contemporary African art are on the rise. How will the 2018 edition of 1-54 London benefit from this enthusiasm? What makes this edition special?

The growth in interest for arts from Africa and the diaspora is a result of a collective effort from artists and numerous institutions and galleries who have been working tirelessly to change the narrative. There is still a long way to go, but it has stimulated a much deserved interest in artists from Africa and the diaspora. This enthusiasm has without a doubt come to 1-54, resulting in greater visitor numbers and in more funding and confidence in what we are doing. For our upcoming London edition, we are welcoming 11 new galleries, we have more Special Projects than ever before: a solo-exhibition of Athi-Patra Ruga, installations by Ibrahim El-Salahi and Larry Achiampong and a commission by Shiraz Bayjoo, among others. We also have an extensive FORUM programme lined-up.

After you entered important markets like London and New York and the African market with success, what is your next challenge for 1-54?

At the moment we are focusing on supporting and growing the fairs we have in Marrakech, New York and London. We care deeply about every edition and its location and we aim, like always, to have engaging and dynamic fairs that work with and support multiple institutions and spaces in the cities they are held in.

WHAT TO COLLECT?

1-54 London 2018 offers a broad selection of contemporary African art, from elder pioneers to key figures of this vibrant scene. But 1-54 is also the best place to discover up-and-coming artists. *Diptyk* selected 15 artists to add to your art collection.

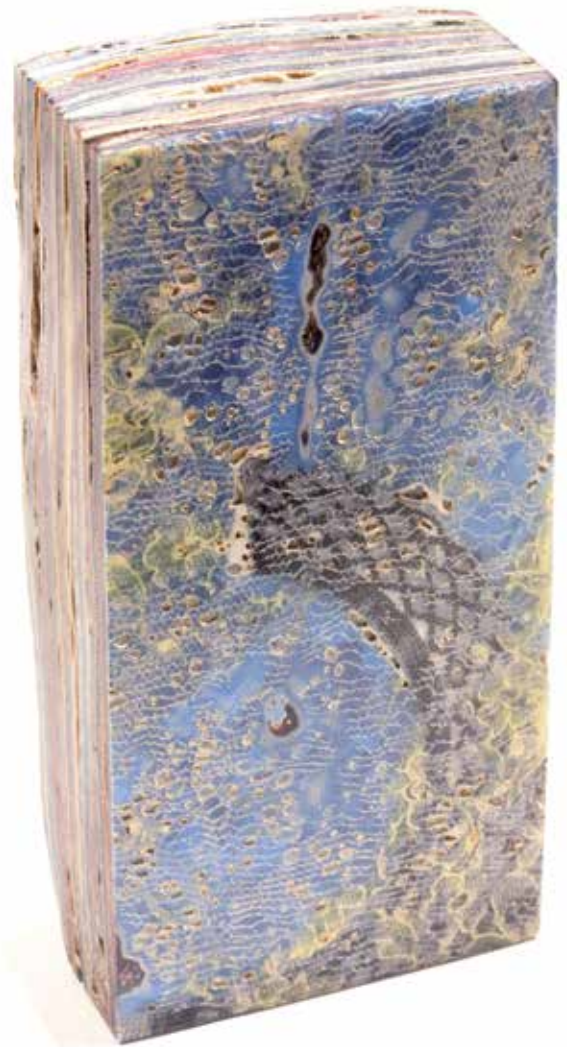
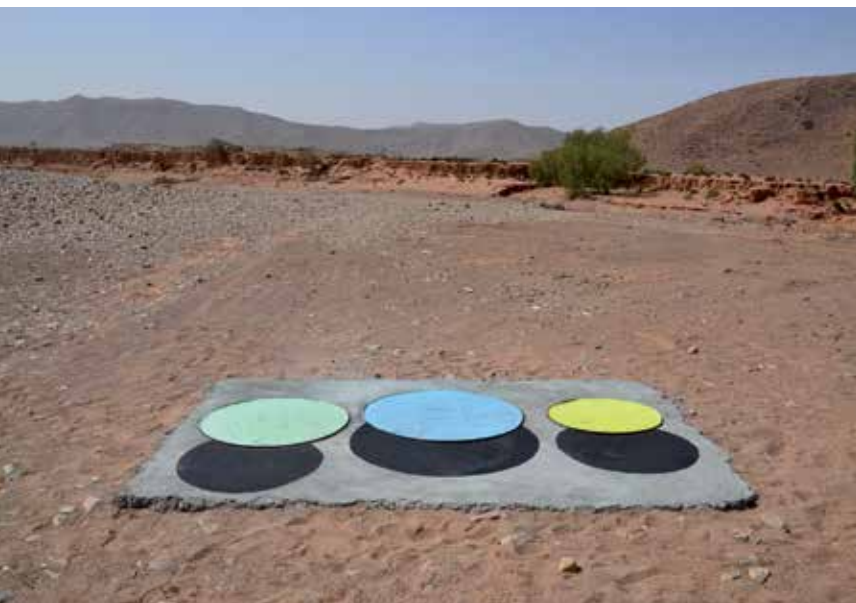
Rym Abouker

HICHAM BENOHOUD **Morocco through a new lens**

Hicham Benohoud's practice gives an alternative view of Moroccan life, society and culture, often via staged acrobatic family portraits, burnt images, performative self-portraits and surrealist imagery. Renowned institutions have included his photographs in their exhibitions, including Maison Européenne de la Photographie in Paris, Tate Modern in London, and Aperture Foundation in New York. He is currently in the group show *Un œil ouvert sur le monde arabe* at Institut du monde arabe in Paris. Museums such as the Tate Modern and Centre Pompidou collect his works.

£2,850

Hicham Benohoud, *Untitled, Landscaping Series*, 2018. @Loft Art Gallery and the Artist
(Loft Art Gallery)



IBRAHIM AHMED **The journey of an artist and a migrant**

Ibrahim Ahmed's dreamlike multidisciplinary works challenge the political lines that define borders and the authenticity of "national identity." Born in Kuwait (1984), Ahmed spent his childhood between Bahrain and Egypt and his teenage years in the U.S. Now back in Egypt, he paints and peels his layered textile assemblages, incorporating poetic references to specific countries and identities, especially in the choice of palettes and textiles. His work has travelled to art fairs and biennales all over the world, including the 13th edition of the Dakar Biennale, ZONA Maco in Mexico and ArtRio in Brazil.

£1,000 - £2,000

Ibrahim Ahmed, *South-South Series (brick)*, 2017.

© The artist, Courtesy of Gallery Nosco 2018
(Gallery Nosco)

* DAN HALTER walks the line

As a Zimbabwean living in South Africa, Dan Halter's multi-disciplinary work deals with the politics of post-colonial Zimbabwe. His many group shows include *Earth Matters: Land as Material and Metaphor in the Arts of Africa* at the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art. He has been an artist in residence in Zürich, Cologne, Turin, Rio de Janeiro and Dufftown in Scotland. His works has been acquired by renowned international collections including Pigozzi Collection, Tiroche Deleon Collection and Reydan Weiss Collection.

£3,820

Dan Halter, *Kuwona Hutsi*, 2017.

Courtesy of Dan Halter and WHATIFTHEWORLD
(WHATIFTHEWORLD)



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* KELANI ABASS The marks of time

Kelani Abass was born in Lagos, Nigeria in 1979 where he still lives. Fascinated with time, memory and the shared history of man and machines, Abass investigates and creates his own kind of archives, through photography, painting and sound, incorporating sometimes-discarded machine parts. The son of a printer, he is interested in how these mediums engage time. He had a solo show at Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos (2016) and his many awards include 1st prize in painting of the Caterina de Medici/3rd Black Heritage Prize (2010), and the Yusuf Grillo Award for best painting student at Yaba Tech (2007).

£4,000

Kelani Abass, *Scrap of Evidence (IFERAN)*, 2018.

Courtesy of SMO Contemporary Art
(SMO Contemporary Art)



* DIMITRI FAGBOHOUN Borderless art

Born the son of a Beninese father and a Ukrainian mother, Dimitri Fagbohoun now lives between Paris, Brussels and Cotonou. His work explores non-linear visions, delving into ideas, identities, histories and boundaries, may they be geographical or artistic. His series *Recollection* reflects the influence of African artworks we admire in museums all around the world while raising important questions on the processes of cultural and artistic appropriation surrounding them. He has shown internationally (Bamako Encounters, Museum für moderne Kunst in Frankfurt) and has received a scholarship from the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art in Washington, DC.

£1,602 - £5,339

Dimitri Fagbohoun, *Microcosmos, Suite, Recollections Series*, 2017-2018.

© Dimitri Fagbohoun, Courtesy of Galerie Cécile Fakhoury
(Galerie Cécile Fakhoury)



✿ **EPHREM SOLOMON**
When domestic meets politics

Trained in traditional printmaking, Ephrem Solomon is known for his wood-cut panels and mixed media works inspired by socio-political observations of contemporary Addis Ababa. Solomon international shows include *Silence*, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery (2018); the NGV Triennial, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (2017-18) and *What about Africa?*, Witteveen Visual Art Centre. His works are held in private collections in Dubai, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, including the Saatchi Collection (UK) and Fondation Blachère (France).

£5,300

Ephrem Solomon, *Hope Series 5*, 2018.

© Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

(Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery)

✿ **EVANS MBUGUA**
African pop art

Evans Mbugua's training as a print designer informs his bright pointillist portraits. Playing with different layers, the Nairobi-born artist starts with a print background. He then layers a portrait in the foreground composed of a unique series of small-dots on the glass or perspex. This joyful portraiture recalls Warhol's silkscreens, with facial features appearing and disappearing in flows of saturated colours. The vitality of his works has attracted the high-end jeweller Maison Chaumet. Evans Mbugua designed a series of six brooches for their *Trésor d'Afrique* presentation.

£5,800 - £6,200

Evans Mbugua, *Lollipop*, 2018.

Courtesy of Gallery of African Art (GAFRA)

(Gallery of African Art - GAFRA)





✿ JOY LABINJO We are family

Joy Labinjo was born 1994 in Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK, and graduated from Newcastle University. In paintings and at times as installation, Labinjo explores her British-Nigerian heritage by depicting intimate scenes of her family life. Her vibrant compositions of colour and patterns were awarded the prestigious Woon Art Prize in 2017.

£5,000 - £8,000

Joy Labinjo, *Untitled*, 2017.

© The artist, Courtesy of Tiwani Contemporary
(Tiwani Contemporary)

✿ MALALA ANDRIALAVIDRAZANA The map and the territory

Madagascar-born artist Malala Andrialavidrazana's art practice stands in opposition to colonial power. Her series *Figures*, which premiered at the 2015 Bamako Biennale, consists of digitally reconstructed maps. Upon close inspection, one realizes the patchwork consists of pre-colonial maps and currency notes, both tools of power and ideology. Building new images shifts perspective and acts as a statement of counter-power to both patriarchy and western hegemony. She received the HSBC Prize for Photography and has shown at La Maison Rouge, France, 2014, Rencontres d'Arles, France, 2007 and Herzliya Museum, Israel, 2007.

£8,000 - £10,000

Malala Andrialavidrazana, *Figures 1856, Geologic Structure*, 2018.

Courtesy of 50 Golborne
(50 Golborne)



✿ ESTHER MAHLANGU Meaningful abstractions

Now 82 years-old, Esther Mahlangu learned traditional Ndebele mural painting as a child. Historically these artworks conveyed a political message: oppressed by the Boers, the Ndebele people started drawing those abstract shapes on their houses to communicate secretly with one another. Mahlangu's large scale geometric patterns are rendered with extreme precision. Today, she is known for bringing the Ndebele tradition to the international contemporary art scene and for collaborations with brands such as BMW.

£3,114

Esther Mahlangu, *Untitled*, 2009.

Courtesy of Burning in Water
(Burning in Water)



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* KEYEZUA A storyteller of the body

Keyezua's press-acclaimed feminist photographic works fearlessly tackle totems and taboos of the physical body. At 1-54, she unveils her new *Floating Nightmares series*, commissioned for the 8th Edition of Breda Photo Festival (Holland) curated by Azu Nwagbogu. Inspired by the soaring death toll of refugees in the Mediterranean sea, the Angolan photographer uses the human body to portray the social, economic and political impact of the refugee crisis and the rise of human trafficking as an uncontrolled growing epidemic. Recent exhibitions include Addis Photo Festival (2016) and Bamako Biennale (2017).

£5,000 - £10,000

Keyezua, *Floating Nightmares*, 2018.
Commissioned for the 8th Edition of Breda Photo Festival

© Keyezua

(MOVART Gallery)



* OMAR BA Symbolic interpretation of the real

Flower, maps, hybrid figures, flags and earth globes. Omar Ba's iconography mixing decorative and figurative elements conveys both deeply personal and political resonances. Omar Ba has charmed the European art scene with the signature style of his enigmatic and poetic paintings. Some of his most recent exhibitions were held at Mucem in Marseille and Foundation Louis Vuitton in Paris. From Le Louvre Abu Dhabi to Credit Suisse, his pieces have been acquired by numerous international collections.

£20,000

Omar Ba, *Processus de mystification 1*, 2018.

© Omar Ba / Art Bärtschi & Cie

(Art Bärtschi & Cie)



* JANUARIO JANO Historical and personal research

Januario Jano's multidisciplinary practice is fuelled by Angola's recent history and Ambundu culture and focuses on the construction of identity, may it be personal or collective. For 1-54, he now delivers abstract collages mixing sewing and painting and is also known for his video and photography. Jano's recent solo exhibitions include *Moponda, This Is Not A White Cube*, Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town (2018). Jano's work has also been included in *The Black Sphinx II*, Primo Marella Gallery, Milan (2018); *Artes Mirabilis*, UCCLA, Lisbon (2018) and *E.U. in Angola*, Portuguese Cultural Centre, Luanda.

£5,500 - £10,000

Januario Jano, *Mponda 11*, 2018.

Courtesy of Primo Marella Gallery
(Primo Marella Gallery)



* SENZENI MARASELA A modern-day Penelope

Senzeni Marasela gives voice and visibility to women: herself, her mother, her alter ego Theodorah and more generally to all fellow South African women. Her practice jumps from a photographic series to durational performance to embroidered works. By embroidering, she pays homage to the striking patience of African women and ties herself to their destiny. Her work has been presented at the 56th Venice Biennale (2015) and features in prominent local and international collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York. At 1-54 she shows a brand new large-scale piece.

£8,000

Senzeni Marasela, *Waiting for Gebane*, 2017.

Courtesy of AFRONOVA GALLERY
(AFRONOVA GALLERY)



* YOUSSEF NABIL Melodrama King

The Egyptian self-taught photographer stages tableaux in which his subjects act out melodramas reminiscent of film stills from the Golden Age of Egyptian cinema. He started his career assisting David LaChapelle and, like his mentor, he is inspired by cinema icons and stars. Youssef Nabil's hand-colored silver gelatin prints are held in various collections from LACMA Museum, Los Angeles, to the joint collection of the British Museum and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. His recent exhibitions include *Youssef Nabil: I Saved My Belly Dancer*, Pérez Art Museum, Miami (2017).

£8,902 - £17,803

Youssef Nabil, *Ali in Abaya*, Paris, 2007.

Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Nathalie Obadia,
Paris / Bruxelles
(Galerie Nathalie Obadia)

WHO REALLY PROFITS FROM THE AFRICAN ART MARKET BOOM?

International exhibits, auction houses with record sales, and specialized art fairs in Paris, London, New York and Marrakech - The hour has come, it seems, for the continent to finally reap the benefits of its creativity.

Emmanuelle Outtier

“2017: A Pivotal Year for African Art” ran a recent headline in the international press, as excitement in the art world reached a fever pitch. In addition to the already numerous international exhibits in 2017, this year was also marked by the opening of the highly publicized Zeitz MOCAA in Cape Town, which seemed poised to become a kind of African MoMA. 2018 has only confirmed this momentum. In February the 1-54 art fair opened its first African edition in Marrakech, and the MACAAL (Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden) was inaugurated. And if the “African Cultural Season” that France is planning for the year 2020 is any indication, this trend isn’t losing steam. “There is certainly a phenomenon happening around Africa, something along the lines of ‘Africa is on the rise,’” remarks Guil-

laume Piens, the director of the Art Paris Art Fair. “Africa is no longer a separate cabal; it is beginning to integrate itself into the international art circuit.” If you still need to be persuaded, look no further than the auction houses, which from Bonhams to Sotheby’s, have opened their doors and their listings to African artists.

AN EXPANDING MARKET

Bonhams London has played a pioneering role in the market since 2008 with its Africa Now auction and is likely to continue. Last year, Giles Peppiatt, Bonhams contemporary African art sales director, assured us that “the market is sound and growing both in terms of price and demand, and in terms of the genuine interest shown for the artwork.” And prospects remain strong, as indicated by last February’s record sale of a painting often

described as the “African Mona Lisa.” The portrait of Ife princess Adetutu Ademiluyi, known as Tutu, by the Nigerian artist Ben Enwonwu fetched over 1.36 million euros at auction. In Paris, Piasa has managed to shore up its share of the market with sale volumes above those of Cornette de Saint Cyr over the same period (Africa Art Market Report 2016). This September, Piasa dispersed a part of the Pierre Loos collection which contributed to the success of the “Beauté Congo” show at the Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art in 2015. Sotheby’s in London created a department dedicated to African art in 2016 and has so far made over 4 million euros in combined sales over two extraordinary sales (2.5 million in April 2016 and another 2 million in March 2017). These are encouragingly high rates, even if they still fall

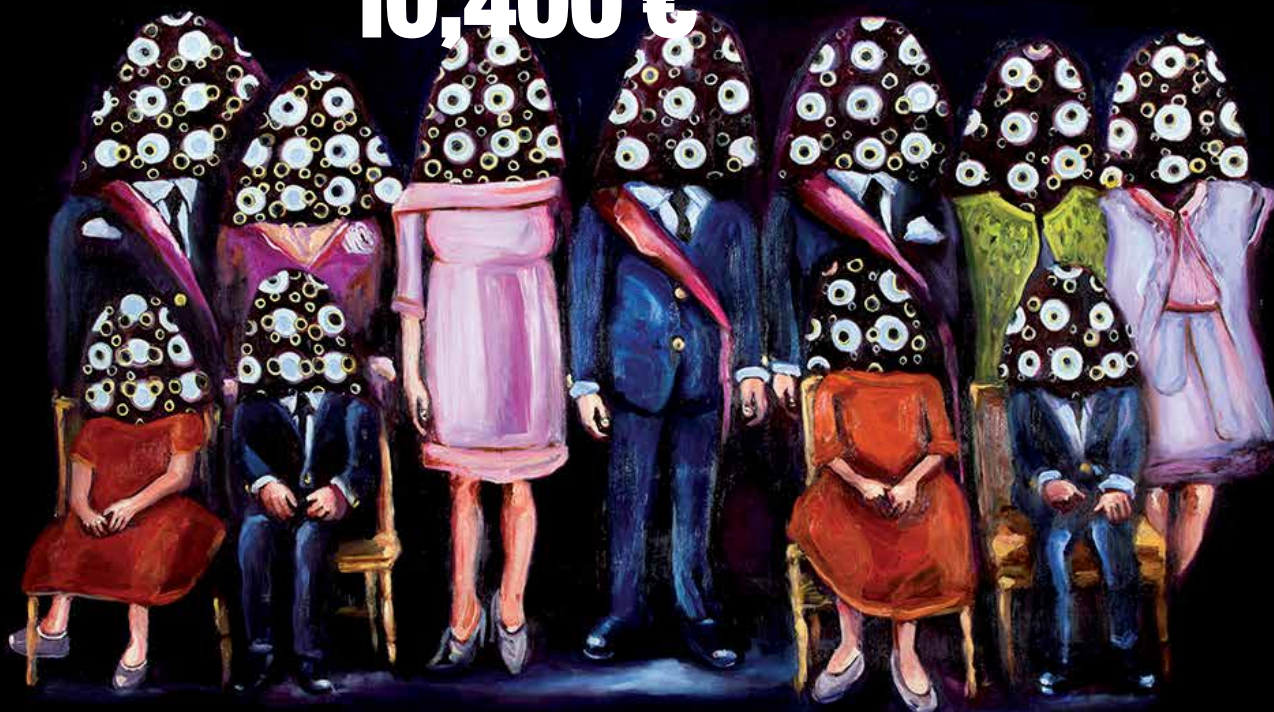
19



SOLD
805,619 €

El Anatsui,
*Earth
Developing
More Roots*,
2011,
Aluminium
bottle caps
and copper
wire, 320 x
338 cm.
© Sotheby's

SOLD
10,400 €

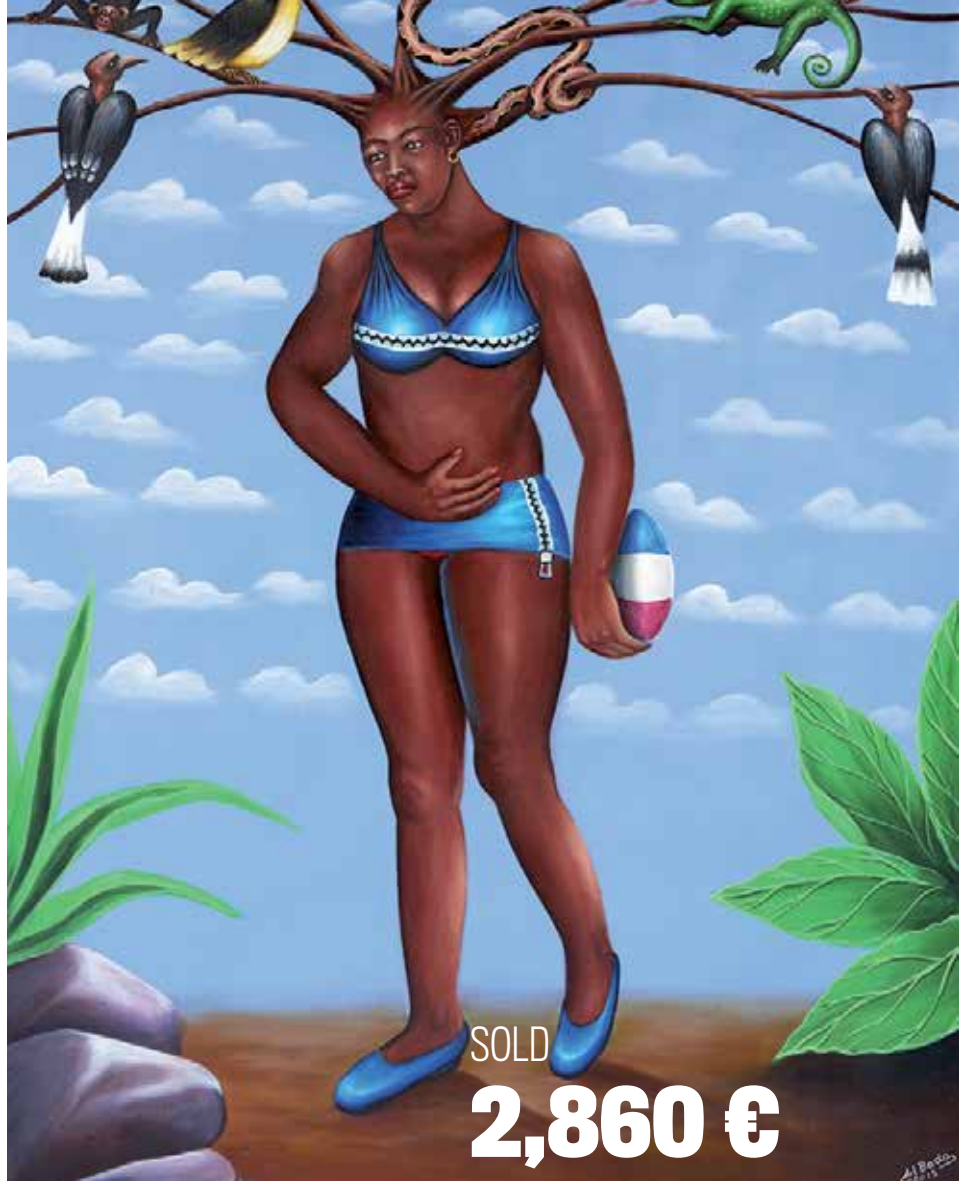


Yassine
Balbzioui,
Watching,
2016, Oil on
linen
© Piasa

20

Pierre Camille
Bodo, *Femme
chargée* :
La sportive
Series, 2013,
Acrylic on
canvas.
© Piasa

Afi Nayo, *Untitled*, 2017, Mixed
media on wood © Piasa



short of prices paid for global contemporary artworks. “This market still remains relatively small and under-developed compared to the global art market,” says Charlotte Lidon, an expert at Sotheby’s. “Modern and contemporary African art represents less than 0.1% of sales at auction while Africa represents 15% of the world population, not to mention an important diaspora.” This same underrepresentation could be seen at Art Basel. While Barthélémy Togo, Yto Barrada, Ibrahim Mahama and Candice Breitz all participated in the prestigious “Unlimited” section dedicated to monumental works, only two galleries (Goodman and Stevenson) based on the continent were present at the fair, and the representation of African artists remained under 2%. But the team at Sotheby’s remains confident: “The market will continue to develop. For now, less than ten artists have reached the million dollar mark at auc-

tion, and we believe that great figures such as Ibrahim El Salahi or even El Anatsui have not yet reached their full potential.”

THE ART FAIR EFFECT

This expanding market has benefited from an ecosystem that has been patiently building up over the years. It has had proven results not only in terms of artists’ visibility, but also in enlarging the circle of enthusiasts, which for so long was the domain of only a select few European initiators such as Jean Pigozzi, Robert Devereux or Jochen Zeitz. The emergence of art fairs dedicated to African contemporary art, starting with the first edition of the 1-54 Art Fair in 2013 on the fringes of Frieze London, has been a catalyst for the African art scene. This winning formula has been reproduced in New York since 2015 before opening in Marrakech in 2018. Founded by Touria El Glaoui, 1-54 connects market

players from one continent to the other and has managed to attract a wide and eclectic audience, as was particularly noticeable at the New York edition. The fair has also attracted a lot of institutional attention, especially by acquisition committees from various university collections which “are buying up works quickly,” according to Touria El Glaoui, as well as by committed individual buyers: “Our fair has resonated quite strongly with the African-American community, which has been quite active in terms of purchasing the art.” As for galleries, El Glaoui has cultivated a “solid group of followers” over the last five years which includes prominent houses in London and Paris known for being at the forefront of contemporary trends. They help expand awareness of the African scene, which has been so often misunderstood, or misidentified by collectors. Ever since the 1979 opening of the historic October Gallery in London, this city, which had



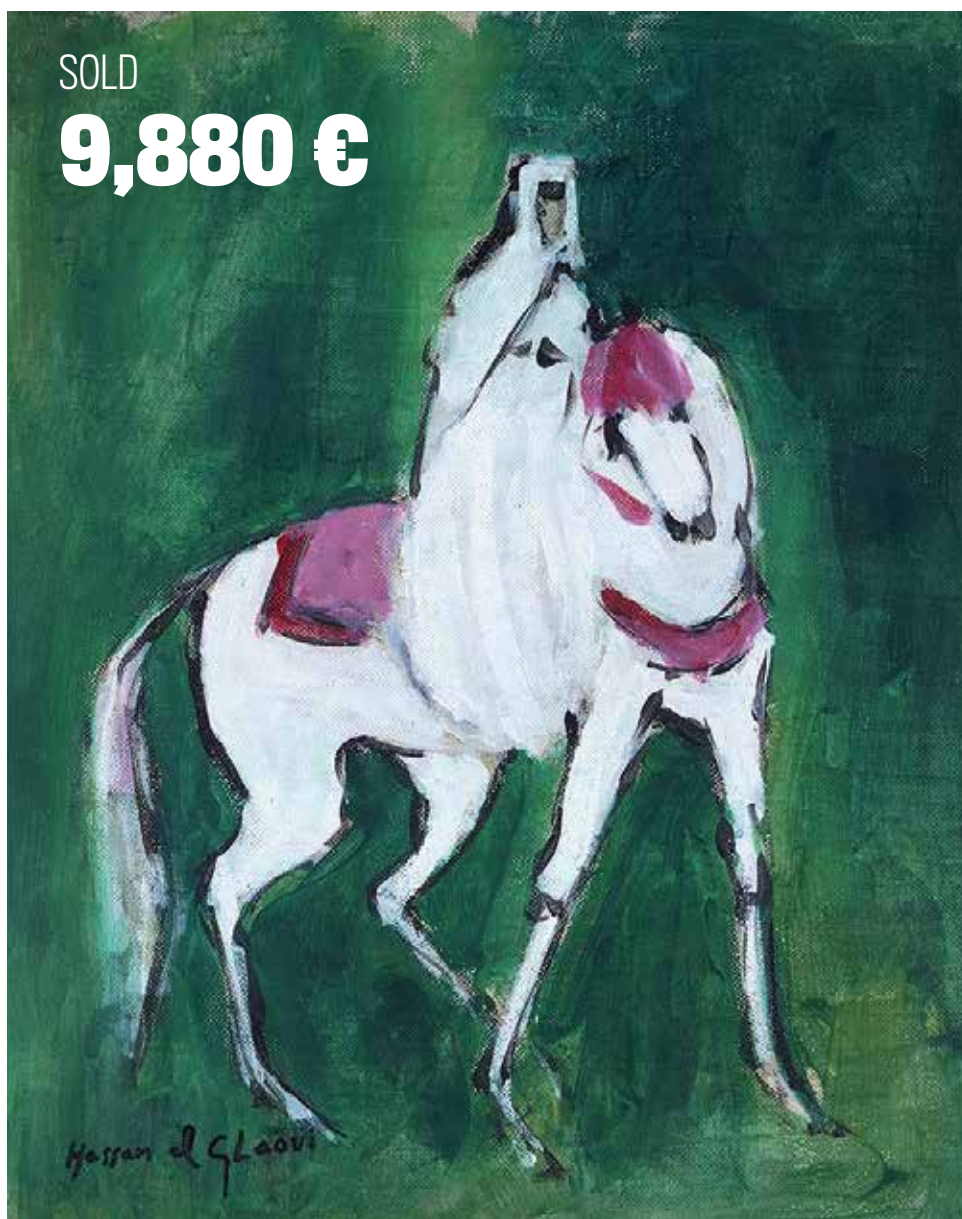
ESTIMATE

8,000 – 12,000 €

21

Jean-Bosco Kamba,
Untitled, 1958, Huile
sur panneau Unalit,
46 x 76 cm

© Piasa



SOLD

9,880 €

Hassan El Glaoui,
Untitled, Oil on
hardboard

© Piasa

largely anticipated this current trend, has seen an exponential growth of young dynamic art structures. Tiwani Contemporary, Jack Bell, and Tyburn are among the biggest players. Tyburn, established in 2015, today represents some of the most sought-after artists from the African continent, such as Joël Andrianomearisoa or Mohau Modisakeng, who was a visiting artist at the South Africa pavilion at the Venice Biennale. In Paris, MAGNIN-A, Anne de Villepoix, and Eric Hussenot are making their mark and helping to bring the French capital up to speed. And some of the most powerful galleries are starting to take notice: Daniel Templon will exhibit works this season by his new protégé, the Senegalese painter Omar Ba.

AFRICA FOR AFRICANS

Not all the stars are aligned, however. The Achilles heel of the African art market remains its weak connection to local communities, with too few collectors or galleries on the continent and little political support. “The potential is enormous, but artists need the support of the governments in their own countries, be it in terms of access to education, encouraging creativity or public financial support for art exhibits,” says Sotheby’s Charlotte Lidon. Because of this lack of state support, the international biennales in Dakar, Bamako or Marrakech, only seem to echo the scene’s growing disconnect, not to say outright schizophrenia, despite their international appeal. And in spite of the success of the Dakar biennale, headed by Simon Njami, and its central role in the African market (300 art events programmed in a single city), it barely hides the continent’s lack of financial and professional means, let alone the fragility of its own institutions. The 7th Marrakech Biennale, which was

set to open in February 2018, was canceled. Why? Because of debts in excess of 3.5 million dirhams and lack of support from both public institutions and the private sector.

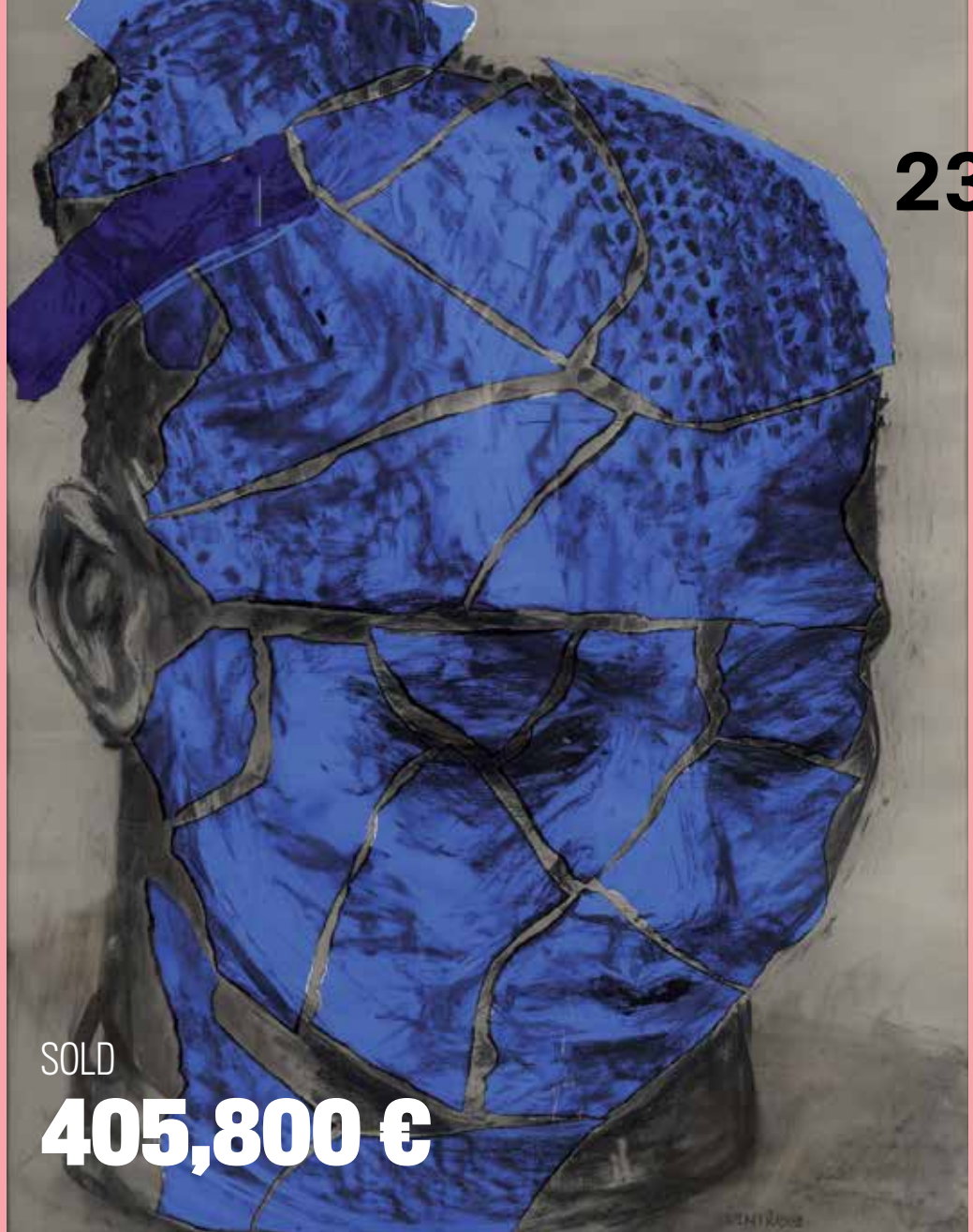
Disregarding naysayers on all sides, artists, curators and collectors have taken their own initiatives, and the lines are slowly moving. These include the Zinsou Foundation in Benin, Koyo Kouoh’s RAW Material Company in Dakar, and the Centre for Contemporary Art started by Bisi Silva in Lagos, just to name a few. Certain internationally renowned artists are also reinvesting back into the cultural field. Ethiopian artist Aida Muluneh launched the Addis Foto Fest in 2010. Barthélémy Toguo and William Kentridge respectively, founded Bandjoun Station in Cameroon and the Centre for the Less Good Idea in South Africa. “There has been an important movement by artists, whether in terms of engagement or return” curator Marie-Ann Yemsi tells us. There are even more encouraging indicators. Cecile Fakhoury opened a second gallery last May, not in Paris or London, but in Dakar. “There is a cultural vitality in Dakar which extends well beyond the Biennale,” explains the Côte d’Ivoire-based gallerist. In Uganda the Kampala Biennale, sponsored in part by Simon Njami, is attempting to create a new platform to make up for the lack of arts education on the continent. After an open call for applications, several young artists were selected to assist seven major artists (including Konaté, Tayou and Gondor) with their ongoing projects. More than just a show space, the Biennale hopes to play a vital role in the transmission of acquired skills and knowledge. We hope and expect that in this way, the continent’s own dynamic and creative forces will be able to stimulate a local market which has yet to reach its full potential.



SOLD
248,512 €

Yinka Shonibare,
Crash Willy,
2009, Mannequin,
Dutch wax
printed cotton
textile, leather,
fiberglass and
metal, 132 x 198
x 260 cm

© Sotheby's



23

SOLD
405,800 €



SOLD
66,339 €

William Kentridge,
*Tête de femme
bleue*, circa 1997,
Charcoal, collage
and gouache on
paper, 178 x 135 cm
© Piasa

Nicholas Hlobo, *Sans titre*,
2006, Mixed media, rubber
inner tube, ribbon, on
paper, 86 x 115,5 cm
© Sotheby's

HASSAN HAJJAJ



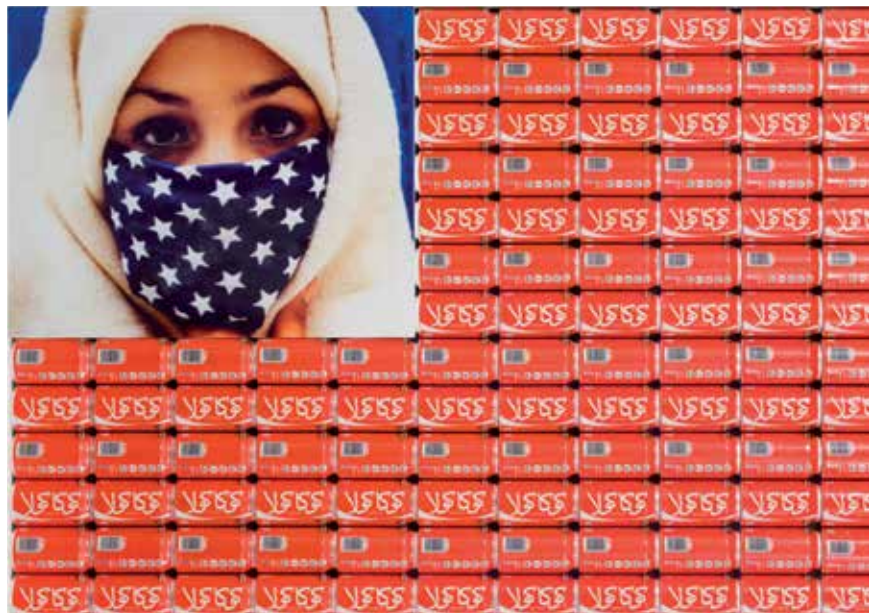
Portrait of Hassan at Malick Sidibé's Studio in Bamako, Mali

© Studio Malick Sidibé

MOROCCO'S "ANDY WAHLOO"

A star of Moroccan contemporary art, he's also a major supporter of the artists he loves and street culture.

Marie Moignard



M.U.S.A. (*Marhaba United States of America)
(*Marhaba = Welcome), 2009/1430 Courtesy of the artist



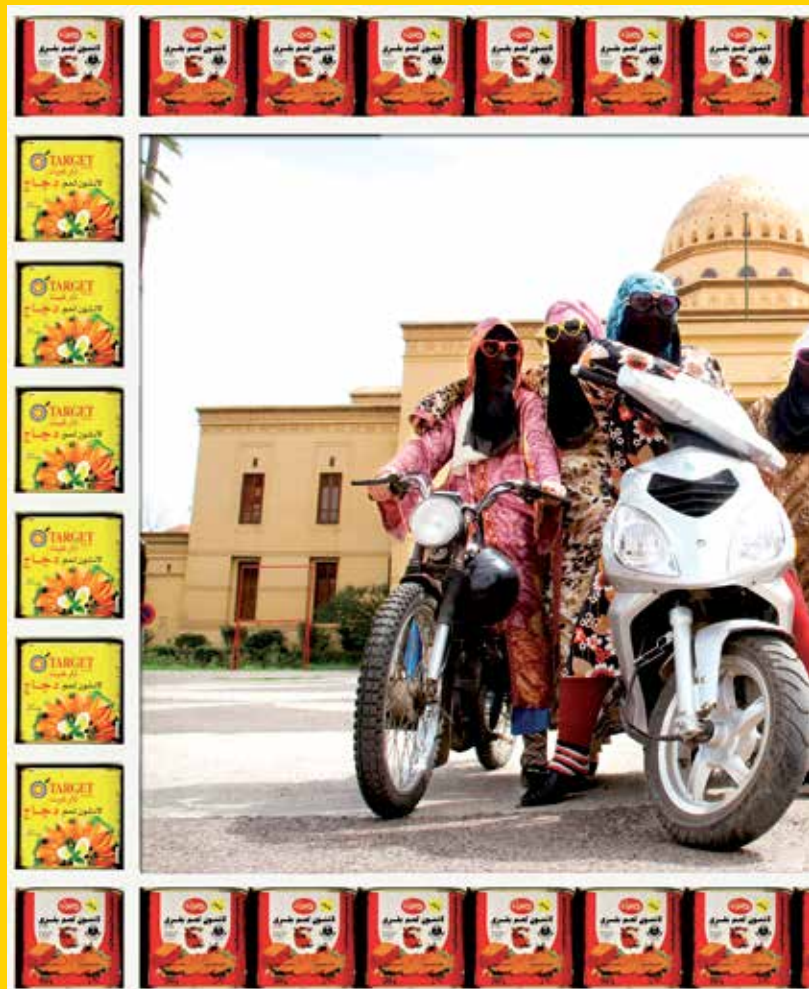
Hindi Kaho, 2011/1432 Courtesy of the artist

We all wish we were part of his “happy family.” Hassan Hajjaj is not just an artist who seamlessly blends photography, fashion, and design. His work has inspired an entire tribe of followers, creators, singers, and musicians who champion love for all, regardless of one’s religions and nationality. The latest convert is the Queen of Pop herself, Madonna. She was immediately seduced by the British-Moroccan artist’s vibrant and eccentric universe while in Marrakech to celebrate her 60th birthday. His portrait of her, complete with a counterfeit fez stamped with the unmistakable, Louis Vuitton logo, garnered some 200,000 likes on the singer’s Instagram account. But far from being a guru, Hassan Hajjaj is driven by an unshakable, almost disarming modesty. An eternal admirer of others, Hajjaj has spent the last twenty-five years cultivating his own entourage of VIPs - which in his case stands more for ‘Very Interesting People’ than for any elite group. So much so that the mere mention of his name has become a label for both unrepentant cool, and social solidarity. And while he could layback and relax on his vintage couch, instead, Hajjaj has worked hard to become one the top 10 most sought after African artists on the market today (Africa Art Market Report 2015).

Last fall, almost as an aside to the Special Project he presented at the 1-54 Art Fair, Hajjaj took up quarters at London’s Somerset House with *La Caravane*, an exhibition which he considers as a homecoming after many years abroad. “I’m following in the footsteps of Malik Sidibé whose work was exhibited here in 2016, and it’s a great honor for me,” says Hajjaj. “It’s also an important moment for me because this is my first solo show in London in seven years. I wanted to promote artists who have crossed my paths with me since then.” And many artists have. Hassan arrived in England when he was 12. His father had been working there since he was a child. He discovered a new and exciting world, but also the prevailing racism that set the children of immigrants apart. He experienced grooving London of the 80’s to the fullest, and in 1984 he created his own streetwear brand called R.A.P. (“Real Artistic People”), one of the very first of its kind. Then he became an assistant to the stylist Andy Blake and set foot in the photography world. “There were a lot of parties where we’d play our own music and set the mood. The city of London has always inspired me. It has really shaped the identity of my work today.”

GUIDED BY FUN

His motto? “Have fun.” Hajjaj only does what he loves, and people love him for it. His sincerity is surprising, for an artist who has worked with institutions like the Victoria and Albert Museum and the LACMA, and who has a boutique-workshop in London and a riad-gallery in Marrakech. The kind of spaces



where the specter of big money usually pushes people to be cynical about productivity. Even Hajjaj’s collaboration with Reebok seems to be guided by a desire to simply have fun. “Along with designer Melody Ehsani, we reinterpreted their iconic Pumps, with a nod to my universe. The textile’s motif comes from the woven mats I use as a backdrop in my pictures, and there’s a Hand of Fatima on each side of the shoe. It’s funny, because in my art I work a lot with knockoffs and imitation brands that I find in the souks of Marrakech! So I guess you could say I’ve come full circle.”

The *détournement* of pop imagery has long been one of Hajjaj’s hallmarks. His first exhibit, *Graffiti From The Souk* (2001), replaced objects from Western consumer culture with Moroccan teapots and babouche slippers in various colors, almost like a silkscreen prints. This simple yet effective play with iconography has won Hajjaj the nickname “Moroccan Andy Warhol,” and the reference and unintended homage has stuck with him ever since. He says, “Andy Warhol was never a real influence on me. It was a journalist who first drew the parallel, but I’d say our intentions differ enormously, and I don’t really identify with the nickname. I much prefer the pun my friend Rachid Taha made when he called me ‘Andy Wahloo’, which means ‘I have nothing’ in Moroccan Arabic.” Soon after that name was bestowed on him, Hajjaj decorated an eponymous bar and nightclub which became a gathering place for hip Parisians in the early post-9/11 era. Of course, at the time Arab culture wasn’t getting good press, but Hajjaj’s decor offered



Kesh Angels, 2010/1431
 Courtesy of the artist & Vigo Gallery, London

Afrikan Boy Sittin', 2013/1434
 Courtesy of the artist & Vigo Gallery, London



"Andy Warhol was never a real influence for me. My friend Rachid Taha made with a play on words when he call me 'Andy Wahloo' which means 'I have nothing' in Moroccan Arabic."



Bumi Sittin', Part of My Rockstars Vol.2 series, 2013/143 Courtesy of the artist



4ÈME BIENNALE INTERNATIONALE DE CASABLANCA

www.biennalecasablanca.org

Intitulée Récits des Bords de l'Eau (*Tales from Water Margins*), la biennale propose d'explorer des récits et vécus issus de contextes insulaires ainsi que le rapport aux affluents, mers et océans, dans une dimension à la fois historique et contemporaine, incluant les expériences de déplacement, voyage, migration et hybridité culturelle. Ce thème – inspiré de la résidence de la biennale, Iftry, située sur la côte marocaine dans la région d'Essaouira, versant sur l'Océan Atlantique – est aussi ancré dans certaines des caractéristiques liées au territoire marocain, au carrefour de la terre, de l'océan et de la mer. Il fait également écho à un grand nombre de questions sociétales contemporaines envers lesquelles les artistes réagissent sous diverses formes créatives.

Sous la direction artistique de **Christine Eyene**.

Noms des artistes :

- **Ibrahim Ahmed** (Koweït / Égypte)
- **Yoriyas Yassine Alaoui** (Maroc)
- **Héla Ammar** (Tunisie)
- **Gilles Aubry** (Suisse / Allemagne)
- **Margaret Aull** (Fiji / Nouvelle-Zélande)
- **Mo Baala** (Maroc)
- **Bianca Baldi** (Afrique du Sud / Belgique)
- **Raphaël Barontini** (France)
- **Shiraz Bayjoo** (Île Maurice / Royaume-Uni)
- **Cristiano Berti** (Italie)
- **Sutapa Biswas** (Royaume-Uni)
- **Rémy Bosquère** (France)
- **Abdessamad El Montassir** (Maroc / France)
- **Raphaël Faon & Andres Salgado** (France / Colombie)
- **Thierry Geoffroy** (France / Danemark)
- **Leilani Kake** (Îles Cook / Nouvelle-Zélande)
- **M'hammed Kilifo** (Maroc)
- **Mehdi-Georges Lahlou** (France / Maroc)
- **Mohammed Laouli & Katrin Stroebel** (Maroc / Allemagne)
- **Delaine Le Bas** (Royaume-Uni)
- **Mehryl Levisse** (France)
- **Julia Mage'au Gray** (Australie / Nouvelle-Zélande / Papouasie-Nouvelle-Guinée)
- **Kolokesa Mähina-Tuai** (Nouvelle-Zélande / Tonga)
- **Fatima Mazmouz** (Maroc / France)
- **Emo de Medeiros** (Bénin / France)
- **Meld & Alexander Schellow** (États-Unis / Allemagne)
- **Gideon Mendel** (Afrique du Sud / Royaume-Uni)
- **Yvon Ngassam** (Cameroun)
- **Amine Oulmakki** (Maroc)
- **Yohann Queland de Saint-Pern** (France - Île de la Réunion)
- **Anna Raimondo** (Italie / Belgique)
- **Saïd Raïs** (Maroc)
- **Ben Saint-Maxent** (France)
- **Magda Stawarska-Beavan & Joshua Horsley** (Pologne / Royaume-Uni)
- **Oussama Tabti** (Algérie / France)
- **Youssef Tabti** (France / Allemagne)
- **Vaimaila Urale** (Nouvelle-Zélande / Samoa)
- **Filip Van Dingenen** (Belgique)
- **Haythem Zakaria** (Tunisie / France)



Garage Hajjaj, 2003/1424

Courtesy of the Artist

a fresh twist and was an instant hit, replete with oil barrels transformed into comfortable poufs and walls lined with multi-colored Coca-Cola bottles. “You could say it sparked everything that followed. The reaction was overwhelmingly positive, in part because my work was fun and not directly Islamic or political.” Hajjaj used that same recipe for success in *Le Salon*, a later installation that lay somewhere between spatial design and interactive art, and which consisted in tinkered objects that celebrate the pop culture of the Arab World. It was a risky middle ground for an artist. This fun “Moroccan corner”, which seems to have been hauled around just about everywhere, had met much fanfare and mixed reactions in various forms, some quite simple, and yet everyone wants a piece! It’s so colorful and cool!

POP ART AND ACTIVISM

That’s the risk inherent to Hassan Hajjaj’s work, only seeing the fun, entertaining side, without acknowledging its potential to raise more profound questions about today’s society. Because his art undoubtedly has a political side, as is most evident in his photography. Hajjaj uses a “girl power” aesthetic to portray Arab women in positions of empowerment as are rarely shown in Western media, where veils are worn to conceal a confident female gaze, and where women in djellabas ride tricked-out mopeds (*Kesh Angels*, 2010) and lift weights (*La salle de gym des femmes arabes*, 2016). Reactions to this aspect of his work have been less enthusiastic. “After 9/11, people were afraid to show that part of my work, because of the veil. But I persevered, and opinions started to change. But there have always been unsavory reactions, like at a show in the United States in 2017, when I was asked how women could ride motorcycles covered up like that. I prefer to leave those kinds of comments aside.” Hassan Hajjaj’s brand of activism is also evident in his endeavor to defend and preserve Moroccan

“I only have three pictures from my childhood, taken at photo studios in Larache, or by itinerant photographers on the beach.”

popular culture. In the documentary *Karima – A Day in Life of a Henna Girl* (2015), set in Marrakech, where Hajjaj is a long-time resident, he brings one of his first female models out of the anonymity of Jemaâ el Fna. His series of portraits *Colors of Gnawa* (2016) has helped save the legacy of master musicians of traditional Gnawa music, which a younger generation is now rediscovering at events like the Gnaoua Festival in Essaouira.

YOU’RE PART OF MY FAMILY

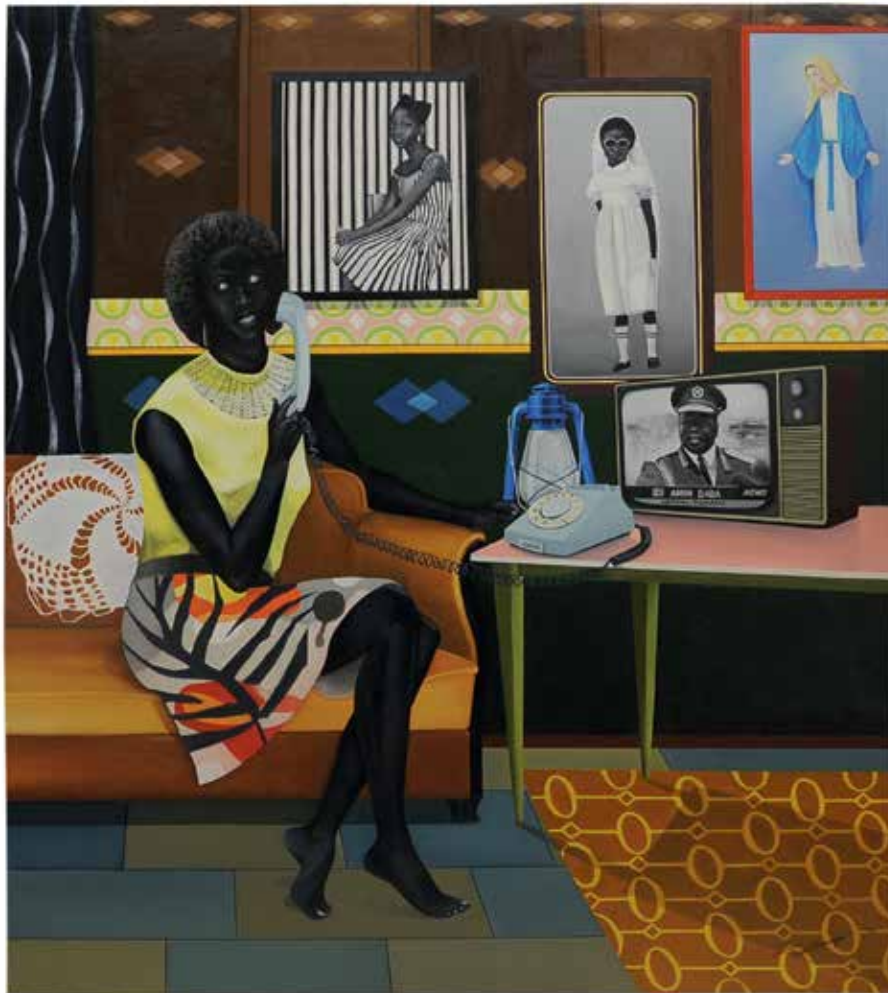
Even though he doesn’t perform on stage himself, music has always been an integral part of his photographic practice. In a series called *My Rock Stars* compiled since 2012, Hajjaj has been collecting portraits of his favorite musicians, such as Marques Toliver or Gnawa artist Simo Lagnawi. It’s a family photo album for a family he never had. “I only have three pictures from my childhood, taken at photo studios in Larache, or by itinerant photographers on the beach. That was my first exposure to photography.” As a child I used to collect discarded strips of film outside the cinema. I especially remember Indian and Egyptian films, filled with colors,” much like the vibrant and contrasted tones of his own creations.

Last December, for his first solo show in Casablanca at Galerie L’Atelier 21, he paid homage to the Moroccan music scene with *Marock stars* (2017), which included Hindi Zahra, DJ VAN, Oum, and others. In Marrakech, the Comptoir des Mines Galerie gave him free reign over an apartment which he redecorated and christened “Mi Casa Su Casa,” and invited his friends to join in. Lesser known, but no less talented photographers were on display, from Marrakech’s own Noureddine Tilsaghani to Rachid Ouettassi from Tangier. From the younger generation, his newest favorite is Yoriyas, a.k.a Yassine Alaoui Ismaili. “This generation doesn’t expect anything from galleries, they just do their own thing on Instagram. It gives me hope.” Like we said, just do what you love.

PIASA

CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART

AUCTION: NOVEMBER 14, 2018, 6PM



Ian Mwesiga (born in 1989, Ouganda)
The telephone call, 2018
Oil on canvas - 60 x 50 inch
15 000 / 25 000 €

CONTACT PIASA

Christophe Person
T. +33 1 53 34 10 18
c.person@piasa.fr

Margot Denis-Lutard
T. +33 1 53 34 10 02
m.denis-lutard@piasa.fr

VIEWINGS & AUCTIONS

PIASA
118 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré
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T. +33 1 53 34 10 10

VIEWINGS

November 10, 2018 from 11 to 6pm
November 12, 2018 from 10 to 6pm
November 13, 2018 from 10 to 6pm
November 14, 2018 from 10 to 12pm

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