



Maimouna Gueressi, *Throne in White*, 2016  
Lambda print on Dibond, 200 x 125 cm  
Fondation Alliances Collection  
Courtesy of the artist and Mariane Ibrahim Gallery



Maimouna Gueressi, *Throne in Black*, 2016  
Lambda print on Dibond, 200 x 125 cm  
Fondation Alliances Collection  
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***Africa Is No Island***  
Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden,  
Marrakech

24 February - 24 August 2018

The Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL), Marrakech, opens internationally on 24 February 2018 with two exhibitions: a semi-permanent exhibition comprised of the Fondation Alliances' general collection and *L'Afrique n'est pas une île (Africa Is No Island)*, an exhibition of contemporary photography from the African continent and the diaspora. The opening coincides with the first African edition of the celebrated contemporary art fair 1-54 in Marrakech. This timely collaboration between MACAAL and 1-54 creates a moment of heightened international awareness, illuminating the creative energy and cultural diversity that is prominent across the continent of Africa.

Curated by Jeanne Mercier and Baptiste de Ville d'Avray of photography platform *Afrique in Visu* and the independent curator Madeleine de Colnet, the exhibition brings together the work of approximately 40 emerging and established photographers who are working from a distinctly African perspective. The artists examine universally relevant cultural concepts of tradition, spirituality, family and the environment, within the context of modern African experiences and daily life.

*Africa Is No Island* celebrates *Afrique in Visu's* decade long working practice by selecting artists who have previously shown on the platform as well as those from within Fondation Alliances collection. This platform itself has become a "visual territory"; overcoming the borders and reporting on different perspectives on, around and from the African continent. The curators have chosen works based on the following three themes; 'Je suis ma représentation' (I am my own representation), 'Dessiner des géographies' (Drawing Borders) and 'Recueillir l'histoire' (Transcribe History). This display runs alongside a collage-based photography installation of works by other *Afrique in Visu* artists which covers part of the exhibition space.

The museum space has been transformed by architecture firm *lazraqbret* into an immersive environment inspired by the traditional architecture of Moroccan medinas, which are typically walled, with many narrow and maze-like streets. Visitors enter the exhibition via a door shaped in the customary circular style. The complex corridors ensure that visitors explore artworks in a staggered and measured manner, concealing the rich variety of artworks within.

The exhibition is accompanied by a sound installation by Italian artist Anna Raimondo which emulates the everyday noises of Marrakech. By immersing the audience in a unique audiovisual environment, the setting brings to life the photographic practice in present-day Africa while reflecting MACAAL's commitment to placing Moroccan art within the wider context of African cultural output.

The multi-layered images of Benin-based, Ivory Coast-born photographer **Ishola Akpo** blur the lines between fiction and reality. The series *L'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux*, shown previously at Lagos Photo Festival, explores the photographer's family history and memories through images which detail his grandmother's dowry: gin bottles, clothes and beads.

Johannesburg-based artist **Lebohang Kganye's** photography incorporates her interest in sculpture and performance, as well as her efforts to archive and memorialise her personal history and identity through family photographs.

Ecological issues linked to plastic and electronic waste are recurrent themes in **Nyaba Léon Ouedraogo's** series *Les Phantoms du Fleuve Congo* which is inspired by the colonial-era text *The Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. The works create a contemporary vision of the Congo River by showing life as it is lived in and around the symbolic artery of Africa.

**Maïmouna Guerresi**, a multimedia artist working with photography, sculpture, video, and installation, creates images which are suffused with spiritualism and are directly related to her own conversion to Sufism. Using recurring motifs such as the veil, her portraits are an affirmation and celebration of female spirituality and African womanhood.



Lebohang Kganye, *The Alarm*, Ke Lefa Laka series, 2013  
 Print on Baryta paper, 64 x 90 cm  
 Courtesy of the artist and Afronova Gallery

**PARTICIPATING ARTISTS, AFRICA IS NO ISLAND**

Anna Raimondo, Italy  
 Ayana V Jackson, United States of America  
 Baudouin Mouanda, Congo-Brazzaville  
 Edgar Marsy, Réunion  
 François-Xavier Gbré, Ivory Coast  
 Hicham Benhoud, Morocco  
 Hicham Gardaf, Morocco  
 Ishola Akpo, Benin  
 Joan Bardeletti, France  
 Joana Choumalí, Ivory Coast

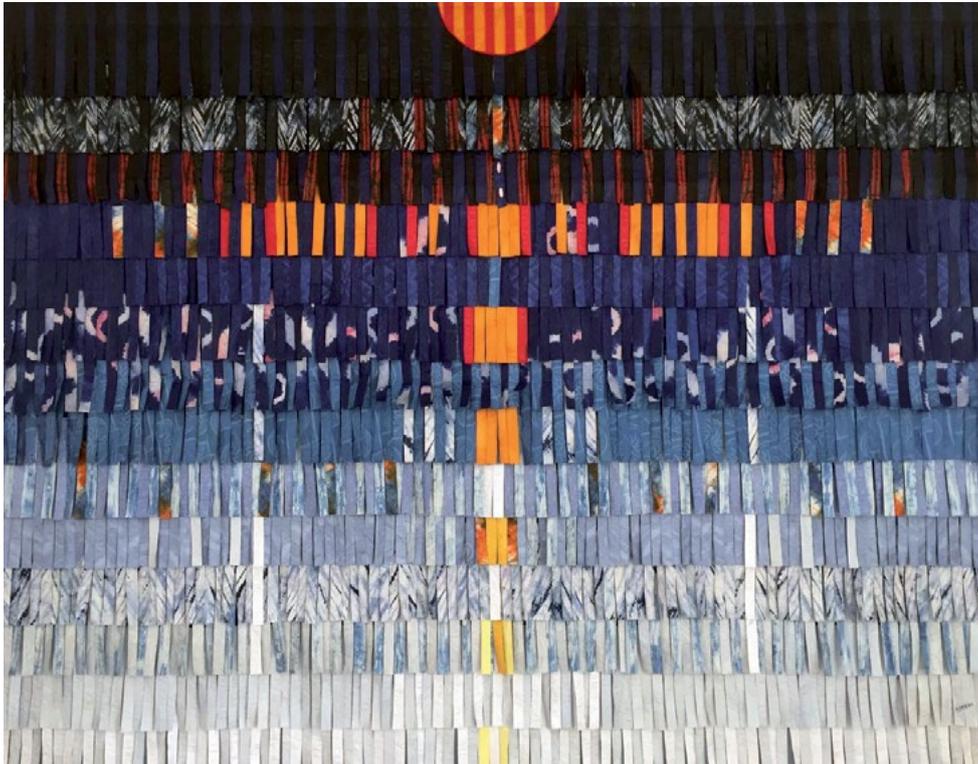
Lebohang Kganye, South Africa  
 Leila Alaoui, France- Morocco  
 Maïmouna Guerresi, Senegal  
 Mohamed El Baz, Morocco  
 Mohammed El Mourid, Morocco  
 Mohammed Laouli, Morocco and Katrin Ströbel, Germany  
 Mouna Karray, Tunisia  
 Mustapha Azeroual, France-Morocco  
 Namsa Leuba, Switzerland-Guinea  
 Nicola Lo Calzo, Italy  
 Nyaba Léon Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso  
 Sammy Baloji, Democratic Republic of the Congo  
 Walid Marfouk, Morocco

**PARTICIPATING ARTISTS, AFRICA IS NO ISLAND**

Collage-based photography installation of works

Abdoulaye Barry, Chad  
 Adrien Bitibaly, Burkina Faso  
 Baudouin Mouanda, Congo-Brazzaville  
 Carolle Benitah, France-Morocco  
 Cristina de Middel, Spain  
 David Lemor, France/Réunion  
 Fakhri El Ghezal, Tunisia  
 Fatoumata Diabaté, Mali  
 Fethi Sahraoui, Algeria  
 François-Xavier Gbré, Ivory Coast  
 Georges Senga, Democratic Republic of the Congo  
 Héla Ammar, Tunisia  
 Hélène Jayet, France/Mali

Hicham Gardaf, Morocco  
 Ishola Akpo, Benin  
 Joan Bardeletti, France  
 Joana Choumalí, Ivory Coast  
 Lebohang Kganye, South Africa  
 Nabil Boutros, Egypt-France  
 Namsa Leuba, Switzerland-Guinea  
 Nestor Da, Burkina Faso  
 Nicola Lo Calzo, Italy  
 Nyaba Léon Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso  
 Philippe Guionie, France  
 Seydou Camara, Mali  
 Wiame Haddad, France-Morocco-Tunisia  
 Ymane Fakhir, Morocco  
 Yo-Yo Gonthier, France/Réunion



Abdoulaye Konaté, *Composition in Blue Abba 1A*, 2016. Textile, 235 x 300 cm  
Fondation Alliances Collection  
Courtesy of the artist and Primo Marella Gallery  
Presented in the semi-permanent exhibition at MACAAL

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **ABOUT MACAAL**

The Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL), Marrakech, is an independent, not-for-profit contemporary art museum and one of the first of its kind in North Africa. MACAAL is dedicated to the promotion of African art across a range of media, with diverse exhibition and education programmes. The museum nurtures an understanding of contemporary art from Africa through collecting and exhibiting both established and emerging artists, highlighting the creative energy and cultural diversity found across the continent.

MACAAL is a philanthropic initiative of Moroccan art collectors Alami Lazraq and his son Othman Lazraq. It forms part of their charitable not-for-profit association Fondation Alliances, which focuses on supporting cultural development in Morocco. Motivated by a passion for the arts, and under the directorship of Othman, MACAAL brings the Lazraq family's private collection of modern and contemporary African art, expanded over the past 40 years, to a broader audience.

## **ABOUT FONDATION ALLIANCES**

Founded in 2009, Fondation Alliances is backed by Alliances Group, a leading integrated real estate group in Morocco. Beyond MACAAL, Fondation Alliances has set up three other not-for-profit initiatives:

- The Al Maaden Sculpture Park: Inaugurated in September 2013, Al Maaden Sculpture Park incorporates monumental sculptures by Moroccan and international artists, exclusively created for Al Maaden's site in Marrakech.

- LCC Program (La Chambre Claire), launched in 2013, is a bi-annual award supporting African contemporary photography through the promotion and exhibition of an emerging artist.

- Programme Passerelles (trans. bridges) encourages engagement with local young people through workshops and classes on contemporary art and design alongside museum visits.

The programme acts as a bridge between local audiences and the wider cultural sphere.

## **ABOUT AFRIQUE IN VISU**

Created in 2006 in Mali by Jeanne Mercier and Baptiste de Ville d'Avray, Afrique in Visu is a participative platform for exchanges in the field of photography in Africa. Supported by approximately 100 regular contributors of photographers, journalists and critics around the world, it is a living archive and creative laboratory on the practice of photography in Africa. It puts professionals on the continent in contact, regardless of their nationality, origin or affiliation, and distributes contemporary creation to enable the exchange of photographic know-how. It does not categorise nor claim to be a history of "African" photography. It has a single leitmotiv, a territory that transcends both terrestrial and maritime borders of Africa. Afrique in Visu is a plethora of stories of a continent revealed through photographs that attempt to take the place of all the images and stereotypes associated with it.

Since its founding a decade ago, Afrique in Visu has published more than 1000 articles, has some 100 contributors around the world, has mounted several exhibitions in Europe and Africa, organised workshops to teach photography, and offered support for 15 photographic projects.

### **Exhibition details:**

**Title:** *Africa Is No Island*

**Address:** Al Maaden, Sidi Youssef Ben Ali, 40000 Marrakech

**Telephone:** +212 676 92 44 92

**Website:** [www.macaal.org](http://www.macaal.org)

**Dates:** 24 February-24 August 2018

**Opening Hours:** Tuesday - Sunday

**Summer Hours:** 10am-7pm

**Winter Hours:** 9am-6pm

 [macaal\\_](https://www.instagram.com/macaal_)

 [Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden](https://www.facebook.com/MuseumofAfricanContemporaryArtAlMaaden)

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