

7 October 2020 by Mark Westall

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1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair opens IRL tomorrow at Somerset House

1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair opens tomorrow Thursday 8th October (8th & 9th preview days) with 36 exhibitors from 17 countries participating in a new blended online and offline model. All exhibitors will showcase work at 1-54 Online Powered by Christie's, with 29 exhibitors also bringing physical presentations to an intimate eighth London edition at Somerset House. As part of the Christie's partnership, there will also be a curated pop-up exhibition of works from all the Somerset House exhibitors on display at the auction house's Duke Street Gallery.



Richard Mudariki, *On WhatsApp*, 2019, Oil on Canvas, 90 x 150cm. Courtesy Gallery Delta

1-54 London 2020 will showcase the work of more than 110 emerging and established artists from Africa and its diaspora, working in a wide variety of mediums and from a range of geographical backgrounds. Three solo exhibitions have been announced: DuduBloom More (Berman Contemporary), Anya Paintsil (Ed Cross Fine Art) and Ekene Maduka (Polartics).

1-54 is delighted will once again be partnering with Somerset House to present the first major UK retrospective of works by the celebrated late French-Moroccan photographer, video artist and activist Leila Alaoui, which will debut during 1-54 and run through to January 2021. A series of photographic works created between 2008 and 2014 will be presented alongside Leila Alaoui's final unfinished video work. Acclaimed for capturing and preserving the unseen stories of individuals and communities displaced by conflict and unrest, Leila Alaoui offers an intimate portrait into the rich cultural identities and resilience of societies facing difficult and uncertain realities. The subjects of Alaoui's works are pictured across the contemporary Mediterranean-landscape and beyond, from Syrian refugees fleeing civil war in Lebanon to young North Africans seeking an alternative future in Europe. Tragically, Alaoui was killed whilst working on a photography project for a women's rights campaign for Amnesty International in Burkina Faso in 2016. She was critically wounded during a terrorist attack in Ouagadougou, passing away from her injuries shortly afterwards at the age of 33.



Anya Paintsil, *Shackles the Snake*, 2020, Acrylic, wool, human hair, synthetic hair and titanium on hessian, 134.6 x 134.6 cm. Courtesy of Ed Cross Fine Art

Founding Director of 1-54, Touria El Glaoui, commented:

"Given the incredible challenges and uncertainty posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic, we are delighted to have been able to find a way to welcome visitors back to our spiritual home at Somerset House in London this October whilst also amplifying our online presence in partnership with Christie's to ensure that art lovers from all over the world will be able to join us too. Having organised fourteen fairs across three continents in the past eight years, this has certainly been the most demanding planning process yet. We are incredibly grateful to all our exhibitors and partners who have demonstrated great commitment, desire and flexibility to help make this fair happen. It's very exciting to think that soon we will be opening our doors both online and at Somerset House and I look forward to welcoming new and old friends to the fair... from a safe distance of course!"



Thina Dube, *We don't like them and they don't like us*, 2020, Acrylic, drawing ink, charcoal and soft pastel on Fabriano, 100 x 70 cm. Courtesy of Guns & Rain

List of participating exhibitors at 1-54 London at Somerset House and 1-54 Online

31 project (Paris, France)
50 Golborne (London, United Kingdom)
Addis Fine Art (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)
Afikaris (Paris, France)
Afriart (Kampala, Uganda)
Atelier Le Grand Village (Massignac, France)
Berman Contemporary (Johannesburg, South Africa)
Boogie Wall (London, United Kingdom)
De Buck Gallery (New York, USA)
Ed Cross Fine Art (London, United Kingdom)
espace d'art contemporain 14°N 61°W (Fort de France, Martinique)

Galerie Eric Dupont (Paris, France)
Galerie Ernst Hilger (Vienna, Austria)
Galerie Number 8 (Brussels, Belgium)
Gallery 1957 (Accra, Ghana)
Gallery Delta (Harare, Zimbabwe)
Guns & Rain (Johannesburg, South Africa)
Jack Bell Gallery (London, United Kingdom)
Luce Gallery (Turin, Italy)
NIL Gallery (Paris, France)
October Gallery (London, United Kingdom)
Polartics (Lagos, Nigeria)
Sakhile & Me (Frankfurt, Germany)
Sulger-Buel Gallery (London, United Kingdom)

TAFETA (London, United Kingdom)
The Gallery of Everything (London, United Kingdom)

This is Not a White Cube (Luanda, Angola)
THK Gallery (Cape Town, South Africa)
Ubuntu Art Gallery (Cairo, Egypt)

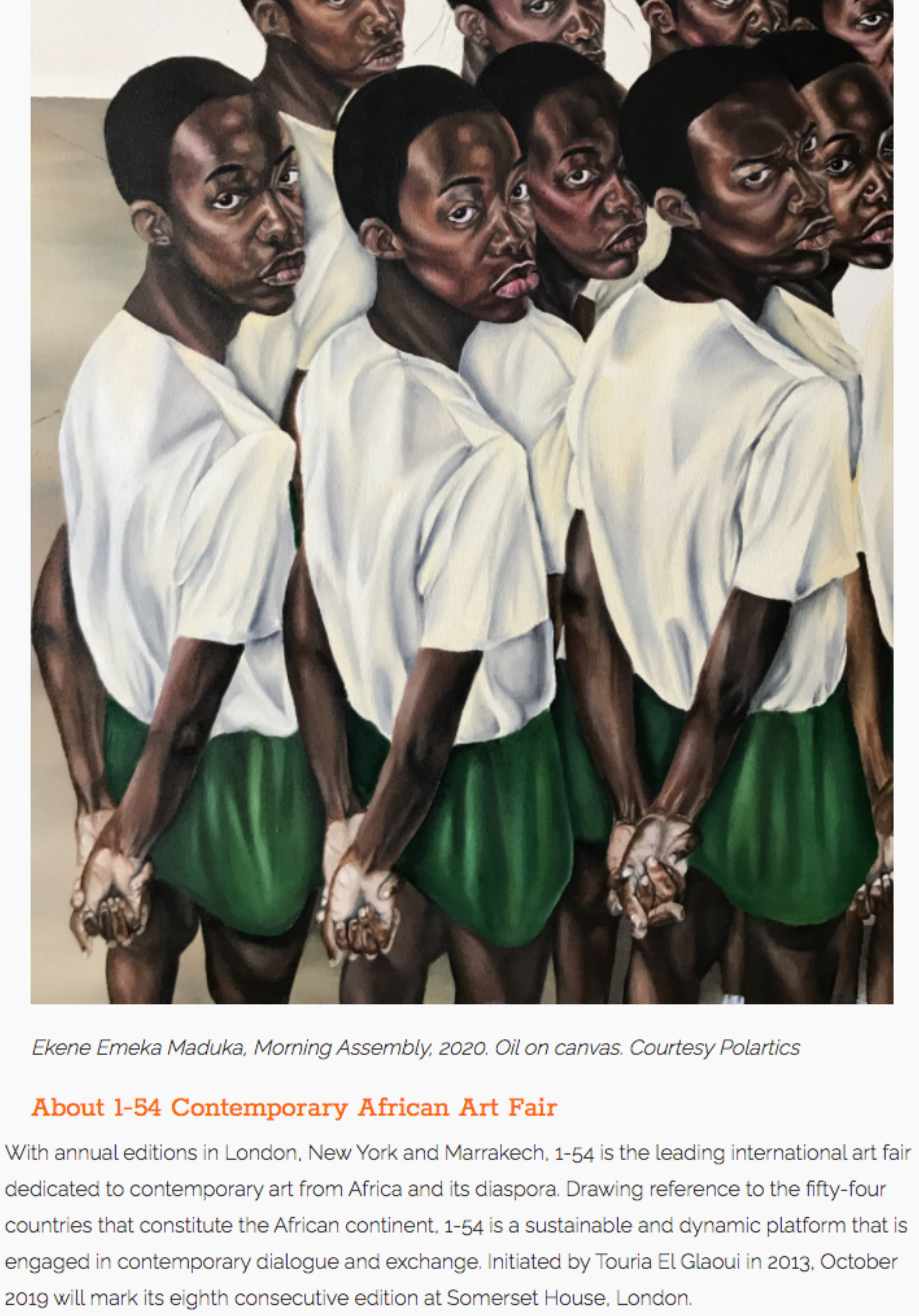
Tickets are on sale now for the public day on Saturday 10th October, with 2-hour time slots available to book all day (10:00-20:00) online [here](#).



Ajarb Bernard Ategwa, *Mme. Limbong*, 2020, Acrylic on canvas, 180 x 149 cm. Courtesy Jack Bell Gallery

The eighth edition of 1-54 London will once again be accompanied by 1-54 Forum, the fair's extensive talks programme with international artists, curators, art historians and cultural producers. This year, 1-54 Forum is curated by Julia Grosse and Yvette Mutumba

(Contemporary And (C&) and Contemporary And Ame?rica Latina (C&AL) and is titled "I felt like a Black guy from New York trapped in Peru." More details [HERE](#)



Ekene Emeka Maduka, *Morning Assembly*, 2020, Oil on canvas. Courtesy Polartics

About 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair

With annual editions in London, New York and Marrakech, 1-54 is the leading international art fair dedicated to contemporary art from Africa and its diaspora. Drawing reference to the fifty-four countries that constitute the African continent, 1-54 is a sustainable and dynamic platform that is engaged in contemporary dialogue and exchange. Initiated by Touria El Glaoui in 2013, October 2019 will mark its eighth consecutive edition at Somerset House, London.

About Touria El Glaoui, Founding Director of 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair

Touria El Glaoui is the Founding Director of the leading international art fair, 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair, which takes place in London, New York and Marrakech every year. Touria El Glaoui was listed amongst the 50 most powerful women in Africa by Jeune Afrique magazine in 2015, 2018 and 2019. She is Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres de la République Française since February 2020.

Born and raised in Morocco, El Glaoui completed her education in New York before beginning a career in the banking industry as a wealth management consultant. After 10 years, she relocated to London, where she initiated 1-54 in 2013. Parallel to her career, Touria has organised and co-curated exhibitions of her father's work, Moroccan artist Hassan El Glaoui, in London and Morocco. She has spoken widely and chaired numerous discussions on contemporary African art and women in leadership at international organisations.