

Meet the six African photographers vying for the £5000 AMPP prize

At a private reception holding this evening in Central London, six talented young African photographers from across the continent and diaspora will be vying for a £5000 prize.

The unprecedented new platform for artists is called Africa MediaWorks Photography Prize for artists will be a major new addition to London's annual photography scene. It aims to showcase artists who have not yet been extensively recognized in the West yet creating high-quality and varied work in countries as diverse as Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Ethiopia, Benin and Senegal.

Below are the six artists who will be judged tonight.

Laeila Adjovi



Picture caption: Art from the series Malaika Dotou Sankofa © Laeila Adjovi. Laeila is a self-taught documentary photographer and photojournalist and works out of Dakar, Senegal. She's one of the six shortlisted for the AMW Photography Prize

Adjovi is a talented photographer that lived in India and New Caledonia before moving back to the continent. Born in 1982, the Beninese and French national grew up in Gabon and South Africa. She now lives and works in Dakar, Senegal.

The political sciences and journalism graduate has exhibited in Senegal, Morocco, Benin, France, South Africa and Ethiopia in the past few years.

She says: “I’m a self-taught photographer interested in documentary photography and photojournalism. My themes relate to social issues, daily life on the continent or the African cultural heritage.”

Laeila-adjovi.com

Rahima Gambo



Rukkaya and Hadiza remember having to hide their school uniforms in plastic bags because they feared becoming a target of Boko Haram. Maiduguri, Nigeria, 2016. The photograph is seen alongside a connect-the-dots style illustration from the book, “Progressive Coloring Book three” by Christopher G. Bakare. It purports to teach 12 psychological skills to students. Published by Heineman Educational Books in Ibadan, Nigeria, 1982.

Gambo is a Nigerian photographer who explores identity, history, memory, spirituality, healing through long-term visual projects.

Born in 1986, the Abuja based photographer often experiments with text, illustration, video, sculpture and installation.

Adeola Olagunju



From the series Redemption © Adeola Olagunju <http://adeolaolagunju.com>

Olagunju is a Nigerian Artist who lives and works in Lagos, Nigeria. After obtaining a degree in Fine and Applied Arts (Graphic Design) in 2009, Adeola worked as a Graphic Artist for Advertising Agencies in Lagos.

Working primarily with photography, her artistic practice encompasses a range of medium, including Video, Painting, and Collage. Adeola explores themes around her environment, self and memory with documentary and conceptual approach.

She has been on residencies at Kuona Trust Centre for Visual Art in Nairobi, Kenya and the Lagos Photo Summer School exchange programme in Berlin, Germany. She has also participated in Photography Master

classes and exhibitions locally and internationally.

Sabelo Mlangeni



From the series No Problem © Sabelo Mlangeni, courtesy Stevenson

Sabelo was born in 1980 in Driefontein near Wakkerstroom in Mpumalanga. In 2001 he moved to Johannesburg where he joined the Market Photo Workshop, graduating in 2004. He won the Tollman Award for the Visual Arts in 2009.

Recent group exhibitions include Rise and Fall of Apartheid: Photography and the Bureaucracy of Everyday Life at Museum Africa, Johannesburg (extended until 30 April 2015); Distance and Desire: Encounters with the African Archive at the Walther Collection in Ulm, Germany (2013-2014).

Public Intimacy: Art and Social Life in South Africa at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (2014); Apartheid and After at Huis Marseille, Amsterdam (2014); the Lubumbashi Biennale (2013); the Liverpool Biennial exhibition The Unexpected Guest (2012); 9th Rencontres de Bamako African Photography Biennial in Mali and the Lagos Photo Festival, Nigeria (both 2011); Appropriated Landscapes at the Walther Collection, Ulm, Germany (2011) and Figures and Fictions:

Contemporary South African photography at the V&A Museum, London (2011).

Michael Tsegaye



From the series Chasms of the Soul © Michael Tsegaye

Following the completion of a Diploma in painting in 2002, Tsegaye switched to photography after developing an allergy to oil paint. Tsegaye, who lives and works in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, says: “As a photographer, I try as much as possible to escape being pigeonholed. I place myself amongst my peers (painters and photographers) across the world. While the spirit of my culture – it’s traditions in music, poetry and literature – informs my photography, my goal is that of the artist: to understand my life and standpoint in the 21st century.”

Alun [be]



From the series Edification © Alun [Be] <https://www.alunbe.com/#1>

He was born in Dakar, Senegal and spent his childhood between France, the United States and West Africa. Alun's personal projects focus on the human condition in public spaces, incited by his studies in San Francisco where he received his M.A. in Architecture.

Of the series Edification, he says: "Edification is an exploration of the impact of technology on society. The intention of this exhibit is to provide a visual narrative of faith in a digital future in which humanity teeters on the cusp of fully merging with technology."

Alunbe.com