



Na Chainkua Reindorf, *Lara* (2021) Photo: Na Chainkua Reindorf

# GHANA NATIONAL PAVILION 59<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION OF LA BIENNALE DE VENEZIA 2022

MEDIA COVERAGE REPORT  
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## Ghanaian Curator Nana Oforiatta Ayim on Why the Future of the Museum Must Exist Beyond Art's Boundaries

Her vision for the second Ghana Pavilion in Venice is finally coming to fruition after a funding delay.

**Christine Ajudua**, July 27, 2022



Nana Oforiatta Ayim. Photo: Fifi Abban.

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A dozen years ago, Nana Oforiatta Ayim worked in the Africa department at the British Museum. Since then, the Ghanaian art historian, filmmaker, and writer has been deconstructing the very idea of it—or rather, the very colonial idea of a museum as a monolithic institution that at once “elevates the art object and distances you from it,” she said, devoid of local context.

Oforiatta Ayim is behind Accra’s nonprofit [Ano Institute of Arts and Knowledge](#) and its Pan-African [Cultural Encyclopedia](#), a digital archive-in-progress of all things culture-related across the continent’s 54 countries. In 2016, with the architect DK Osseo-Asare, she created a [Mobile Museum](#) to travel around the country—not only exhibiting its collections, but also inviting local communities to contribute to them en route.

Now, the Mobile Museum is gearing up to travel around Venice, Italy, where Oforiatta Ayim returned to curate the Biennale’s Ghana Pavilion for a second time, having launched it with the architect David Adjaye in 2019 to much [acclaim](#). While the inaugural pavilion situated Ghana’s present in relation to its past, this year’s exhibition—“Black Star: The Museum as Freedom,” with large-scale installations by emerging artists Na Chainkua Reindorf, Isaac Nana Akwasi Opoku (a.k.a. Afroscope), and Diego Araújo exploring new modes of expression—is more focused on the future.

And, she said, “I think the future museum encompasses way more than just art.”

Before leaving Accra for Italy, where she is currently installing the final part of the exhibition in Venice—which lost government funding at the last minute due to Ghana’s financial crisis—Oforiatta Ayim spoke with Artnet News about her hustle to reimagine museums with and for the communities they serve.

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Works by Na Chainkua Reindorf in the Ghana Pavilion at this year's Venice Biennale. Photo: David Levene.

**Tell me about the inspirations behind the exhibition for this year's Ghana Pavilion.**

"Black Star"—obviously, it's in the middle of our flag; it's the name of our football team; but it was also the name of Marcus Garvey's shipping line.

So it has these national connotations, but then also these very pan-African connotations—this idea of unity across not just the continent, but also of the diaspora, and also of Ghana having its Year of Return [in 2019; it is now hosting a 10-year Beyond the Return campaign].

Ghana has always kind of been placed as this kind of lodestar, leading the way of what could be possible for Africans and Black people across the world. It's fascinating to me that there are so many African Americans coming back—people like Chance the Rapper seeing Ghana as this place of possibility.

I invited a Brazilian artist, Diego Araújo, to be part of the exhibition because I felt like, What does it actually mean, this return? What is the message or connection that we're trying to build? What can it really do for us in terms of healing these wounds of the past and creating new connections for the future?



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And then, what can it mean in terms of our cultural institutions?

I think the first exhibition, “Ghana Freedom,” was about looking at the past, and where do we situate our present in relation to the past? I paired older artists with younger ones—Felicia Abban with Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, and Ibrahim Mahama with El Anatsui, and John Akomfrah with Selasi Awusi Sosu—so that it was very much about time.

With “Black Star: the Museum as Freedom,” it’s the idea of, How do we create freedom for ourselves now and in the future? And so the artists are really future-builders.



Isaac Nana Akwasi Opoku (aka Afroscope),  
“Dreamer” series, 2021. © Afroscope.

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**What sort of future, or futures, are they building?**

So, Na [Chainkua Reindorf] is looking into mythologies of masquerading, which are so male-focused. She created this whole mythology around women and women's bodies, and these skins that women can put on for their own liberation. It's very much grounded inside this idea of women's freedom and inhabiting your freedom in such an incredible, empowering way.

Then Afroscope [the artist Isaac Nana Akwasi Opoku], he trained a robotic arm to draw in his likeness and created this museum within a virtual-reality space. He's really looking at to what extent can we expand technology to expand ourselves, and our own physical limitations—to what extent can technology set us free? And can we imbue it with a spirit?

And Diego Araújo, who is a Brazilian artist, created this installation piece called *A Salt Congress...*

I pause because we haven't managed to put it up yet. The government pulled all funding from this year's pavilion a month before the opening because of the financial crisis. I'm still suffering the consequences of it now.

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**How did you manage to open the pavilion at all?**

I have a great network of people that I've built over the last 20 years—that's how it happened. People that I know and that I work with just spread the word, like wildfire, that the Ghana pavilion had to be supported. In Ghana, I literally went knocking on doors. And people just gave, gave, gave.

And in Venice, the most beautiful thing was that we got so much support. We didn't have installers, we didn't have producers; all these people kept coming in, helping us to bead things, install things, to put this thing on the ground—I mean, it was incredible.

And so we were still free to create what we needed to create, despite the obstacles and despite the constrictions that we were dealt. We still were able to put ourselves into this global narrative and have resonance.

But it was unbelievably stressful. And still is, because we haven't finished.



Na Chainkua Reindorf, *Veil* (2022), in the Ghana Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2022.  
Photo: David Levene.

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**Why was that particular piece—*A Salt Congress*—delayed?**

It was like nine crates—so many tons of salt. It was so expensive, too—oh my God. Anyway, that's a whole other thing—the nightmare of logistics of getting it, hauling it to Venice.

But the piece is being installed right now—it's a sound installation. Diego's whole premise was: How do you create a language between Ghana and Brazil that's not born of trauma, and not born of separation, but that's a common language between us—that we create anew?

I found that fascinating. I spent three months in Brazil on a writing residency and it was astounding; the echoes and resonance that I felt from Ghana were just incredible.

So all three of them are looking towards something *future*—new languages, new mythologies, new technologies.

I really wanted this Ghanaian pavilion to be at the forefront, you know? Not just like, “Oh, here we are joining the conversation.” No, we are actually at the *forefront* of this conversation.



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**In the West, the conversation is still very much about decolonizing museums.**

To me, that's a whole other thing that has its own problems [laughs]. I mean, a lot of these spaces, if they were truly to decolonize, they would have to eat themselves up; they would have to basically destroy themselves in order to rise again.

I'm not saying that they're disingenuous—some people, I'm sure, do want to grapple with this kind of colonial past. But if they *really* want to do it, they would have to let go of maybe 20, 30 years of their careers. Like, the African studies programs or Africanists—their fields are colonial. There's no two ways around it.

I feel like the Western museum is based on, *I think, therefore I am*—like the white man of the Enlightenment who goes out into the world and collects things to bring back to the enlightened viewer.

And to me a whole new paradigm needs to be put in place, which is why I started Ano's Cultural Encyclopedia—it was almost kind of like a rebuff to the Enlightenment and to the whole kind of French *Encyclopédie*.



Ano's Mobile Museum in Accra, Ghana.  
Courtesy of Ano Institute of Arts and  
Knowledge.

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**How does that connect with Ano's Mobile Museum?**

They connect in that the Mobile Museum is traveling around Ghana, and all of the cultural information that we collect from it is uploaded onto the Cultural Encyclopedia. And also the exhibitions and workshops that we do in the Ano space correlate to wherever the museum is at that time.

The aim is to deconstruct the idea of a museum as static and monolithic, to bring it into communities, and also to reevaluate—or think about—what has value, who gives value to what object, and why. And to create a kind of kaleidoscopic encyclopedia of the country—not an authoritative one or a definitive one, but a starting point.

**You launched the Mobile Museum with Osseo-Asare in 2016 at the Chale Wote street-art festival in Accra, converting one of the city's ubiquitous kiosks—small, quasi-legal structures that house everything from barbershops to groceries. How has it evolved since then, both conceptually and structurally? You recently reimagined it for exhibitions in Germany [**"Efie: The Museum as Home"**] and at the Dakar Biennale [**"Nkabom: The Museum as Community"**].**

In Venice as well—we've connected with people from the local community who are looking at themes that reflect or resonate with those of the Ghana pavilion, to do a Mobile Museum outside of the biennale later in the year.

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In Venice as well—we've connected with people from the local community who are looking at themes that reflect or resonate with those of the Ghana pavilion, to do a Mobile Museum outside of the biennale later in the year.

We have what DK is now calling the *fufuzela*—these bamboo structures. The name comes from *fufu*, our national dish. So like music and food, the idea of the structure is something that everybody has access to—because they're open source; they're modular; anyone can put them together.

We can add different exteriors, depending on what we come across. It's kind of a research project, in that we're learning so much as we go along; we don't have a fixed idea of what we're going to find. And I think, in a way, that's the beauty of it—we go and we research and we find out what's on the ground, and then kind of create a structure accordingly.

The arrogance of patriarchal models is that they come in and they impose what they think is right for us in terms of structure, but I don't even know what's right for us. I may know what's right for me and my tiny little community in Accra, which is quite a cosmopolitan arts community, but that might not be right for a community in Tamale; it might not be right for a community in Kumasi.

In a way, the Mobile Museum is as much a research tool as it is an exhibition model. It's trying to be humble in its premises, and hoping that within the journey, what we find are things that we don't even know yet, that we can't even imagine.

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Installing Ano's Mobile Museum in Elmina, Ghana. Courtesy of Ano Institute of Arts and Knowledge.

**Tell me about the national museum that you reopened in Ghana last month; it had been closed for seven years.**

In the 1960s, [then-president] Kwame Nkrumah commissioned these Italian architects to build a national museum in Accra. And then obviously we had the coup, and he was deposed, and the museum, as it was envisaged, never came to be.

But its foundations are still there. And so with all of these new ideas that we have, I thought: Why don't we create a museum for our context and for our time?

I wanted to do it with David Adjaye initially, but now obviously, David is doing so many projects here in Ghana—the National Cathedral, you know—that it became: What if we invite the next generation of designers in to think about what a museum can look like?

This is something that is being supported by the ministry of tourism—this idea of us having a competition and of creating a space for this future museum where the national museum was originally intended to be.



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**Is that something you're still actively working toward?**

I am, but I'm *really* tired of working with government [laughs].

You know, I was asked to be the lead curator, and I initially had this whole plan of creating a kind of decolonial institution. And then the minister of tourism comes and says, "Well, actually, you only have a week to finish the exhibition." A week!

**Oh, wow.**

Because it was on his political agenda. And so this whole deeply thought-through narrative got sidelined by politics.

It's not the same as in the global north, where institutions are already built, infrastructure exists, and, you know, if you want to be a curator, an art historian, you just do that one thing.

I used to say, when I first set up Anó, that we didn't just have to be the creatives—we had to be the creators of our own narratives. And now, 20 years later, it's even bigger than that: It's not just that we have to be the creators of our own narratives—we also have to be the creators of our own structures, and our own infrastructure.

And then, not just of our own infrastructure, but of our own resources, too.

On the one hand it's really exciting, because I would never have been able to do what I'm doing here and now in the U.K., for example. I'm imagining new structures, and I'm pretty much certain that I'm gonna be able to dream them into being, because I don't have the rules and the regulations, etcetera, of a place like London.

But at the same time, it means that I pretty much have to do *everything* myself [laughs]. And it's really tiring!

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Isaac Nana Akwasi Opoku (aka Afroscope),  
“Dreamer” series, 2021. © Afroscope.

**What’s your vision for the museum, or a museum, of the future—or for the structures that you’re imagining and dreaming into existence?**

There’s a community across the global south, whether in Bolivia or Vietnam or the Bahamas, where I speak with creatives and future dreamers about what kind of structures are possible. And the fact that they span not just art, but also politics and ecology and the environment and education, is what’s really inspiring to me—because the art world paradigm is one that’s way too narrow right now. I can’t operate and exist in a paradigm that literally speaks to itself.

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When you go to the opening of the Venice Biennale or the Dakar Biennale, or even in an exhibition in Accra, what you find is other people who know and appreciate the arts already—other artists or curators or thinkers or academics or art lovers. Which is fine and great; it's a family, and I'm not knocking it at all. But what about the rest of the world, people who could be just as impacted or inspired or as expanded by art? How are we speaking to or exchanging with *everybody*?

And so I think the future museum is one that encompasses *way* more than just art.

First of all, it would be really grounded within our context, where we maybe look at spiritual traditions, indigenous knowledge systems, local materials, things that grow here and that are sustainable and thoughtful in the way that they are built and created, but also one that speaks to everyone—you know, various members of the community, not just the elite. And then also that encompasses these different ways of being—not just the arts, but also philosophy and ecology and the environment and education.

For example, at home—and when I say “home,” I mean my hometown, which is up in the Atewa rainforest—we have the Odwira festival. And in the festival you have art, design, poetry, music, dance, history. It's this incredible exhibition model, like a *Gesamtkunstwerk*—this total work of art, with the highest artistic forms of expression all coming together in one—and everyone participates in it. It's like every single object that you see in the British Museum is on display, and embodied.

It's a form that's been around for centuries and centuries. When you leave, you've learned and you've been uplifted and you've been enlightened and you've come together as a community. I've always been very inspired by experiencing that firsthand.

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You have these days as well where you are supposed to go to the elders and get information about history and mythologies. But then there's also dance, and there's also the drumming, and there's also, you know, the design of the cloth, which *speaks*. It's this whole interaction of all of these different ways. And the drummer who drums a kind of historical poem will pour libation to the tree that he's cutting from, and ask the tree, "Can I cut you?" And then he *listens* to the tree.

It's not a desecration of nature and the environment, but an encompassing of it. And so for me, a future museum would be one that encompasses all of these different elements of life, rather than excluding them.





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**I understand you're working on a new project outside of Accra, in the countryside.**

That's kind of the future for Ano. We have a bit of land up in the mountains, in Aburi, and we're creating a farm and school.

We'll still have Ano in Accra, but in Aburi we're creating this new kind of space, looking at the next generation and the next 20 years of Ano. We're creating a school based off everything that we've gathered over the last 20 years—the indigenous knowledge systems, material that we've gathered through the Pan-African Cultural Encyclopedia.

And a farm is part of that, because for me now, it's not just about the arts or education, but about the whole of it, the ecology. So the idea is also that the kids and residents who come through are growing their own foods, creating, cooking, eating—all of that will be part of this whole process of the museum being *life*, from beginning to end.

So that's the next phase. We're fundraising for it right now.

**What inspired this?**

With the whole debate around restitution that's been happening, a group of us have come together—Africans who are working actively towards restitution—largely women, interestingly enough.

At the beginning of this whole restitution resurgence, there was so much required of us. People would call us and be, like, "Can we interview you about this?" "Can we talk to you about this?" It was almost like this exploitation economics, where we were supposed to represent the African voice in a sea of whiteness.

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And we talked so much [among us] about how we preserve our mental health, our physical well-being, our own selves within this work, which is so taxing—not just in terms of the actual work, but also, you know, when you are going into these institutions, which are majority white and to a large extent still steeped in violence, how do you take care of yourself? How do you protect yourself?

How do we make sure that we have support mechanisms for each other, where we check in with each other and make sure that we're O.K.? Because this work of restitution is not just about objects coming back—it's about repair; it's about healing. It's emotional *work*. It's spiritual work, as well.

**So you're creating a sort of infrastructure for self-preservation?**

Yeah. And creating spaces that are not just about coming in to do this work—they are spaces of care, and they're spaces of growth.

There's been so much damage. There's been so much trauma. There's been so much separation. I feel like so many of us have been working, working, working so hard to undo this and to heal and to repair. But in the process of that, you know, sometimes we damage ourselves, or we work ourselves into the ground.

And how do we do the opposite of that? How do we create spaces where we can flourish, where we can have joy, where we can have *ease*? Where we can put our hands into the earth and grow something on a hilltop and still be contributing to our growth?

So that's where I'm looking next—towards us, and inwards, to create these spaces.



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34 ARSENALE PAVILIONS

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## Ghana spreads its artistic wings

For its second appearance at the Biennale, the West African country is looking beyond its pavilion. As well as three artists from Ghana and its diaspora exhibiting in the Arsenale, bamboo structures by the US-Ghanaian architectural practice Lowdo will appear across the city. By **Jareh Das**



**Na Chaikeua Reindorf's acrylic, gouache and fabric Ever (2021). The artist's work often includes textiles, which she says are particularly important in West Africa, where they are considered mediums through which people "can literally weave their personal and collective narratives"**

### GHANA

The Ghana pavilion's debut at the Venice Biennale in 2019 was widely lauded. It featured an all-star line-up of the country's artists, including Selasi Awiti Sossu, Ibrahim Mahama and the legendary studio photographer Felicia Abiam. So there is much expected of its return this year. The exhibition is titled *Black Star: the Museum of Freedom* and has been put together by the same curator as the 2019 pavilion, Nana Oforiatta Ayim, who is also the director of ANO Institute of Arts and Knowledge in Accra and director-at-large of Ghana's Museums and Cultural Heritage. She has invited the artists Na Chaikeua Reindorf, Afroscopie and Diego Arañaja to respond to the multiplicity of meanings associated with the country's iconic black star. This symbol permeates every aspect of Ghanaian life, from the national flag to the important civic monument Black Star Square, and has

been used as a beacon for people of African descent to return back to the continent.

From independence to the present Oforiatta Ayim continues the thematic enquiry she began with the last pavilion, which explored freedom as a central topic, with the momentum around Ghana's independence in 1957 extending into the present, framed by post-colonial and neoliberal shifts. The idea of displaced Africans returning home was also central to pan-Africanist Marcus Garvey's Back-to-Africa movement in the early 20th century and, more recently, Ghana's *Beyond the Return* project. This state-sponsored initiative encourages the global African diaspora to relocate to Ghana for land or home ownership and business opportunities.

In the pavilion are a series of large-scale, thematically connected installations exploring reworking (the reinterpretation of histories and geographies in post-colonial discourses, belonging and flows of life,

**“***[The curator] Oforiatta Ayim continues the thematic enquiry she began with the last pavilion, which explored freedom as a central topic***”**

through physical, symbolic and metaphorical registers. Na Chaikeua Reindorf's recent paintings using acrylic, gouache and fabric mounted on canvas are reminiscent of Asafo (textile) flags made by the *tsote* people in Ghana, and those from the historic Kingdom of Dahomey. Reindorf is "creating her own mythologies and depictions of women inhabiting and taking control of their bodies and narratives". Oforiatta Ayim says. It is a world of *Mama Nyanya* (roughly translated, "god-women") who are in dialogue with

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**Brazilian artist Diego Arañaja's digital collage Untitled (2018). The artist explores trade links between his homeland and Ghana, examining the connection to trauma and separation**

the elements around them—a feminist reinterpretation of the largely male-led Ghanaian traditions of masquerades and secret societies. An immersive and interactive bust installation will be shown alongside the paintings.

The artist Afroscopie is influenced by Afrofuturism and Surrealism. His work brings together diverse African philosophies such as the Yoruba concept of *Ashé*, the *Nguzi Bantu* philosophy of Ubuntu and Akan *Adinkra* symbolism. In Venice he will explore the different flows of life in these alternative systems of thought through the lens of, and with the aid of, technology, in a series of mixed-media and digital collages from the series *Ade: Sunsum Kasa* (2021). He aims to present new futuristic spaces as an alternative to outdated knowledge systems that he sees as failing us all. "Afroscopie examines to what extent technology can be imbued with spirit", Oforiatta Ayim explains,

"and what it means for technology to be a true extension of our selves."

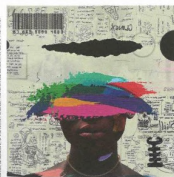
The Brazilian artist Diego Arañaja is interested in connections between Ghana and his homeland. His sound archive *A Salt Congress* (2022) draws inspiration from the diverse communities inhabiting the shorelines of West Africa, a zone embraced as a new meeting point for African diasporas across the world. Oforiatta Ayim says that Arañaja "looks at the histories of Ghana and Brazil and their connection to the histories of trauma and separation, by creating a new language for them".

### Inclusive innovation

The installations will be housed within what the curator describes as a modular bamboo structure by D.K. Osseo-Asare of Low Design Office (Lowdo), a practice based in Tema, Ghana, and Austin, Texas. Lowdo creates spaces and buildings that it describes as "inclusive innovation for people living in resource-constrained environments".

Osseo-Asare's structures will also be replicated in spaces across Venice and Ghana, with the intention of linking these two sites through their shared histories, notably the gold-salt trade routes once connecting the Venice lagoon with its equivalent in Sakumono, Ghana.

The freedom and reworking at the heart of the pavilion's thesis are rooted in ideas around national identity, ingrained locally yet extending to the diaspora, but, as the cultural theorist Homi K. Bhabha has argued: "One's sense of nationhood is discursively constructed." How these artists unpack social constructs around return and belonging—amid the reality that, in today's Ghana, these utopian ideals are being used by the state to create new models for economic development—will be interesting to see.



**December #0009 (2021) by the Ghanaian artist Afroscopie, whose influences include Afrofuturism and Surrealism**

### SAUDI ARABIA



**Muhammad Shono's *The Lost Path* (2020) was installed at the first edition of Desert X Al Ula**

## Saudi pavilion rings the changes

"I never expected to represent Saudi at the Venice Biennale," says Muhammad Shono. An artist who has been unafraid to critique the country's social restrictions—now rising under Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman—Shono takes his nomination by Saudi Arabia a sign of "how big the changes are for all those who now feel free to question and create".

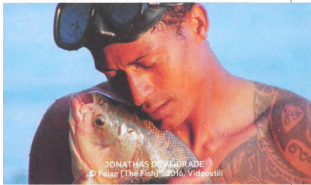
Shono's work at the Saudi pavilion is a metaphor for transformation—an important topic in the country at large and its visual arts scene in particular. For Shono, who is one of the major figures on the art scene, the work builds on long-standing interests: in particular what he refers to as the "line", a horizontality that recurs throughout his typically large-scale installation practice. Operating as a gestural mark, the idea of a line is for Shono a sign of creativity, grounded in an ink-like black palette. It appears, for example, in his winding installation, *The Last Path*, for the first Desert X Al Ula exhibition in 2020, a slick, tangled tangle of black pipes that brought to mind oil slithering down the valley, and in his robotic arm for the Driyah International Biennale, painting a floor-sized canvas black.

Reem Fadda, the cocurator of Desert X Al Ula 2022 and the director of the Cultural Foundation in Abu Dhabi, has curated this year's pavilion—Saudi Arabia's third at the art biennial, commissioned by the country's Ministry of Culture. It perhaps reflects more straightforwardly on the Saudi's social and political shift than one might have expected. But for Saudi artists, the speed of the change is fast becoming a subject in itself. **Melissa Groatland**

**“***Shono's work at the Saudi pavilion is a metaphor for transformation—an important topic in the country's visual arts scene***”**



April 2022  
Monopol (Germany)  
Online



**BRASILIEN:  
Jonathan  
DE ANDRADE**

Jonathan de Andrade ist ein Künstler mit anthropologischem Blick. Eines der bekanntesten Werke des 1982 geborenen Brasilianers zeigt Fischer, die einen gerade aus dem Wasser gezogenen Fisch in ihren Armen halten, ihn streicheln und sterben lassen – ein irritierendes Ritual, das Gewalt und Liebe vereint. De Andrade hat Filme mit lokalen Theatergruppen oder mit Gehörlosen gemacht, Menschen auf der Straße gebeten, ihm das Innere ihrer Portemonnaies zu zeigen und Skulpturen für vergessene Badchosen geschaffen. Seine neue Arbeit für den brasilianischen Pavillon trägt den Titel „Com o coração saindo pela boca“ (With the heart coming out of the mouth). Sie findet ihren Ausgangspunkt in den vielen Sprichwörtern und Ausdrücken in Brasilien, die den Körper als Metapher benutzen, und ist inspiriert von populärwissenschaftlichen Ausstellungen, wie der Künstler sie als Jugendlicher besuchte, zum Beispiel einem begehrten menschlichen Körpermodell. eb



Jonathan de Andrade, born in 1982, is an artist with an anthropologist's eye. One of the Brazilian artist's best-known works depicts fishermen holding a fish they've just pulled out of the water in their arms, stroking it and letting it die. It's a bewildering ritual that unites violence and love. De Andrade has made films with local theater groups and with the deaf, has asked people on the street to show him the inside of their wallets and created sculptures for forgotten swimming trunks. His new work for the Brazilian Pavilion is titled "Com o coração saindo pela boca" [With the heart coming out of the mouth]. The piece finds its starting point in the many Brazilian expressions that use the body as a metaphor, and is inspired by popular science exhibitions the artist visited as a teenager, such as a walk-in human body model. eb

GIARDINI

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**BELGIEN:  
Francis ALYS**

Das Hüpfspiel mit dem Stein, „Himmel und Hölle“ genannt. Laufspiele im Kreis, bei denen ein Lämmchen und ein Wolf sich jagen. Der Reifen, der kunstvoll mit dem Stock durch die Straße getrieben wird. Über Jahre hat Francis Alys klassische Kinderspiele gefilmt, in seiner Wahlheimat Mexiko, in Afghanistan, im Irak und in afrikanischen Ländern. Überall dort, wo Auto- und Bildschirme das Spiel auf der Straße noch nicht zurückgedrängt haben, hat der gebürtige Belgier hingeschaut. Seine Ausstellung im belgischen Pavillon auf der Biennale will er ganz diesem Archiv der Kinderspiele widmen – ein Projekt zwischen künstlerischer Poesie und anthropologischer Neugierde. eb



The hopscotch game with the stone, called heaven and hell. Running games in a circle, where a little lamb and a wolf chase each other. The hoop expertly guided through the street with a stick. For years, Francis Alys has filmed traditional children's games in his adopted country of Mexico, in Afghanistan, Iraq, and in countries in Africa. The Belgian-born artist has observed all the places where car culture and screens have not yet put an end to playing in the streets. Alys has dedicated his exhibition in the Belgian Pavilion at the Biennale entirely to his archive of children's games – a project poised between artistic poetry and an anthropological curiosity. eb

GIARDINI



FRANCIS ALYS „Untitled“, Bamyan, Afghanistan, 2010

Photos: Courtesy the artist, Design: Massimo, courtesy the artist, © Francis Alys, © Na Chankua Reindorf, © Diego Araúja

Venedig-Biennale.PAVILLONS



NA CHANKUA REINDORF  
„Geda“, 2021

**GHANA: „Black STAR“**

Im Jahr 2019 feierte Ghana mit Werken von unter anderem John Akomfrah, El Anatsui, Lynette Yiadom-Boakye und Ibrahim Mahama ein furioses Venedig-Debut. Und auch die für dieses Jahr angekündigte Gruppenschau „Black Star – The Museum as Freedom“ verspricht Großes: Der „Black Star“, Ghanas Nationalsymbol und ein Zeichen für Panafrikanismus und Antikolonialismus, steht für die Schaffung neuer Konstellationen und Verbindungen. Na Chankua Reindorf greift in ihren Textilarbeiten Traditionen der Maskerade und Geheimbünde auf, der Designer Afroscope spürt der mystischen Dimension des Wassers nach, während der Künstler Diego Araúja den Atlantischen Ozean als Geburtsort einer neuen Kreolsprache erforscht. #

In 2019, Ghana celebrated a stunning Venice debut with works by John Akomfrah, El Anatsui, Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, and Ibrahim Mahama, among others. And this year's group show "Black Star: The Museum as Freedom" also promises great things. The "black star," Ghana's national symbol and a sign of Pan-Africanism and anti-colonialism, represents the creation of new constellations and connections. Na Chankua Reindorf takes up traditions of masquerade and secret societies in her textile works, designer Afroscope investigates the mystical dimension of water, while artist Diego Araúja explores the Atlantic Ocean as the birthplace of a new Creole language. #



ARSENALE



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“**T**he Biennale will represent the rebirth not only of Venice itself, but of the whole art world,” declares Toto Bergamo Rossi, director at Venetian Heritage. His statement is bullish, but it's also reflective of the widespread optimism surrounding the return of the Venice Art Biennale exhibition, which after a year-long delay will open to the public on 23 April.

For the curator Cecilia Alemani, this prospect is “beyond exciting”. Unable to travel during the pandemic, this year's edition was organised almost entirely from her New York apartment, via hundreds of Zoom calls. “It has been devastating,” she says. “I can't wait to get back together, to look at art in a physical way. The relationship I've missed the most is with art.” Emma Dexter, director of visual arts at the British Council, which runs the British pavilion at the event, feels the art-loving public are ready, too. She senses a “real hunger among audiences now to get out and about and see as much art as possible”.

For Venice itself the significance of these visitors cannot be overstated. As a city heavily dependent on its tourism economy, the impact of Covid-19 has been immense. According to the City Council's tourism department, visitor numbers in 2020 dropped by 76% compared with 2019, and though figures for 2021 have yet to be released, the ongoing effect of the pandemic is plain to see. Around the streets, many shops sit empty and the shutters of some rental properties have been closed for months.

For some Venetians the absence of mass tourism has been a mixed blessing. Servane Giol, author of *Soul of Venice*, describes the experience of living in the crowd-free city during the pandemic as “total magic,” but acknowledges that many businesses “suffered intensely”. She adds that for the hospitality industry in particular, the return of the Biennale will be fundamental.

At the Gritti Palace, which will be Sotheby's headquarters during the vernissage, general manager Paolo Lorenzoni is feeling encouraged – the hotel has been sold out for over a year for the preview period, with more enquiries than ever for the following months. Raffaele Alajmo, chief executive of Alajmo restaurant group, is also upbeat, describing the Biennale as a vital injection of “pure energy” for Venice.

At museums, preparations are under way for a slew of exhibitions, which directors hope will pull in the crowds. Highlights include *Marlene Dumas: Open-End*, at Palazzo Grassi, and a site-specific installation by Anselm Kiefer at the Doge's Palace. The Peggy Guggenheim Collection will present *Surrealism and Magic: Enchanted Modernity*, and director Karole Vall says: “There's no doubt that having the Biennale back is exciting for us, and for the city, as it means the art world will, we presume, be coming in droves.”

Right: The Guggleria, one of the Biennale venues



“The return of the Biennale means first and foremost the return of artists; the energy and magic they bring with them will flood back into the city”



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Clockwise from bottom: Mariela Duran, Memona Ramp, 2012; Venice Biennale president Roberto Ciulla with this year's curator Cecilia Alemani, Remedios Varo, Simposio (La noble et le pauvre), 1935 (detail)



With a focus on our relationship with nature, Alemani's edition will encourage "really serious thought about our environmental footprint"

Photo: Sotheby's, Photo: Sotheby's, Photo: Sotheby's, Photo: Sotheby's, Photo: Sotheby's





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She refers to the event's broader impact, too, saying she hopes Alemanni's edition, which focuses in part on our relationship to nature, will encourage "an appreciation of a wider range of artists, different ideas and, above all, really serious thought about our environmental footprint".

Dealer Victoria Miro, whose Venice gallery will present an exhibition by Paula Rego, welcomes the influx of collectors, but the importance of the Biennale is "first and foremost the return of artists; the energy and magic they bring with them will flood back into the city".

Within Miro's roster of artists is Kudzanai-Violet Hwami, who was selected to take part in the 2021 Biennale College Arte for emerging artists. She was subsequently awarded a grant of €25,000 to produce a work that will be included in Alemanni's International Exhibition. Contemplating the time she's spent working in Venice over the past month, Hwami says: "Having experienced the city in its skeleton form, ghostly and mostly quiet, I look forward to seeing it come to life."

Alma Zevi, whose art agency and consultancy Paterson Zevi has offices in London and Venice, is also excited at the thought of seeing the city buzzing with life again. She notes that after its three-year hiatus the Biennale will represent "a key moment to reconnect" with friends and professionals from across the art industry.

"I wouldn't miss it," says Nathan Clements-Gillespie, director at Frieze Masters: "As one of the first major international art world events [the Biennale] brings people together from all across the world – everyone goes to Venice."

In her curatorial statement, Alemanni reflects on what role the International Art Exhibition should play at this historical juncture. "The simplest, most sincere answer I could find is that the Biennale sums up all the things we have so sorely missed in the past two years: the freedom to meet people from all over the world, the possibility of travel, the joy of spending time together, the practice of difference, translation, incomprehension and communion," she says.

Will it represent the rebirth that Bergamo Rossi and others foresee, I ask? Alemanni replies with a laugh: "We can certainly hope." ○



Jaider Esbell, *Anonimados*, 2021

Written by Camilla Purdon

## MUST-SEE PAVILIONS

The title of the 59th Venice Art Biennale, *The Milk of Dreams*, comes from a children's book by Leonora Carrington. In it, the Surrealist artist evokes what curator Cecilia Alemani describes as "a magical universe inhabited by creatures that can change and be transformed, shifting between human, animal and machine". Drawing inspiration from Carrington's imaginary world, this year's edition has three principal themes: the representation of bodies and their metamorphoses; the connection between bodies and the earth; and the relationship between individuals and technologies. The event will feature 91 national pavilions alongside the International Exhibition, which will present almost 1,500 works by 213 artists – the vast majority of whom are female or gender nonconforming and including many who are participating in the Biennale for the first time. Interspersed with contemporary works will be five "time capsules" displaying unseen and historic works and objects. Alemanni says: "It was important for me to focus on those voices and stories that have been for too long considered minor or put aside."



### SAMI PAVILION, Guardiani

This year the Nordic Pavilion is changing its name to the Sami Pavilion in recognition of the region's indigenous population, the first time an indigenous nation has taken over a national pavilion at the Biennale. These Sami artists – Paulina Foedoroff (above), Marië Anne Sara and Anders Sumua – will present installations that combine painting, sculpture, video and performance with the smells and sounds of the tundra. Co-curator Katya Garcia-Anton says: "[They are] leaders of their generation; their art expresses their daily activism to defend the Sami way of life, their reindeer, forests, rivers and lands from colonialism and climate change, as well as a manifesto of hope in their people's capacity to build a sustainable future."



### GHANA PAVILION, Amnesia

The Ghana Pavilion will present *Black Star: The Museum as Freedom*, referencing the black star in the centre of the Ghanaian flag, which acts as a symbol of liberation from colonialism. Designed by architect DK Osei-Aasa, the pavilion will feature large-scale immersive works by young artists Na Chankwa Reindorf, Afroscope and Diego Anselmi, who, according to curator Nana Oforiatta Ayim, "use historical imperatives to create all new visions of the world, by drawing on mythology, including technology with spirit, and creating new creole languages not born of separation, trauma or pain".



### BRITISH PAVILION, Guardiani

Sonia Boyce's exhibition will feature a multi-media installation involving video, sound, wallpaper and sculptural objects. It will draw on the highly collaborative practice Boyce is renowned for; she often invites participants to come together and speak, sing or move as forms of response to the past or present. By depicting these social encounters she explores the dynamics between people, often focusing on getting in, to doing so she shows the importance of intuitive risk taking in leading to artistic innovation. Emma Dexter, director of visual arts at the British Council and commissioner of the pavilion, says: "Boyce's work celebrates overcoming difference and division through creative collaboration and dialogue – now needed more than ever in these challenging times."



### US PAVILION, Guardiani

Featuring a new body of work by American sculptor Simone Leigh, this will be "the first time the US Pavilion is dedicated entirely to the experiences and contributions of Black women", according to curator Eva Respini. The exhibition will draw on artistic traditions from within Africa and the African diaspora and merge disparate narratives, featuring monumental figurative sculptures in bronze, as well as work in Leigh's signature materials – ceramic and raffia. In October, Leigh will convene scholars, performers, writers and artists from around the world for *Leaphots of Detroit: Venice*, which will, Respini says, "mark the pinnacle of this historic project".

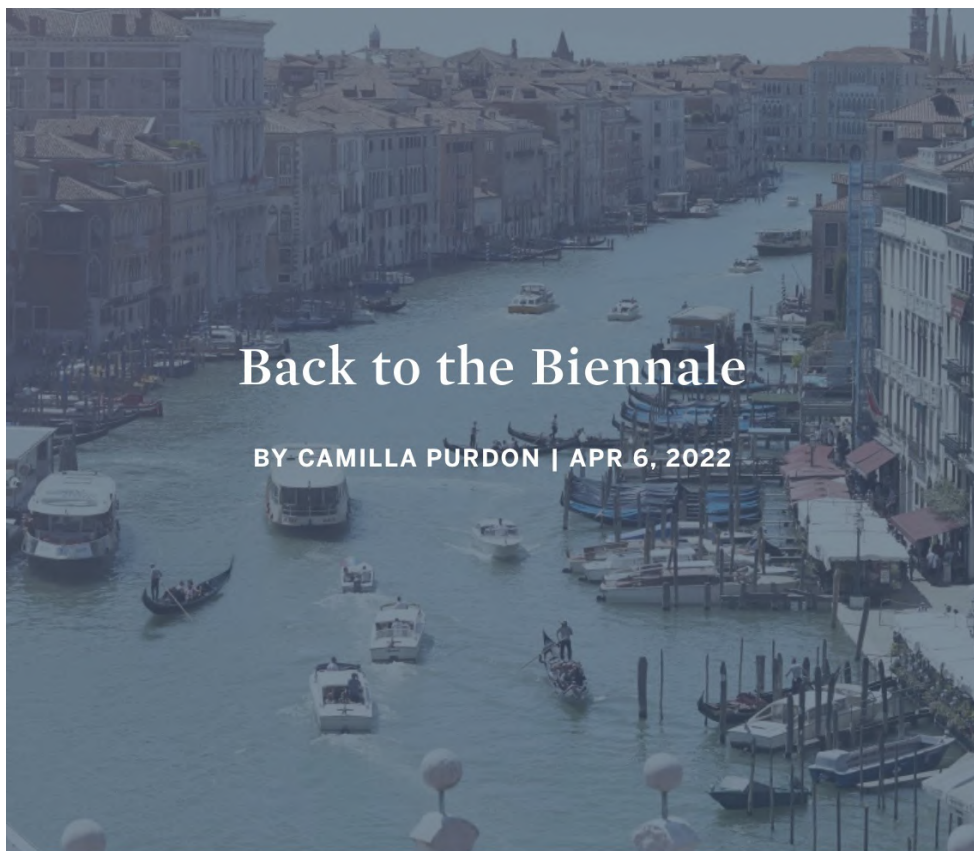
Clockwise from top: Simone Leigh, Leigh's work for the US pavilion being made; Sonia Boyce; Nana Osooku (Afroscope), *Dreamer Series*, 2021; Paulina Foedoroff

Venice Art Biennale 2022 *The Milk of Dreams* runs from 23 April to 27 November [www.labiennale.org](http://www.labiennale.org)



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## Back to the Biennale

BY CAMILLA PURDON | APR 6, 2022

*After a three-year break, the world-famous event returns for its 59th edition –  
and those with a connection to Venice can't wait*

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PHOTO: STUART MILNE

Emma Dexter, director of visual arts at the British Council, which runs the British pavilion at the event, feels the art-loving public are ready, too. She senses a "real hunger among audiences now to get out and about and see as much art as possible".

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REMEDIOS VARO, *SIMPATÍA (LA RABIA DEL GATO)*, 1955 (DETAIL) © ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY



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VENICE BIENNALE PRESIDENT ROBERTO CICUTTO WITH THIS YEAR'S CURATOR CECILIA ALEMANI. PHOTO: ANDREA AVEZZU. COURTESY: LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

At museums, preparations are under way for a slew of exhibitions, which directors hope will pull in the crowds. Highlights include *Marlene Dumas: Open-End*, at Palazzo Grassi, and a site-specific installation by Anselm Kiefer at the Doge's Palace. The Peggy Guggenheim Collection will present *Surrealism and Magic: Enchanted Modernity*, and director Karole Vail says: “There's no doubt that having the Biennale back is exciting for us, and for the city, as it means the art world will, we presume, be coming in droves.”

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MARLENE DUMAS, *MAMMA ROMA*, 2012

© MARLENE DUMAS



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THE GAGGIANDRE, ONE OF THE BIENNALE VENUES. COURTESY: LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

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### GHANA PAVILION, Arsenale

The Ghana Pavilion will present *Black Star - The Museum as Freedom*, referencing the black star in the centre of the Ghanaian flag, which acts as a symbol of liberation from colonialism. Designed by architect DK Osseo-Asare, the pavilion will feature large-scale immersive works by young artists Na Chainkua Reindorf, Afroscope and Diego Araújo, who, according to curator Nana Oforiatta Ayim, “use historical imperatives to create all new visions of the world, by drawing on mythology, infusing technology with spirit, and creating new creole languages not born of separation, trauma or pain”.



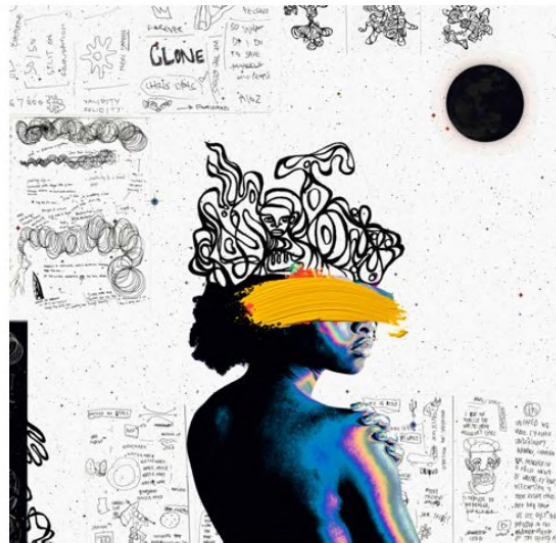
NANA OPOKU (AFROSCOPE),  
*DREAMER SERIES*, 2021. © NANA  
OPOKU

## IVORY COAST

**The dreams of a story, Frédéric Bruly Bouabré, Abdoulaye Diarrassouba dit Aboudia, Armand Boua, Saint-Etienne Yéanzi dit Yeanzi, Laetitia Ky, Aron Demetz**

Commissioner: Henri Koffssé N'koumo; Curators: Massimo Scaringella, Alessandro Romanini  
Exhibitors  
Venue: Magazzino del Sale 3, Dorsoduro 264

The title of the **Ivory Coast Pavilion** (Magazzino del Sale 3, Dorsoduro 264 – Zattere) is "The dreams of a story", but the concept of the Pavilion curated by Alessandro Scaringella and Alessandro Romanini does not go beyond this vague and superficial formulation and does not do justice to the invited artists. Among these artists is the famous veteran **Frédéric Bruly Bouabré** (1923-2014), the creator of an alphabet of 448 monosyllabic pictograms designed to be a universal language, created using references to religion, philosophy, African legends, to achieve universal brotherhood and world peace. The Italian sculptor **Aron Demetz** (1972) is also present. **Armand Boua** (1978) presents the crisis of the social situation evident in the streets of the cities on the Ivory Coast with paintings where the images are deconstructed and 'punctured' all over the surface. **Abdoulaye Diarrassouba aka Aboudia** (1983) composes works affected by the violence and aggressiveness of 1980s graffiti. Instead, **Saint-Etienne Yéanzi aka Yeanzi** (1988) in our short interview, confides to me that he is touched by the problems of society in general, by what happens in the streets and in the houses. He is aware of his responsibility as an artist who, he says, has the function of "producing awareness, preservation of memory, transmission of cultural heritage and to consolidate a strong identity, which guarantees the evolution of human beings and society". "For the Biennale I am presenting a workshop on the reappropriation of the identity of my country... and I am also showing various works that retrace my artistic path". The youngest artist in the group is **Laetitia Ky** (1996) who explained to me where she got the idea of using her own hair to create statements about race, gender, African society in general with performative photographs. "I found an album on Facebook of hairstyles that African women sported before colonization. Those hairstyles were really interesting and encouraged me to use hair as a medium of expression; at first I did it for fun, but after receiving widespread response from the public, I began to develop values of self-love, tolerance, equality, and respect". Laetitia trained as a fashion designer and practices design, but she is also a model, actress and painter.



Nana Opoku (Afroscope) Dreamer Series, 2021

## GHANA

**Black Star - The Museum as Freedom, Na Chainkua Reindorf, Diego Araújo, Afroscope**

Commissioner: Kwasi Agyeman, CEO, Ghana Tourism Authority Ministry of Tourism, Arts And Culture; Curator: Nana Oforiatta Ayim  
Venue: Arsenale

The **Ghana Pavilion** (Arsenale) is built with accuracy and depth in its content and choice of artists. Curator Nana Oforiatta Ayim is a writer, filmmaker and art historian living in Accra. He founded a pioneering Pan-African Cultural Encyclopaedia, a Mobile Museum Project, which he intends to bring to the Biennale, and curated the first Ghana Pavilion at the 58th Venice Biennial in 2019. The design of the exhibition is entrusted to the Ghanaian architect DK Osseo - Asare, with offices in Ghana and Texas, Professor at Penn State University. The artists are **Na Chainkua Reindorf**, who builds habitable installations to deal with surveillance and the meaning of the gaze in the contemporary, she also composes large fabrics which deal with social problems related to the politics of identity, gender, and types

of clothing, from digging into the mythological female history of Africa and proposing her fantastic mythical reconstruction with detailed attention to the decorations and colours of the traditional West African fabrics. **Afroscope** (Nana Opoku) is a multifaceted designer and artist who retrieves stories and mythologies of the past to create new hybrid narratives, where religious mysteries of various ethnicities, new technologies, Afrofuturistic visions reshuffle the cards of a culture in the process of rapid and unprecedented evolution. In 2017 he was the winner of the Kuenyehia Prize for Contemporary Ghanaian Art, Ghana's most prestigious award. **Diego Araújo** is an artist, writer, theatre director from Salvador de Bahia, Brazil. Since 2015 he has directed the Creole Time process that deals with traumatic issues and experiences related to the African Diaspora and its Afro-descendants. He was director and producer of Teatro Base from 2010 to 2017. Las but not least he founded, with the artist Laís Machado, the **ARAKÁ Platform**, a space for creation and relations between Afro-Atlantic artists. The strong identity choice of the artists is linked to the theme of the Pavilion: "Black Star—The Museum as Freedom", which on the one hand refers to the star of the Ghanaian flag, the football team and the story of the ship of the



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same name bought by Marcus Garvey to bring the freed slaves home to the African motherland, on the other hand has the concept of a 'portable' museum that meets the people, and interprets their wishes where he was born in Ghana and whose idea will be brought by the curator to Venice where he will organize meetings with the population.

## UGANDA

**Radiance: They dream In Time, Acaye Kerunen, Collin Sekajugo**

Commissioner: Naumo Juliana Akoryo; Curator: Shaheen Merali  
Venue: Palazzo Palumbo Fossati, San Marco 2597

The title of the **Uganda** Pavilion at Palazzo Palumbo Fossati is "Radiance – They Dream in Time", a title that the curator (who was born in Tanzania and lives in Great Britain) Shaheen Merali, former exhibitions chief at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin and co-organizer of the Gwangju Biennale in 2006, dedicates entirely and respectfully to the artists and above all on their use of the visual dynamics of the culture of the country present in formal and informal archives.

**Acaye Kerunen**, a multidisciplinary artist, creator of installations and performances, an actress and a writer, works with the collaboration of African women in the shared creation of forms using different female practices such as sewing, weaving, embroidering, knitting with natural and unusual fabrics, that are respectful of nature and with a strong ecological and political value. Kerunen's work in fact presents different African female identities compared to the dominant, Western and ethnocentric narratives. **Collin Sekajugo** is an artist and activist, founder of Ivuka Arts Kigali in Rwanda (2007) and the Weaver Bird Arts Foundation (2011) in Uganda, organisations that develop community art practices and promote social change through creativity. As an artist he paints with different types of media and his figures seem to be made of many materials and realities that overlap as if to indicate a stratified material and immaterial nature of his characters. His poetic concept is linked to a strong postcolonial thought that focuses on the search for an alternative African identity, based on concepts of harmony, peace and shared humanity.

## REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Into the Light, Roger Ballen, Lebohang Kganye, Phumulani Ntuli**

Commissioner: Nospipo Nausca-Jean Ngcaba  
Ambasciatore della Repubblica del Sudafrica in Italia; Curator: Amé Bell  
Venue: Arsenale



Phumulani Ntuli, *Are these the... that gave me...*, 2020 Photo credit/ Phumulani Ntuli

The **South African** Pavilion (Arsenale, Sale d'Arm) entitled "Into the Light" concerns the inner journey of artists and each of us into the realm of fantasy and imagination and runs in parallel with the general theme of the Biennale. It seems by far the most poetic of all the African Pavilions, at least on the basis of the partial news that you have before actually viewing the exhibition venue. South African curator Amé Bell is director of David Krut Projects in Johannesburg and curator of exhibitions in South Africa and abroad. The American artist **Roger Ballen** (1950) who lives in Johannesburg, started with documentary photography and then, over his career, enriched the concept of photography through the use of drawing, theatre, installation, film. Photography thus becomes the intersection of a series of practices that allude to dreams, to the unconscious leading to the paradoxical and sardonic in a continuous shift of boundaries between reality and imagi-

nation, between true and false, between the real presence of things and the sign of their traces. Fertile and irrational drawing is treated through various registers ranging from childish, to comics, to low and scurrilous drawing or simply crazy. At the Biennale he brings the work *The Theatre of the Apparitions* (2016): a video that draws inspiration from the drawings scratched on the darkened windows of a women's prison, which is then a journey of the artist in his own conscience and unconscious, in his own fears and desires, where the idea of metamorphosis, eros, life and death build a sort of merciless and burlesque testament of the artist himself. **Phumulani Ntuli** (1986) does research, sculptures, video installations and performances. His processuality is formulated through the artistic convergence of documentation and image as spaces of militant commitment. It involves different types of audiences drawing attention to the pauses, flaws and silences of the story.

25 January 2022  
Art Review  
Online

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## Artists revealed for Ghana pavilion at 2022 Venice Biennale

ArtReview News 25 January 2022 [artreview.com](https://artreview.com)

Curated by Nana Oforiatta Ayim, *Black Star: The Museum as Freedom* features the artists Na Chainkua Reindorf, Afroscope and Diego Araújo



Na Chainkua Reindorf, *Lara*, 2021. Courtesy the artist



# ArtReview

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25 January 2022  
Art Review  
Online

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The artists and exhibition details for the Ghana pavilion at this year's Venice Biennale have been announced. For the pavilion's sophomore outing, Ghana presents *Black Star: The Museum as Freedom*, lining up installations by artists Na Chainkua Reindorf, Afroscope and Diego Araújo.

Curated by Nana Oforiatta Ayim, the show takes its title from the Ghanaian national emblem, tracking the symbol – the 'Lodestar of African Freedom' – back to Marcus Garvey's Black Star Line and the Back-to-Africa movement, and campaigns for Pan-Africanism and anti-colonialism. The exhibition 'examines new constellations of this freedom across time, technology and borders'. The exhibition also functions through the curator's idea of the Mobile Museum, which visits communities across Ghana with the aim of 'co-curation and exchange'.

Na Chainkua Reindorf's work explores the traditions of historically male secret societies, constructing her own mythical society of women, Mawu Nyonu; Afroscope considers the intersections of spirituality, nature and technology; Diego Araújo reflects on the Atlantic Ocean's role as divider and unifier.

Nana Oforiatta Ayim said in a statement: 'Ghana in its 65th year still grapples with political, economic, cultural, social and knowledge systems not made of or for its contexts. Systems created within its communities over thousands of years were deemed inferior to ones termed 'universal' by dominant powers. As we outgrow and move beyond ill-fitting systems; new ones, not yet defined, that draw on rich histories, not with nostalgia but with discernment of hindsight and experience; are forming.'

**ArtReview** News 25 January 2022 [artreview.com](http://artreview.com)

25 January 2022  
ARTnews  
Online

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## Ghana Names Artists for National Pavilion at 2022 Venice Biennale, the Anticipated Follow-Up to Its 2019 Debut



BY **TESSA SOLOMON** January 25, 2022 2:37pm



Installation view of El Anatsui in the Ghana Pavilion at the 58th Venice Biennale.  
(PHOTO BY LAURA CHIESA/PACIFIC PRESS/SIPA USA)(SIPA VIA AP IMAGES)

25 January 2022  
ARTnews  
Online

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Ghana has announced the three artists that will represent it at this year's Venice Biennale, set to open in April. The exhibition for the country's national pavilion will be titled "Black Star—The Museum as Freedom," a reference to the black star that is in the center of the Ghanaian flag which acts as a symbol of freedom from colonialism.

The exhibition will include work by Na Chainkua Reindorf, Afroscope, and Diego Araújo. The pavilion's curator is art historian and filmmaker Nana Oforiatta Ayim, who is the director of the ANO Institute of Arts & Knowledge in Accra and director of Ghana's Museums and Cultural Heritage.

For the pavilion, Reindorf will present large-scale, mixed-media installations that tell the mythology of Mawu Nyonu, a fictitious secret society of women imbued with natural forces. Afroscope's will show *Ashe*, which will use technology to embody the flow of life through natural elements. And Diego Araújo's contribution will be *A Congress of Salt*, which will reimagine the Atlantic Ocean, the main conduit for the the trans-Atlantic slave trade, as the birthplace of a new, rich creole society.

The pavilion will be designed by architect DK Osseo Asare and draws on the ideologies of the "Mobile Museum", an art exhibition and educational program that travels into communities across Ghana that is part of the ANO Institute of Arts & Knowledge. At each stop of the Mobile Museum, people are encouraged to contribute to its curation, affording them influence over their culture's institutional representation. During the Venice Biennale, a program based on the Mobile Museum will be held in spaces throughout the city.

25 January 2022  
ARTnews  
Online

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In a statement, Oforiatta Ayim said, “Ghana in its 65th year still grapples with political, economic, cultural, social and knowledge systems not made of or for its contexts. Systems created within its communities over thousands of years were deemed inferior to ones termed ‘universal’ by dominant powers.”

She continued, “As we outgrow and move beyond ill-fitting systems; new ones, not yet defined, that draw on rich histories, not with nostalgia but with discernment of hindsight and experience; are forming.”

In 2019, Ghana presented its first pavilion at the Venice Biennale, a series of interlocking spaces by architect David Adjaye that presented work by painter Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, sculptor El Anatsui, installation artist Ibrahim Mahama, and video artist John Akomfrah. Oforiatta Ayim oversaw that exhibition with input from the late curator Okwui Enwezor, who worked as an advisor until his death in March 2019. Those pieces touched on themes including environmental damage, colonial violence, and Ghana’s path after achieving independence from Britain in 1957.





22 April 2022  
The Art Newspaper  
Online

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**The Week in Art** // Podcast

## The best of the Venice Biennale: our critics' review

Plus, artists Francis Alÿs, Sonia Boyce, Shubigi Rao and Na Chainkua Reindorf on their national pavilion shows; and a Bellini masterpiece



Simone Leigh's *Brick House* (2019), the first work you see when entering the main exhibition in the Arsenale venue at the Venice Biennale

Photo: Aimee Dawson

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**CHRISTIE'S**

Hosted by **Ben Luke**, with guest speakers **Louisa Buck** and **Jane Morris**. Produced by **Julia Michalska**, **David Clack**, **Aimee Dawson** and **Henrietta Bentall**

22 April 2022



22 April 2022  
The Art Newspaper  
Online

In this Venice Biennale special, we give you a flavour of the 59th edition of the Biennale which, as ever, brings a deluge of contemporary art to the historic Italian city.



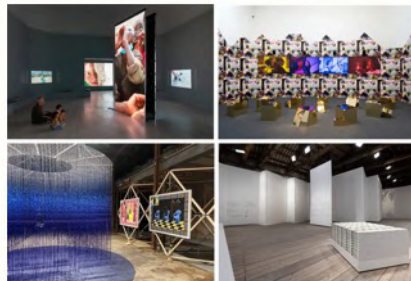
**The Week in Art**

Wonder women: curator Cecilia Alemani on what we can expect at the female-dominated Venice Biennale this year

Hosted by **Ben Luke**. With guest speaker **Martin Bailey**. Produced by **Julia Michalska, Aimee Dawson, David Clack** and **Henrietta Bentall**

Sponsored by **Christie's**

We talk to four artists in the national pavilions—Francis Alÿs in the Belgian Pavilion; Sonia Boyce in the British Pavilion; Shubigi Rao in the Singapore Pavilion; and Na Chaikua Reindorf in the Ghana Pavilion—about their presentations and how, if at all, they relate to the idea of nationhood.



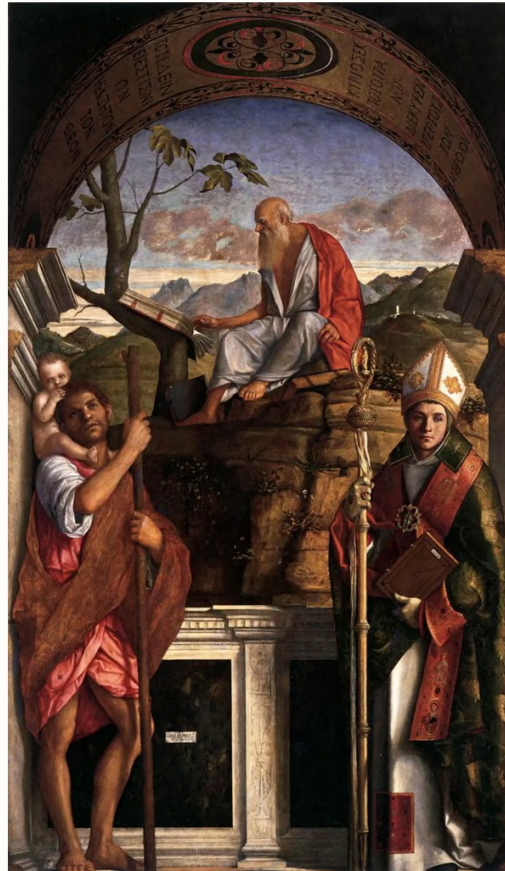
Clockwise from top left: *The Nature of the Game* by Francis Alÿs for the Belgian Pavilion; Room 1 in Sonia Boyce's British Pavilion; Shubigi Rao's *Pulp III: A Short Biography of the Banished Book* in the Singaporean Pavilion; Na Chaikua Reindorf's works in the Ghanaian Pavilion show *Black Star, The Museum as Freedom*  
Belgian Pavilion: Roberto Ruiz; British Pavilion: Cristiano Corte © British Council; Singaporean Pavilion: Alessandro Brasile; Ghanaian Pavilion: Aimee Dawson

Louisa Buck and Jane Morris join host Ben Luke to review the main exhibition, *The Milk of Dreams*, curated by Cecilia Alemani, and pick their highlights of the Biennale so far.



22 April 2022  
The Art Newspaper  
Online

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Giovanni Bellini's *Saints Christopher, Jerome and Louis of Toulouse* (1513)

And while most visitors to Venice this week are immersed in contemporary art, for this episode's Work of the Week, we take a look at a masterpiece that remains exactly where it was intended to hang. The art historian Ben Street joins Ben Luke in San Giovanni Crisostomo, a church near Venice's Rialto bridge, to look at *Saints Christopher, Jerome and Louis of Toulouse*, a late painting by the Venetian Renaissance artist Giovanni Bellini.

- [Venice Biennale](#), [📅 23 April-27 November](#)
- *Ben Street, How to Enjoy Art: A Guide for Everyone*, *Yale University Press*, £14.99/\$20.



11 April 2022  
The Art Newspaper  
Online

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## Ghanaian pavilion: returning country's presentation to spill out across Venice

For its second appearance at the Biennale, Ghana will install modular bamboo structures in locations around the city



Na Chainkua Reindorf's acrylic, gouache and fabric *Evor* (2021)  
© the artist

**Jareh Das**

11 April 2022

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11 April 2022  
The Art Newspaper  
Online

The Ghana pavilion's debut at the Venice Biennale in 2019 was widely lauded. It featured an all-star line-up of the country's artists, including Selasi Awusi Sosu, Ibrahim Mahama and the legendary studio photographer Felicia Abban. So there is much expected of its return this year.

The exhibition is titled *Black Star: the Museum as Freedom* and has been put together by the same curator as the 2019 pavilion, Nana Oforiatta Ayim, who is also the director of ANO Institute of Arts and Knowledge in Accra and director-at-large of Ghana's Museums and Cultural Heritage. She has invited the artists Na Chainkua Reindorf, Afroscope and Diego Araújo to respond to the multiplicity of meanings associated with the country's iconic black star. This symbol permeates every aspect of Ghanaian life, from the national flag to the important civic monument Black Star Square, and has been used as a beacon for people of African descent to return back to the continent.

#### From independence to the present

Oforiatta Ayim continues the thematic enquiry she began with the last pavilion, which explored freedom as a central topic, with the momentum around Ghana's independence in 1957 extending into the present, framed by post-colonial and neoliberal shifts. The idea of displaced Africans returning home was also central to pan-Africanist Marcus Garvey's Back-to-Africa movement in the early 20th century and, more recently, Ghana's Beyond the Return project. This state-sponsored initiative encourages the global African diaspora to relocate to Ghana for land or home ownership and business opportunities.



*Dreamer #0009* (2021) by the Ghanaian artist Afroscope, whose influences include Afrofuturism and Surrealism  
© the artist



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11 April 2022  
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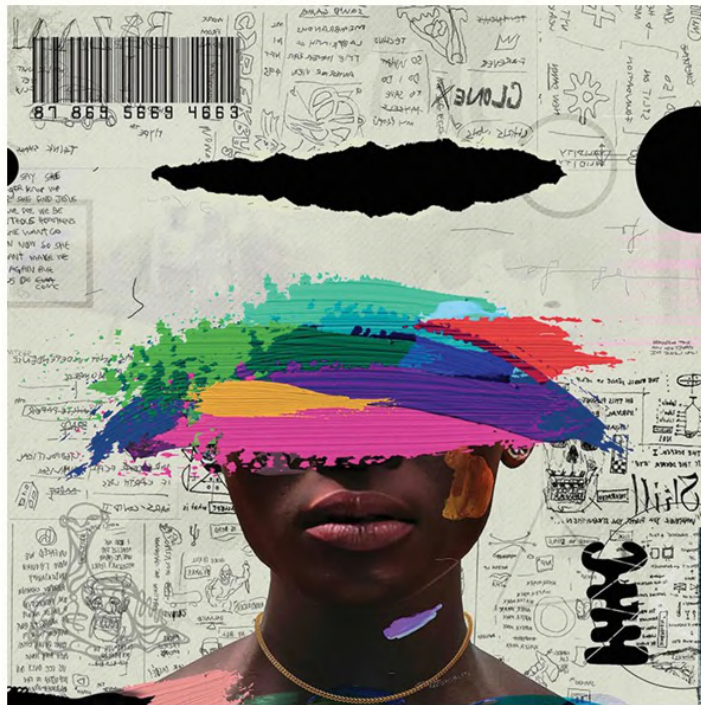
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11 April 2022  
The Art Newspaper  
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*Dreamer #0009* (2021) by the Ghanaian artist Afroscope, whose influences include Afrofuturism and Surrealism  
© the artist

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**[The curator] Oforiatta Ayim continues the thematic enquiry she began with the last pavilion, which explored freedom as a central topic**

In the pavilion are a series of large-scale, thematically connected installations exploring reworlding (the reinterpretation of histories and geographies in post-colonial discourse), belonging and flows of life, through physical, symbolic and metaphoric registers. Na Chainkua Reindorf's recent

paintings using acrylic, gouache and fabric mounted on canvas are reminiscent of Asafo (textile) flags made by the Fante people in Ghana, and those from the historic kingdom of Dahomey. Reindorf is “creating her own mythologies and depictions of women inhabiting and taking control of their bodies and narratives”, Oforiatta Ayim says. It is a world of Mawu Nyonu (roughly translated, “god-women”) who are in dialogue with the elements around them—a feminist reinterpretation of the largely male-led Ghanaian traditions of masquerades and secret societies. An immersive and interactive bead installation will be shown alongside the paintings.





11 April 2022  
The Art Newspaper  
Online

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The artist Afroscope is influenced by Afrofuturism and Surrealism. His work brings together diverse African philosophies such as the Yoruba concept of Ashe, the Nguni Bantu philosophy of Ubuntu and Akan Adinkra symbology. In Venice he will explore the different flows of life in these alternative systems of thought through the lens of, and with the aid of, technology, in a series of mixed-media and digital collages from the series *Ashe: Sunsum Kasa* (2021). He aims to present new futurist spaces as an alternative to outdated knowledge systems that he sees as failing us all. “Afroscope examines to what extent technology can be imbued with spirit,” Oforiatta Ayim explains, “and what it means for technology to be a true extension of our selves.”



Brazilian artist Diego Araúja’s digital collage *Untitled* (2018). The artist explores trade links between his homeland and Ghana, examining the connection to trauma and separation  
© the artist

The Brazilian artist Diego Araúja is interested in connections between Ghana and his homeland. His sound archive *A Salt Congress* (2022) draws inspiration from the diverse communities inhabiting the shorelines of West Africa, a zone embraced as a new meeting point for African diasporas across the world. Oforiatta Ayim says that Araúja “looks at the histories of Ghana and Brazil and trade [and their connection] to the histories of trauma and separation, by creating a new language for them”.



11 April 2022  
The Art Newspaper  
Online

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### **Inclusive innovation**

The installations will be housed within what the curator describes as a modular bamboo structure by D.K. Osseo-Asare of Low Design Office (Lowdo), a practice based in Tema, Ghana, and Austin, Texas. Lowdo creates spaces and buildings that it describes as “inclusive innovation for people living in resource-constrained environments”.

Osseo-Asare’s structures will also be replicated in spaces across Venice and Ghana, with the intention of linking these two sites through their shared histories, notably the gold-salt trade routes once connecting the Venice lagoon with its equivalent in Sakumono, Ghana.

The freedom and reworlding at the heart of the pavilion’s thesis are rooted in ideas around national identity, ingrained locally yet extending to the diaspora. But, as the cultural theorist Homi K. Bhabha has argued: “One’s sense of nationhood is discursively constructed.” How these artists unpack social constructs around return and belonging—amid the reality that, in today’s Ghana, these utopian ideals are being used by the state to create new models for economic development—will be interesting to see.

### **Ghana**

**Artist:** Na Chainkua Reindorf, Afroscope and Diego Araújo

**Organisers:** *Nana Oforiatta Ayim; Akwasi Agyeman, Ministry of Tourism, Arts And Culture*

**Where:** *Arsenale*



17 December 2021  
The Art Newspaper  
Online

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**Venice Biennale 2022 // News**

## Venice Biennale 2022: all the national pavilions, artists and curators

The latest details about the key participants of the 59th International Art Exhibition



The Venice Biennale's Central Pavillion in the Giardini  
Photo: Francesco Galli; Courtesy of La Biennale di Venezia

**José da Silva**

17 December 2021

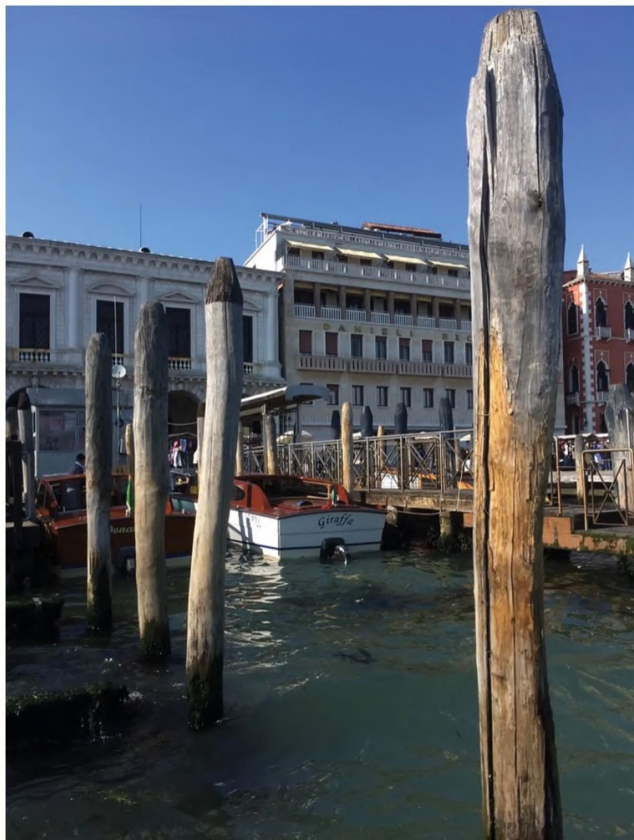


17 December 2021  
The Art Newspaper  
Online

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The Venice Biennale, the oldest art biennial, is back after being delayed a year due to the pandemic—and it is seemingly as jam-packed with artists as ever. To help you get your head around who is showing where, we have brought together all the national pavilions and artists that have been announced so far.

• [Venice Biennale: 59th International Art Exhibition](#), Giardini, Arsenale and various venues around Venice, 23 April-27 November 2022



Venice, the City of Water, will play host to the oldest biennial in the world ©  
J da Silva





17 December 2021  
The Art Newspaper  
Online

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Evor (2021) by Na Chainkua Reindorf  
© Photo: Na Chainkua Reindo

## Ghana

**Artist:** Na Chainkua Reindorf, Afroscope and Diego Araújo

**Organisers:** *Nana Oforiatta Ayim; Akwasi Agyeman, Ministry of Tourism, Arts And Culture*

**Where:** *Arsenale*

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FT Weekend

23 April/24 April 2022

**Arts**  
Life & Arts



Art meets the historic moment

Venice Biennale | British, Ukrainian and French artists speak to the political present – and offer fun – in outstanding pavilions. By Jackie Wulfschläger

**P**erched on a reflective gold stool, beneath psychedelic tessellated wallpaper, surrounded by films of black women singing jazz, folk music and blues-infused a cappella, I am chilling in the British pavilion at the head of the main canal in the Venice Biennale – a location declaring the imperial order circa 1900, when Britain led the world.

Sonia Boyce's "Feeling Her Way" is the most joyful, vibrant British pavilion this century. It's about collaboration and play, "how to listen, how to watch things unfold with other people", she says. After years of lacklustre shows here, Boyce's warm, generous call-and-response harmonies ring out. The pavilion feels vibrant through the eyes, ears and spirit of the first black woman to represent Britain.

On other side, France and Germany twist nationalist inflection as inventively and playfully. France has Zineb Sedira's stunning immersive recreation of Algerian immigrant experience, and in Germany's pavilion Maria Eichhorn imposes ghostly silence – empty rooms, walls striped to brick, floor slanted to bare foundations – in a meditation on the Nazi heritage of this 1930s building.

What else to do? This biennale is fun, but it is also a moment when history sharply meets the political present. The main avenue's most beautiful pavilion



THE DECORATIVE ANTIQUES & TEXTILES FAIR

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Russia's pale green arches and turrets, is closed – the artists resigned following the invasion of Ukraine. Opposite, the Nordic pavilion, transformed into the "Sami Pavilion" and filled with reindeer skulls, is a protest by a remote community lying postcolonialism to green politics – global message.

The fine-classical American pavilion, modelled on slave-owner President Thomas Jefferson's grand house, is briefly unrecognisable – draped in thatch with wooden columns to suggest a 1970s west African home. In "Sovereignty", Simone Leigh's totemic bronzes of black women tower and repossess the space, or discomfort us, as in the bent figure washing clothes, based on a vintage photograph "a very racist image", the artist says.

Like Boyce, Leigh is the first black woman to represent her country. Speaking to and for acute tensions in US society, she also rips beyond – her "Brick House", a bust of a black woman with braids and a skirt fashioned as a clay house, guards the Arsenal entrance majestic, confrontational, defiantly unsmiling, heavy as the burden of colonial history.

Vincent is undoubtedly a frame for battles of voice, visibility and identity, and who here there is a potent as who is. Ghana's pavilion is a building site, not ready in time – a reminder of many African countries' difficulties in finding funds to stage a presence here. Most works for Kazakhstan's show have been held up, on route at the Georgian border, by the war. The Czech and Slovak pavilion, supposed "under reconstruction" after roof damage, reads like a metaphor for eastern European mortality.

But the Ukraine pavilion is open, and elsewhere the cavernous scuola grande di Materotonda, Ukrainian war work, laid in miraculously on display monumental portraits of soldiers – a few weeks ago a musician, art consultant, a chemist – as depicted from front-line photos sent by one of them to his wife, painter Lusia Khomenko. Larger than life, sombre-based, expression a mix of determination and vulnerability, they bear witness. Their ordinariness is the point – they could be us.

This pandemic-delayed biennale's hard-won existence has galvanised artists into new strength, to hardly imaginable possibilities in times of crisis and to immensely ambitious, engaging installations which are the triumph of director Cecilia Alemani's central exhibition. Within the Arsenal, Precision (Ghana's) labyrinth of vines, water, rocks,

Above Wu Tsang's "Of Whales" imagines the ocean as seen from beneath by the great mammal

Right: Sonia Boyce in the British Pavilion

Left: the sunshade all over installation of Anselm Kiefer at Palazzo Ducale

Left: Zineb Sedira's exhibition "Dreams Have No Titles" in the French pavilion

Left: a portrait of a soldier in the Ukraine pavilion, by Lusia Khomenko in her "Max is in the Army" series (2022)

Right: Zineb Sedira's exhibition "Dreams Have No Titles" in the French pavilion

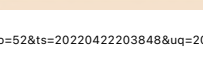
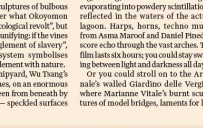
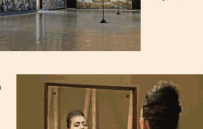
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connections and America's industrial past, glint in sunshine like archaeological remains of a lost civilisation.

Alemani calls her presentation "The Milk of Dreams", after a whimsical Leonora Carrington fairy tale, and in an absurdly gender-balanced show – 90 per cent women – she draws attention to surrealism's legacy for contemporary art. Her deeper theme is transformation, new possibilities that challenge "the presumed universal ideal of the white, male 'Man of Reason' as fixed centre of the universe and measure of all things".

The installations happily that free, and the most original sculptors and painters also seen beyond these prescriptions: Magdalena Okonko's cold, burnished black and ochre ceramic vessels; Regina Brach's futuristic figural sculptures in aluminium, hard-edged yet supple and delicate; Chiara Enzo's tiny crystalline tempera paintings of flesh and body parts. And a few excellent male painters even manage to scrape through.

Unforgettable are the ethereal, mournful canvases in dripping, dilute pigments featuring black figures in eerie settings by Noah Davis, the leading painter of his generation when he died at 32 in 2015. Unforgettable is Alemani's reduction of 92-year-old Ibrahim El-

After years of lacklustre British shows, Boyce's warm, generous call-and-response harmonies ring out

Sabali, whose large-scale figural paintings pioneer a fusion of modernism with Islamic ornament and Indonesian traditions, to cabinet-scale – drawings on the back of medicine packets.

Alemani's concentration on historical surrealists (near half her show's artists are dead) and their mostly meek, derivative descendants is pronounced at the Giardini. The gains are tightly curated "time capsules", but much outside is sited beyond parody – Sided Moteche Hansen's earnest video of a broiled of sex dolls sets the tone. There's a stiffness, a curious lack of sensuality, for an exhibition supposedly celebrating female sensibility. Even the best of the omnipresent post-surreal fabric works, lifetime achievement (Golden Lion winner Cecilia Vicuña's hanging thread-and-dentine pieces, balancing fragility and resilience, seem cerebral).

The Giardini only burst into feeling with the magnificent room devoted to Paula Rego. Centred on "Oratorio", the triptych featuring abandoned babies and traumatised mothers, dramatising violence and intimacy in hard-edged pastel marks, this is painting aglow and shocking – and highlighting the academic character of much else here.

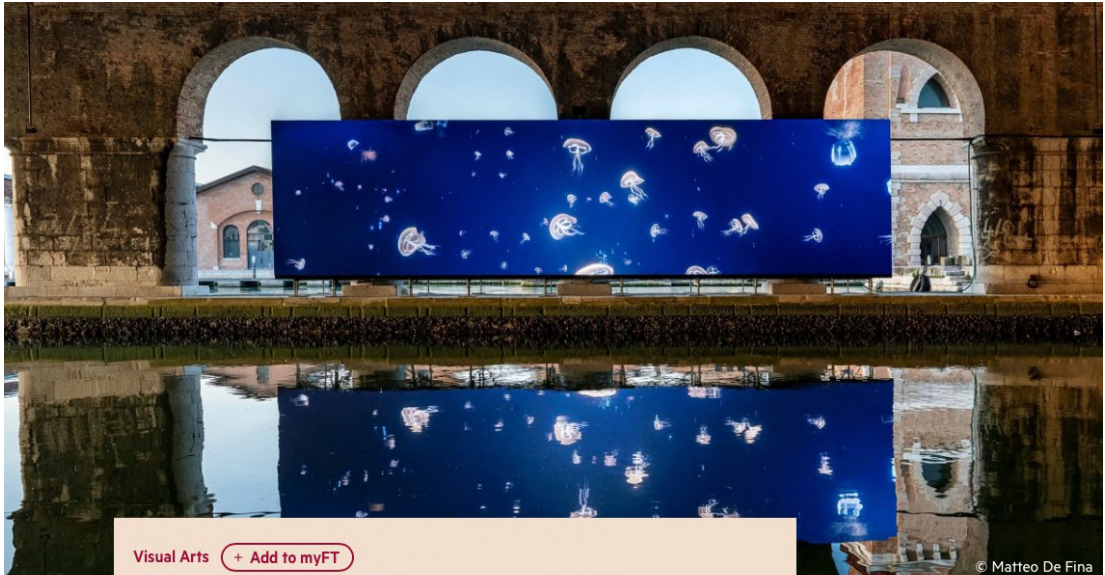
By choosing almost exclusively women, Alemani has paid a severe price in terms of quality, a cost obvious too in the contrast with many superb exhibitions by male artists across town.

Aston Ceramby's cobble bodies and surprisingly delicate drawings, a revelation, are light of spirit, animated, human, in dialogue with architect Carlo Scarpa's sleek glass-and-wood modernist paradise, the Olivetti showroom in Piazza San Marco. Anish Kapoor pulls the Venetian sky to earth in "Sky Mirror", exquisitely placed in the Accademia courtyard, opening his retrospective there. Kapoor also presides, the beginning of a breathtakingly holistic project, his fountain at Palazzo Manin. Rajib Shaha's enamel-encrusted paintings about painting, reminding Giorgio de Chirico and Titian of a Himalayan setting, offer moments of stillness and absorption at Palazzo Manin.

And, unmissable, the name on everyone's lips this week, the all-over installation of charred, light-piercing, hanging with braided runners – soldiers' uniforms, red-inked shoes – at Palazzo Ducale: the work that asserts painting as a continually inventive medium, and makes Anselm Kiefer the man of the moment in Venice 2022.

To November 27, laBiennale.org

23/24 April 2022  
Financial Times  
Print



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© Matteo De Fina

## Venice Biennale meets the moment with outstanding pavilions

British, Ukrainian and French artists bring work that speaks to the political present — but also offer fun

Jackie Wullschläger APRIL 23 2022

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26 January 2022  
Artnet  
Online

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**Art World**

## Art Industry News: Melania Trump's NFT Sale Came in 30 Percent Under Its Starting Bid Amid a Massive Crypto Crash + Other Stories

Plus, the MFA Boston will return a stolen Dutch painting, and Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe pays tribute to Virgil Abloh on the cover of Teen Vogue.

**Artnet News**, January 26, 2022



Melania Trump visiting Emmanuel Macron in 2018, which is now the source material for her NFT portrait.



26 January 2022

Artnet  
Online

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**Ghana Reveals Venice Biennale Pavilion**

– After its acclaimed debut at the 2019 Venice Biennale, Ghana will return for its sophomore outing with a presentation of work by Na Chankua Reindorf, Afroscope, and Diego Araújo. Nana Oforiatta Ayim, director of ANO Institute of Arts & Knowledge in Accra, is back to organize the presentation, which is designed by architect DK Osseo-Asare. For more Venice updates, check out our up-to-date round-up of pavilions. *(Press release)*

**Phillips Mounts Private Selling Exhibition of Ghanaian Artists**

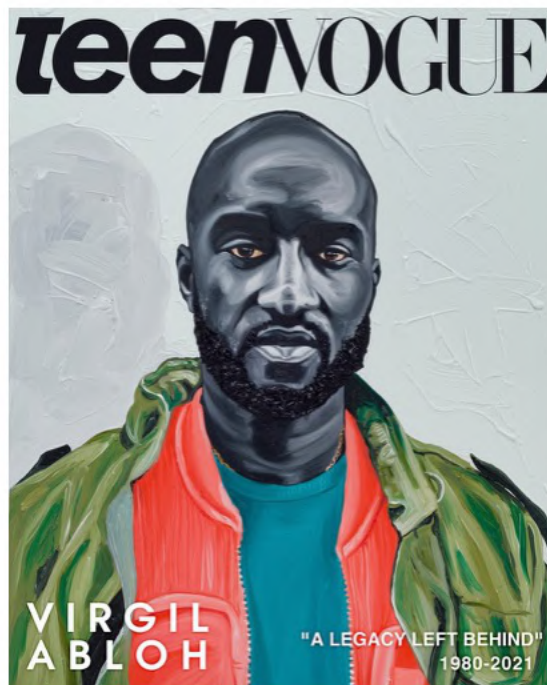
– Amid an explosion of demand for work by young African artists, Phillips London is mounting a selling show titled “Birds of a Feather” featuring work by six young artists from Ghana: Awanle Ayiboro Hawa Ali, Courage Hunke, James Mishio, Araba Opoku, Abdur Rahman Muhammed, and Kwaku Yaro. The show, produced in collaboration with Ghanaian-based agency Artemartis, runs from February 1 to 10. *(Press release)*

26 January 2022  
Artnet  
Online

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## FOR ART'S SAKE

**Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe Designs *Teen Vogue* Cover** – Another Ghana-born painter, Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe, paid tribute to the late designer Virgil Abloh in a special issue of *Teen Vogue* with a new portrait on the cover. Quaicoe was chosen for the project in part because Abloh was “the son of Ghanaian parents,” per *Teen Vogue*. ([ARTnews](#))



Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe's cover for 'Teen Vogue.' Courtesy of 'Teen Vogue.'

12 April 2022  
Wallpaper\*  
Online

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ART | 1 DAY AGO | BY [HARRIET LLOYD-SMITH](#)

## Venice Biennale 2022: 15 national pavilions on our radar

With the 59th [Venice Biennale](#) almost upon us (23 April - 27 November 2022), watch this space for live reporting on the must-see pavilions arriving this year



Uffe Isolotto, *Bodies on Balconies*, 2018. Public Art Commission for Vendsyssel Theatre, Hjørring, Denmark. Photography: Torben Petersen

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12 April 2022  
Wallpaper\*  
Online

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**T**he 59th Venice Biennale is almost upon us, and after the last two years, ‘much anticipated’ doesn’t seem to quite cut it. Soon, the labyrinthine waterways will be teeming with art-hungry crowds as the global art world descends once again for the world’s most prestigious art event (23 April – 27 November 2022).

Cecilia Alemani will take the reins of the central exhibition, ‘The Milk of Dreams’ at the Arsenale and Giardini, borrowing its title from a book by Surrealist icon Leonora Carrington, with the surrounding palazzos filled to the brim with world-class Venice Biennale collateral events.

This year will also see a number of firsts. Eight countries – Cameroon, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Namibia, Nepal, Oman, Uganda and Uzbekistan – will make their Venice Biennale debut, while the Nordic Pavilion will see the first-ever takeover by Indigenous Sámi artists.

With more than 90 national pavilions popping up in the Giardini and the Arsenale this year, it’s not been the easiest task to whittle down our must-sees, but here’s a taste of what we’re most excited about:

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## **59th Venice Biennale: top national pavilion picks for 2022**

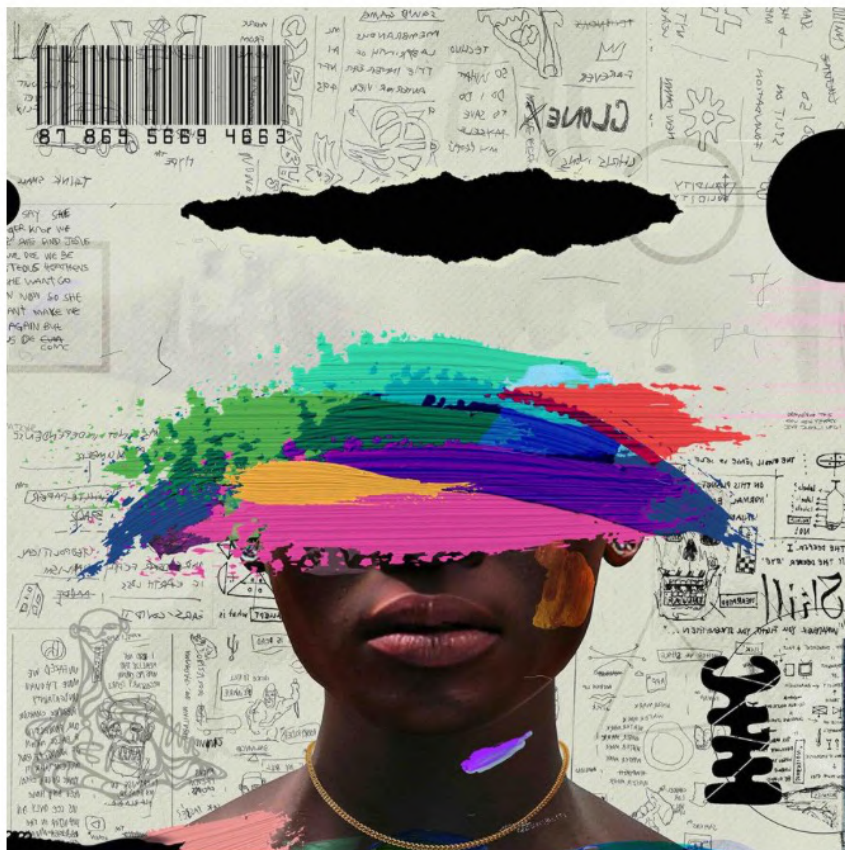
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12 April 2022  
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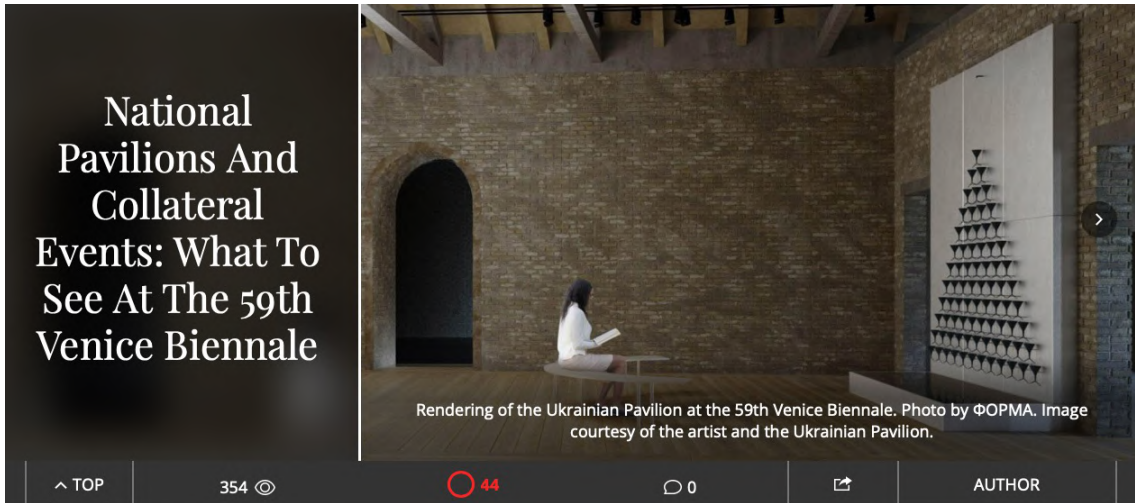
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## Ghana: group presentation



Nana Opoku, (*Afroscope*) *Dreamer Series*, 2021

Following its debut at the Biennale Arte 2019, Ghana will present the group exhibition 'Black Star – The Museum as Freedom', featuring large-scale installations by three artists: Na Chainkua Reindorf, Afroscope and Diego Araújo. The show borrows its name from the Black Star that symbolises Ghana through its flag, national football team, and most notable national monument, and also the connection of Africa with its diasporas.



19  
APR

The wait is nearly over—the much-anticipated 59th Venice Biennale will finally open to the public this week. From Simone Leigh’s striking figurative works to Pavlo Makov’s installation with heightened global relevance, here are the national pavilions and collateral events you should try not to miss.

TEXT: Herbert Wright  
IMAGES: Courtesy of various

The title for this year’s Venice Biennale, which opens 23 April, is “The Milk of Dreams”. Chosen by Artistic Director Cecilia Alemani, Director and Chief Curator of New York’s High Line Art, it is taken from a book by 20th century surrealist Leonora Carrington, whose work will be included in the International Exhibition.



Herbert Wright

26 | 78025 | 942

Herbert is a London-based writer covering architecture, urbanism, and art. He is contributing editor...

VIEW PROFILE



Na Chainkua Reindorf, *Evor*, 2021. Image courtesy of the artist.

Technology has always assisted art, but of course now its progress is hyperaccelerated and that's creating fear as well as possibilities. Things to come include robot painter Ai-Da, whose work will be featured in "Leaping Into The Metaverse" (23 April–3 July) at InParadiso Gallery, inside the restaurant at the entrance to the Giardini. Ai-Da's creators say they raise the question "who are we, and what is art?", but there is another question: As AI advances into creativity, will robotics ultimately render artists redundant? Very different robots create DRIFT's *Social Sacrifice* (19 April–1 May), the Dutch artist duo's first-ever indoor aerial drone performance. Through animating the swarming dynamics between a school of fish and a predator, the performance sheds light on the notions of individual autonomy and collective interdependence.

The NFT fad rears its head at Venice, with Global Crypto Art DAO staging an NFT-only show at the Palazzo ca' Bernado. Oblivious to the eco-crime of exploiting blockchain technology, the show will feature 20 international artists. Co-curator Sandro Orlando Stagl previously curated Kenya's Pavilion in 2015, which was accused of neo-colonialism and subsequently repudiated by the Kenyan government. What a contrast to other African pavilions such as Ghana's. In "Black Star—Museum as Freedom", three national artists express post-colonialist optimism using large-scale installations, designed by a Ghana and Texas-based architecture and design studio.

31 March 2022  
Elephant  
Online

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31 Mar  
2022

ART / ARTISTS TO WATCH

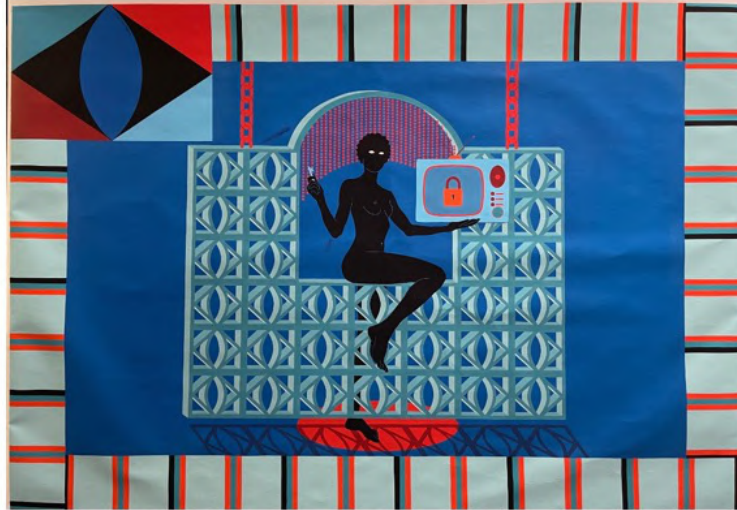
## Venice Biennale: Elephant's Pick of Must-See Exhibitions

Heading to the city of canals in April? These are the artists you definitely need to check out at the 59<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale



31 March 2022  
Elephant  
Online

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Na Chainkua Reindorf, Lara, 2021

## Na Chainkua Reindorf

The exhibition *Black Star: The Museum as Freedom* will show at this year's Ghana pavilion. A black star sits on the country's flag, and has come to symbolise many things, from the national football team to Marcus Garvey's Back-to-Africa movement.

The star icon could be seen to represent freedom, a central theme of a show which brings together large-scale installations by [Na Chainkua Reindorf](#), Afroscope and Diego Araújo. It is curated by Nana Oforiatta Ayim, a writer, art historian and filmmaker based in Accra, who is the founder of the ANO Institute of Arts and Knowledge, and curated Ghana's pavilion in 2019.

Mixed-media artist Reindorf will subvert historically male secret society traditions for this biennale presentation by expanding on the story of the Mawu Nyonu, a mythical secret society of seven women who are deeply connected with the elements. *(Emily Steer)*

## Latest News in Black Art: New University Appointments at Tufts, Temple, and Rutgers, 20,000 Black Memorabilia Objects Headed to Auction, Ghana at Venice Biennale & More

by VICTORIA L. VALENTINE on Jan 30, 2022 • 5:58 pm No Comments

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*Latest News in Black Art features news updates and developments in the world of art and related culture*



*From left, Jova Lynne starts at Temple Contemporary at Tyler School of Art and Architecture Jan. 31. | Photo by Clare Gotto; Margaret Vendryes officially joins Tufts University in June. | Photo Courtesy Margaret Vendryes*

### **Biennials**

Ghana announced its exhibition plans for the 59th Venice Biennale. Titled “Black Star: The Museum as Freedom,” the presentation will feature works by three artists—**Na Chainkua Reindorf**, **Afroscope** and **Diego Araújo**. The pavilion is curated by **Nana Oforiatta Ayim**, director of ANO Institute of Arts & Knowledge in Accra and director-at-large of Ghana’s Museums and Cultural Heritage, and designed by architect **DK Osseo Asare**. The exhibition will be on view in the Ghana Pavilion from April 23-Nov. 27, 2022.

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26 January 2022  
Le Quotidien de L'Art (France)  
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**PATRIMOINE**

## Au CMN, fin de la vocation monoculturelle des monuments

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**BIENNALE DE VENISE 2022**  
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## LES ESSENTIELS DU JOUR

QDA 26.01.22 N°2313 5



En haut : **Nana Opoku**  
*(Afroscope) Dreamer Series*  
2021.  
© Nana Opoku.

**Diego Araújo**  
*Untitled (from the creative process of Diego Araújo's 1st creollage, QUASELHAS)*  
2018, collage numérique.  
© Diego Araújo.

### BIENNALE DE VENISE 2022 Le pavillon ghanéen bisse 2019

En 2019, le Ghana avait fait une première apparition remarquée à la 58<sup>e</sup> Biennale de Venise avec une exposition très politique, étudiant les conséquences de l'indépendance acquise en 1957 dans le cadre de la décolonisation britannique. Pour sa deuxième participation, le pays continue d'explorer la thématique de la liberté, en faisant à nouveau appel à la commissaire Nana Oforiatta Ayim – directrice de l'ANO Institute of Arts & Knowledge à Accra et directrice générale des musées et du patrimoine culturel du Ghana – pour présenter « Black Star - The Museum as Freedom ». L'étoile noire possède des symboles multiples au Ghana : référence au motif présent sur son

drapeau, elle évoque aussi les connexions entre diasporas africaines à travers la compagnie maritime Black Star Line, fondée en 1919 par le militant jamaïcain Marcus Garvey, l'un des grands représentants du mouvement Back-to-Africa, promouvant le retour des descendants d'esclaves dans leurs pays d'origine – aujourd'hui réactivé sous le nom de « Beyond the Return », une initiative gouvernementale alimentant les discussions sur le panafricanisme et l'anticolonialisme. L'exposition examinera les questions relatives aux diasporas à travers le temps, la technologie et les frontières, avec une scénographie de l'architecte DK Osseo-Asare à l'Arsenal. Elle comprendra des installations de Na Chainkua Reindorf, dont le travail s'intéresse à la politique de l'habillement et à son aspect

identitaire dans l'histoire du Ghana, tandis qu'Afroscope et Diego Araújo formuleront une réflexion sur l'eau sous un angle à la fois géopolitique (l'océan Atlantique séparant les Ghanéens issus des diasporas de leurs ancêtres) et spirituel. Le pavillon s'inspirera également du concept de musée mobile pensé par Nana Oforiatta Ayim, qui se déplace régulièrement dans les communautés du Ghana pour y développer des projets de co-curation : ce modèle sera reproduit pendant toute la durée de la Biennale, avec des événements et ateliers montés en collaboration avec des organisations vénitienes.

**JADE PILLAUDIN**  
☎ [ghanainvenice.com](http://ghanainvenice.com)

## EMPLOI

**Hes·SO** GENÈVE  
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Lieu de travail : Genève  
Entrée en fonction : 1er janvier 2023  
Taux d'activité : 100%  
Délai de candidature : 18 mars 2022  
Détail du poste : [www.hesge.ch](http://www.hesge.ch)

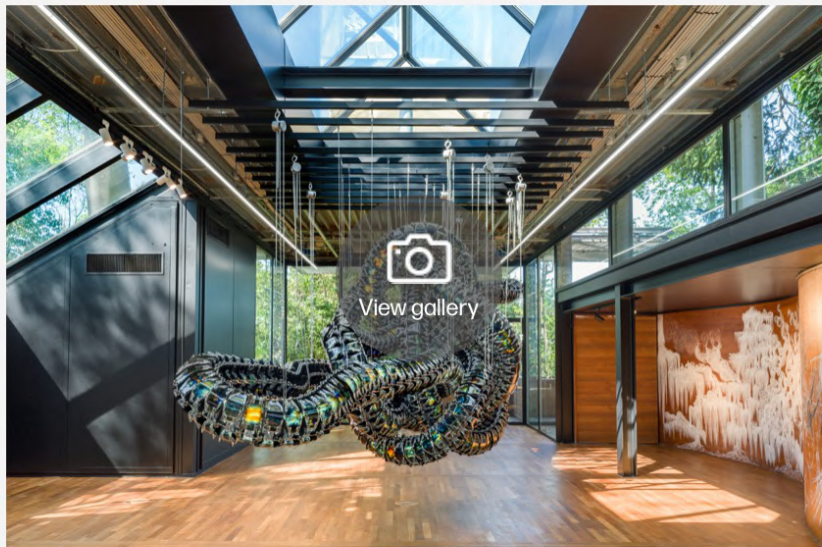
La HES-SO Genève/HEAD adopte une politique de recrutement en faveur de l'égalité des chances et de la diversité.

— HEAD  
Genève



## Biennale Arte 2022: the pavilions not to be missed

Well-known names such as Simone Leigh for the United States Pavilion and new entries, including Uganda: our gallery brings together a list of pavilions that are worthy of special attention.



[VIEW ARTICLE DETAILS](#)



AUTHOR: **Clara Rodorigo** PUBLISHED: **21 April 2022**

21 April 2022  
Domus (Italy)  
Online

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The 59. International Art Exhibition entitled “The Milk of Dreams” is ready to open its gates on 23 April. Curated by Cecilia Alemani and organised by the Biennale di Venezia under the chairmanship of Roberto Cicutto, the event has been in the news for months (for instance, with the recent - predictable - announcement of the resignation of the curators and artists of the Russian Pavilion). Postponed due to the pandemic, the Biennale is now ready to welcome 213 artists from 58 countries, whose works will occupy the Central Pavilion, the Giardini and the Arsenale. Many numbers, all significant: 26 Italian artists, 180 first participations, 1433 works and objects on display and 80 new productions. There are 80 National Participations, including 5 countries participating for the first time: the Republic of Cameroon, Namibia, Nepal, the Sultanate of Oman and Uganda. Expectations are growing around the Italian Pavilion at the Tese delle Vergini in the Arsenale, which for the first time will feature just one name, that of the artist Gian Maria Tosatti.

Whether it is about “historic” pavilions and well-known names, such as Simone Leigh’s for the United States Pavilion, or new entries making their Biennale debut, such as the Uganda Pavilion which will present works by Acaye Kerunen and Collin Sekajugo, the Biennale always knows how to spark discussion. Worthy of note is the rich calendar of collateral events organised in numerous venues around Venice, including the exhibition on artist Angela Su, representing Hong Kong.

21 April 2022  
Domus (Italy)  
Online

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While waiting to finally navigate the labyrinthine path of exhibitions and collateral events, we have prepared a list of pavilions that, given the premises, you cannot miss.

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**Read also: [The best exhibitions to see in Venice during the Biennale 2022](#)**

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***Opening image:*** Yunchul Kim, *Chroma V. Korean Pavilion, 2022.*  
*Courtesy of the artist. Photo Roman März*

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◀ Na Chainkua Reindorf wendet die Bildsprache ghanaischer Kriegsflaggen auf einen fiktiven Geheimbund von Frauen an  
EVOR, 2021

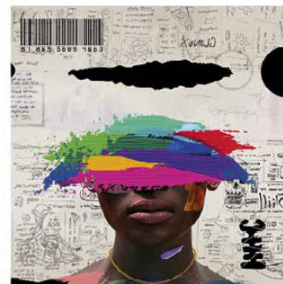
▼ Suche nach kultureller Identität mit den Mitteln der Kunst: digitale Collage von Afroscope  
DREAMER #0009, 2021

**GHANA**

## Afroscope, Diego Araújo und Na Chainkua Reindorf träumen von einem freien und geeinten Afrika

**G**leich mit seiner ersten Teilnahme an der Venedig-Biennale sorgte Ghana für eine kleine Sensation. Für den Länderpavillon des westafrikanischen Staats hatte die Kuratorin Nana Oforiatta Ayim Künstler aus drei Generationen eingeladen, darunter den Bildhauer El Anatsui und die Malerin Lynette Yiadom-Boakye. Jetzt, drei Jahre später, wird der Pavillon erneut von Ayim kuratiert. Die in Deutschland und Großbritannien aufgewachsene Kunsthistorikerin lebt mittlerweile in Accra, der Hauptstadt Ghanas. In ihren Ausstellungen geht es um die afrikanische Diaspora, die Nachwirkungen der Kolonialzeit und die Suche nach einer eigenen kulturellen Identität. Dieser Dreiklang prägt auch Ayims neuen Biennale-Pavillon, in dem sie Arbeiten von Afroscope, Diego Araújo und Na Chainkua Reindorf zeigt. Der Ausstellungstitel, »Black Star – The Museum as Freedom«, bezieht sich auf den schwarzen Stern auf Ghanas Nationalflagge und zugleich auf die Utopie eines

freien und geeinten Afrika; die 1919 vom Aktivist Marcus Garvey gegründete Black-Star-Schiffslinie sollte ehemalige Sklaven aus Nordamerika und Europa zurück in ihre Heimatländer und zu ihren kulturellen Wurzeln bringen. Na Chainkua Reindorf greift für ihre Gouachen der Mawu Nyonu-Serie die traditionelle Bildsprache ghanaischer Kriegsflaggen auf, verwandelt diese allerdings in Abzeichen einer fiktiven Geheimgesellschaft heiliger Frauen – aus männlichen Kriegern werden weibliche Gottheiten. Der Virtual-Reality-Künstler Afroscope (Isaac Nana Opoku) versetzt uns mittels digitaler Medien in die Collage-Landschaften eines panafrikanischen Utopias. Und bei Diego Araújo, einem in Brasilien geborenen Installationskünstler und Theaterautor, wird die ghanaische Atlantikküste zur Geburtsstätte eines neuen, afrikanische Heimat und amerikanische Diaspora verbindenden Bewusstseins. // MICHAEL KOHLER



◀ Nana Oforiatta Ayim kuratiert den ghanaischen Pavillon in diesem Jahr schon zum zweiten Mal. Sie wuchs in Deutschland und England auf und lebt heute in Accra

## African art stars you don't want to miss at Venice Biennale 2022

As the 59th international contemporary art fair kicks off in the city of canals, Sub-Saharan Africa will be well-represented with eight pavilions that showcase thought-provoking art from the region.



© Afroscope

### Ghana: Afroscope

In 2019, Ghana made its acclaimed debut at the Venice Biennale. In 2022, Nana Oforiatta Ayim is once again curating Ghana's pavilion, which presents a group show entitled "Black Star: The Museum as Freedom." Afroscope, one of the displaying artists, presents "Ashe," a work exploring the confluence of spirit, technology and elements such as water to depict dreamlike alternative realities.

▶ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8



23 April 2022  
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## African art stars you don't want to miss at Venice Biennale 2022

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### Ghana: Afroscope

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