

Again, contemporary African Art Fair goes to New York

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An expanding space for artists, writers and connoisseurs known as 1:54 Contemporary African Art sharpens its focus in the 2016 edition as it continues in New York, U.S.

The 2016 programme for 1:54 Forum has been announced to include the fair's discursive programme curated by Koyo Kouoh, and her collaborators Adrienne Edwards (Performa, New York and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis), Ugochukwu-Smooth C. Nzewi (Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College), and Dexter Wimberly (independent New York-based curator).

Kouoh who leads the discussion is a founder and Artistic Director of RAW Material Company, Dakar, Senegal and Curator of the 2016 EVA International – Ireland's Biennial of Contemporary Art.

The fair's forum will host 1:54 Performs, a new performance section for this year's edition co-presented with Performa and curated by Adrienne Edwards, Curator at Performa and Curator-at-Large at the Walker Art Center. A statement. By the organisers added that the innovative platform of the fair will centre around two original performances.

It features what has been described as contributions from a rising generation of cultural entrepreneurs and producers, Forum's programme that will pivot around key areas of interest, including independent and institutional curating in an increasingly digital and decentered age. The statement stressed: "This will build on current waves of productivity steadily

metabolising the digital as a valuable tool in disseminating and connecting with forms of knowledge and exchange.

“Forum will act as a go-between travelling from historical, formative moments to future hypotheses in the areas of artmaking, exhibition, dissemination and critical reflection. With a vast amount of activity now taking place online, the subject of how institutions have sought to deal with this shift, with its own conditions of engagement and display, will also be visited.”

The schedules include 1:54 FORUM , Friday, May 6, with Welcome and Opening Remarks by Kouoh; and Beyond Cultural Polarities: Africa’s Creative ‘Repats’. On cultural Polarities. The organisers stated: “As Africa’s international creative class becomes more visible on the continent – particularly in major metropolises like Dakar, Lagos, Addis Ababa, Nairobi, Luanda and Johannesburg – many diaspora Africans are choosing to return to the continent. Many of these returnees, known as ‘repats’, are highly educated and skilled, and while they have shown that they can seize new opportunities and transfer skills to Africa’s nascent creative industries, they face plenty of challenges. Discussants include Andrew Dosunmu (filmmaker based in Nigeria); Nina Keïta (entrepreneur based in Côte d’Ivoire); and Elinyisia Moshia (journalist based in Tanzania). Moderated by Claude Grunitzky (Founder and Editor-in-Chief of rue Africa).”

Also included is Media Platforms for the Promotion of the Arts, Visual Cultures, and Social Experiences of and about Africa and the Diaspora

The panel explores the new wave of omnibus digital content providers focused on African and African Diaspora contemporary cultures and social activities with discussants Claude Grunitzky (Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of TRUE Africa) and Abiola Oke (CEO of Okayafrica). Moderated by Ugochukwu-Smooth C. Nzewi (Curator of African Art at the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College).

Next is The Politics and Privilege of Play: Dexter Wimberly (independent curator) in conversation with ruby onyinyechi amanze (artist)

Navigating the liminal space between fantasy and reality, ruby onyinyechi amanze’s drawings envision speculative narratives of self-discovery, supernatural existence and spatio-temporal escapism to evoke ideas around cultural hybridity, belonging, and displacement.

Not left out on Saturday, May 7 is Emerging Social Entrepreneurs and Cultural Brokers. The panel focuses the changing dynamics and growing interest in contemporary art and cultures of Africa and the African Diaspora.

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