

Galleries Lafayette to Celebrate African Art and Design

The French retailer will host the "Africa Now" event at its Boulevard Haussmann flagship from March 29 to June 10.

By Robert Williams on January 5, 2017



"Plastic Smile" by Moffat Takadiwa, who will be featured in Galleries Lafayette's Africa Now exhibition

ART OF AFRICA: Galleries Lafayette will celebrate African art and design with an exhibition and pop-up shop next spring.

From March 29 to June 10, window displays at the French department store chain's Boulevard Haussmann flagship will feature works by Lakin Ogunbanwo, a Nigerian photographer best known for his portraits. **Joël Andrianomearisoa, a mixed-media collage and sculpture artist who lives and works between Paris and Madagascar, will create an installation under the store's signature cupola.**

The store's first-floor gallery space will host an exhibition curated by Marie-Ann Yemsi called "Le jour qui vient" ("The Day to Come" in English), featuring painters, sculptors, photographers and video artists, many of whom the store said have never shown their works in France. Among them will be pieces by Igshaan Adams, a South African tapestry artist, and Ruby Onyinyechi Amanze, a Nigerian-born artist based in Brooklyn, N.Y., whose drawings evoke key themes of the African diaspora by depicting characters she calls "aliens" — people with fluid geographic and cultural identities.

"This artistic voyage through critical, dense and promising works invites us to transform our outlook, our perceptions," Galleries Lafayette said in a statement.

Marché Noir, the Paris boutique offering African vintage finds curated by Togolese stylist Amah Ayivi, will open a pop-up shop on the flagship's sixth floor featuring vintage fashion, accessories and home goods culled from the street markets of Lomé. A selection of pieces by young African designers will also be available for sale.



The initiative is part of the retailer's ongoing commitment to supporting contemporary art, as it gears up to open its Galeries Lafayette Foundation headquarters to the public later this year. In September, it tapped South Korean artist Haegue Yang to create original artworks for its department store chain across France and design a limited-edition carrier bag for the store.

Guillaume Houzé, Galerie Lafayette Group's director of patronage and image, is a descendant of the store's founder and, together with his grandmother, Ginette Moulin, has established a large private collection.

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