

I-54 Contemporary African Art Fair

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In its 6th edition, 1-54 Contemporary African Art fair presents a diversity of works at Somerset House, London from October 4-7

Text by Lara Chapman

The 54 countries of Africa come together at Somerset House, London, in a celebration of Contemporary African Art. The sixth edition of the 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair presents 43 galleries, over 130 artists and 11 solo shows. Since it was founded in 2013, the fair has expanded to include shows in New York and Marrakech. The Founding Director of 1-54, Touria El Glaoui, commented: "The growth and popularity of the fair is a real testament to the shift away from Euro-centric art-historical narratives."

This shift in thinking is reflected upon and contributed to in FORUM – the fair's diverse talk and events program which, for the first time this year is curated by Ekow Eshun, chairman of the Fourth Plinth Commissioning Group and Creative Director of Calvert 22 Foundation.

A few highlights of the fair include a public sculptural project by Ibrahim El-Salahi in Somerset House's courtyard; the first major UK solo exhibition of South African artist Athi-Patra Ruga's work; an immersive installation by British-Ghanaian artist Larry Achiampong; an experiential display in 1-54 Lounge by Shiraz Bayjoo and special projects with Nando's Sulger Buel Lovell and 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning.

Among the exhibitors this year there are 16 galleries from Africa: Addis Fine Art, AFRONOVA GALLERY, AGorgi Gallery, ARTLabAfrica, Circle Art Gallery, Galerie Cécile Fakhoury, Gallery 1957, Loft Art Gallery, Mashrabia Gallery of Contemporary Art, MOVART Gallery, Retro Africa, Selma Feriani Gallery, SMAC, SMO Contemporary Art, VOICE gallery, WHATIFTHEWORLD.

Of the 43 exhibitors, 11 galleries will be welcomed to the London fair for the first time: ADN Galeria, Art Bärtschi & Cie, Burning in Water, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Gallery Nosco, HUBERTY & BREYNE GALLERY, James Cohan, Kristin Hjellegjerde, Loft Art Gallery, MOVART Gallery, Retro Africa and Yossi Milo Gallery.

The 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair will be on display at Somerset House until October 7