



## 18 galleries for Art X Lagos

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EIGHTEEN galleries have been selected to attend this year's Art X in Lagos.

They are: Art House – The Space (Nigeria), Addis Fine Art (Ethiopia), Circle Art Agency (Kenya), Stevenson Gallery (South Africa), Gallery 1957 (Ghana), Tafeta (United Kingdom), Tiwani Contemporary (United Kingdom), Nike Art Gallery (Nigeria), and Out of Africa Gallery (Spain).

The United Kingdom (UK)-based Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare is the keynote speaker for Art X Talks, one of the intellectual aspects of the event, which is West Africa's premier international art fair.

ART X Talks, to be curated by Missla Libsekal, will feature talks by key stakeholders in Africa's art economy on November 3 and 4.

Shonibare, who was part of the five-man jury that selected this year's N1 million Art X Prize, is also exhibiting at the fair, with no fewer than 50 artists and 18 art galleries from Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, South Africa, Spain and UK.

The organisers said they were building on the success of previous editions, which hosted 15,000 visitors; and continuing with its ambition to showcase the best and most innovative contemporary art from Africa and the diaspora.

The galleries were chosen by a Selection Committee led by Advisory Board members N'Goné Fall, the Senegalese curator, art critic and cultural consultant, and Femi Lijadu, one of Nigeria's most

respected art collectors and leading commercial lawyers.

As part of its pan-African identity, widening Nigeria's connection to the contemporary African art world, ART X Lagos is proud to welcome East African artists to the fair for the first time. It will feature critically-acclaimed artists, such as Kenyans Paul Onditi and Cyrus Kabiru.

At a briefing in Lagos, founder and Director, Art X, Lagos, Tokini Peterside. said the third edition of the fair, which will hold between November 2 and 4 at the Civic Centre, Victoria Island, Lagos will be an improved bumper edition.

"After the success of ART X Lagos 2017 we are delighted to return for a third edition. We are validated in our decision to develop this vital platform for the growth and increased visibility of African artists and galleries. This would have been impossible without the phenomenal support of the galleries, sponsors and partners, who took a huge leap of faith and committed to support us from ground zero, for which we are most grateful. In six weeks, we will open the doors to ART X Lagos 2018. We look forward to welcoming a vast and varied, local and international audience as we seek to reinforce Lagos' position as an emergent cultural capital on our continent," she said.

Among Nigerian artists exhibiting at the fair are Nike Okundaye, Duke Asidere, Gerald Chukwuma, Oladotun Popoola, and winner of Art X Lagos project Bolatito Aderemi-Ibitola.

Group Head, Corporate Communications & External Affairs, Access Bank Plc, Amaechi Okobi, noted that Nigeria has an amazing collection of talents, especially in the creative sector, adding that the bank would always support any Nigerian who does anything that would bring positive attention to Nigeria.

"Yinka Shonibare is a phenomenal ambassador of Nigeria and it is time to change the narrative," he said.

Founder, Nike Art Gallery, Nike Okundaye, said she was inspired to be part of this year's fair because of young Nigerians' efforts to take art to the next level, adding that the youth have given art a new spirit, which she must identify with. "I am proud of Art X Lagos," she said. She disclosed that some of her works listed for the fair include *Eniyan Laso mi* and *Water*, among others.

Asidere stated that despite challenges Nigerian artists have continued to produce works that will transcend the moment and outlive them because art sector has been very elastic in the last few years. He noted that with the coming of Art X Lagos, young and emerging artists have found a credible platform to express their talents.

For Popoola, featuring at the fair for the first time is a big privilege. He recalled that after the successful hosting of his solo exhibition at Signature Gallery in Lagos, he was confined to the studio for 24/7.

"I had to up my game. And for Art X, there is a piece of work I am showing, which tells about the social life in Nigeria. I will use found objects and controlled metal to produce it as hybrid stuff," he said.

ART X Lagos 2018 is made possible by the generous, committed support of its sponsors, which include Access Bank (Gold Sponsor); Ford Foundation (Diversity and Education Sponsor); Stanbic IBTC Pensions, H2Oh!, Anap Jets and Chapel Hill Denham (Bronze Sponsors); Lufthansa, Absolut, Budweiser, Leadway Assurance and Metro Capital (Category Sponsors).

The fair will also feature Interactive Projects, curated by A Whitespace Creative Agency, and will feature experiential platforms that explore ideas influenced by the exhilarating essence of Lagos. OlalekanJeyifous and Wale Lawal have created a virtual reality installation, Mad Horse City, which explores a futuristic imagination of Lagos in the year 2115. Meanwhile 'Lagos Drawings' is an Interactive Installation, by Karo Akpokiere, which combines digital technology, perceptible sounds and visual illustrations inspired by Lagos Textures.

Also, ART X Prize with Access was evolved to bolster the efforts of emerging artists who have demonstrated a commitment to careers as professional visual artists. Bolatito Aderemi-Ibitola, who emerged as the winner in June, this year, after a rigorous selection, received a grant of N1million and will have a solo presentation of her project, *Scraps* from Mama's Floor at this year's fair.

ART X Live!, the live art and music segment of the fair will make a return this year, featuring some of Africa's most talented rising artists, curated by Lanre Masha, with Odunsi the Engine as creative director.

Performers include Teni the Entertainer, Ghanaian musician Amaarae, and BOJ, accompanied by some of Lagos' finest emerging visual and graphic artists. The theme this year invites guests to indulge in an electric exploration of Africa's rich musical history with a celebration of our heroes past – the icons, legends and sounds that have shaped the continent's contemporary musical landscape.

