

Art Radar Asia

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10 African artists to know at Dak'Art 2014 | Senegal

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Ranging from sculptors to photographers, *Art Radar* profiles ten artists to look out for at Dak'Art 2014.

The eleventh edition of Africa's major contemporary art event, the Biennale of Dakar, popularly known as Dak'Art, will take place from 9 May to 8 June 2014 in Dakar, Senegal. *Art Radar* profiles ten exciting artists from Africa and the African diaspora who will exhibit at Dak'Art 2014.



Arlene Wandera, 'I've Always Wanted a [Dolls] House', 2013, sculpture, modelling, woodwork, 70 x 114 x 49 cm. Image courtesy the artist and Dak'Art 2014.

Dak'Art 2014 will take place over five venues and is curated by Elise Atangana, Abdelkader Damani and Smooth Ugochukwu Nzewi. The main highlight of the biennale is an exhibition of 61 artists from Africa and the African Diaspora. There will also be exhibitions by guest artists and a special exhibition on African sculpture.

Art Radar picks ten artists to look out for at the main event of Dak'Art 2014, the international exhibition of African and African diaspora artists.



Kiluanji Kia Henda, 'O.R.G.A.S.M.', 2011, photographs and installation. Image courtesy the artist and Dak'Art 2014.

Kiluanji Kia Henda

Influenced by the documentary photographs of John Liebenberg, artist Kiluanji Kia Henda (b. 1979, Luanda, Angola) uses images to narrate untold stories. Known for his striking but never retouched photography, he also works with installations, mixed media, music and theatre. His installation *O.R.G.A.S.M.*, the Organisation of African States for Mellowness, uses photographs and objects to comment ironically on the so-called philanthropic efforts of western non-governmental organisations, providing a "critical insight on how charity has become part-business and part-propaganda."

Kia Henda's works often employ humour and irony to discuss postcolonialism, identity, politics and modernisation in Angola and Africa. His work has been widely exhibited, including at the African Pavilion at the **Venice Biennale 2007**. His photographic series *Icarus 13* was created for the **3rd Guangzhou Triennial** in 2008, and also shown at the São Paulo Biennial in 2010 and **INSERT2014** in New Delhi, India. In 2012, Kia Henda won the National Award for Culture and the Arts from the Angolan Ministry of Culture.



Wangechi Mutu, 'The End of Eating Everything', 2013, animated video, 8 min 10 sec, edition of 6. Image courtesy the artist, Gladstone Gallery New York and Dak'Art 2014.

Wangechi Mutu

Wangechi Mutu was born in Nairobi and is currently based in New York. She works primarily with painting and collage, using Mylar (a heat-resistant plastic that congeals paint rather than absorbing it) and images from sources like magazines, anthropology and botany texts, medical diagrams, travel postcards, pornographic materials, hunting publications and traditional African arts. Her "fleshy images" explore the female body as a site of engagement and also use materials such as fake pearls and synthetic hair.

The End of Eating Everything is Mutu's first animated movie, which carries over her trademark style using Mylar. Her characters are often hybrid "creature-women" and the protagonist of this film is a female creature obsessed with consumption, played by American singer-songwriter Santigold. The soundtrack for the film is an original compilation by Mutu.

Wangechi Mutu is the winner of the Deutsche Bank Artist of the Year Award (2010) and Brooklyn Museum's Artist of the Year (2013). She has exhibited widely and her work is included in the collections of **MoMA**, the **Whitney Museum of American Art** and **Tate Modern**.



Olu Amoda, 'Sunflower', 2012, painted repurposed steel belt, spoons and mild steel, diameter 205 cm. Image courtesy the artist, Art Twenty One, Lagos and Dak'Art 2014.

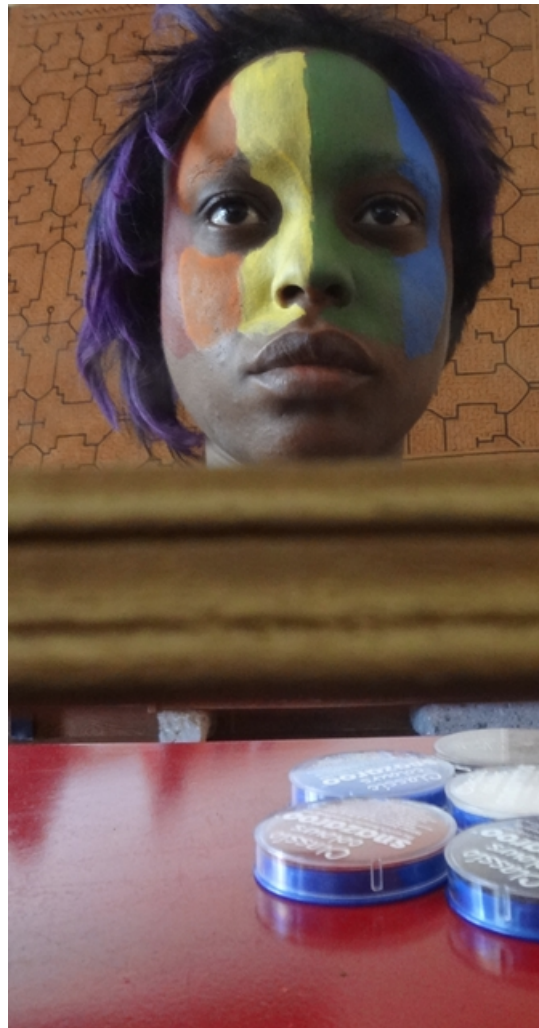
Olu Amoda

Olu Amoda is a renowned Nigerian sculptor, muralist, furniture designer and multimedia artist who repurposes various materials for his creations. His work *Sunflower* is created from steel and metal spoons, both strong materials, uniting to form a softer subject: a sunflower. Amoda often uses discarded materials, and the nails that form the flower's centre were acquired from containers that arrived at Lagos' Tin Can Island as luxury goods for the elite. According to the Dak'Art website, *Sunflower* thus

presents a subtle commentary on primitive consumerism as the new 'cool' in Africa, and how global neoliberalism masks Nigeria's, and by extension, Africa's lack of industrial agency.

Olu Amoda's work has been exhibited worldwide and he is the Founder and Chief Executive of Riverside Art and Design Studios in Yaba, Lagos. He

has taught Sculpture and Drawing at the School of Art, Design and Printing at Yaba College of Technology in Lagos since 1987.



Ato Malinda, 'Mshoga Mpya', 2014, performance.
Photograph by Daniel Jack Lyons. Image courtesy the
artist and Dak'Art 2014.

Ato Malinda

A performance artist, Ato Malinda (b. 1981) addresses issues such as sexuality, colonisation, race and culture through her practice. Her work has ranged from being performed on the streets to a participatory performance at a gallery. The performance that Malinda will showcase at Dak'Art Biennale 2014 is called *Mshoga Mpya (The New Gay)*, in which only one person can experience the performance at a time in an enclosed cubicle with the artist. The intimacy of the performance reflects its private nature as it tells stories that Malinda collected in Nairobi of experiences faced by the LGBT community.

Ato Malinda grew up in the Netherlands, Kenya and the United States. She is currently pursuing an MFA at New York's Transart Institute, starting out as a painter but now working with diverse media such as installation, video and drawing. She is also a freelance curator.





Fayçal Baghriche, 'Wenn du ins Feuer guckst', 2012, lightbox, 200 x 240 cm. Image courtesy the artist, Galerie Campagne Première and Dak'Art 2014.

Fayçal Baghriche

Fayçal Baghriche (b.1972, Algeria) is a performance artist, photographer and sculptor. In *Wenn du ins Feuer guckst* (*When you look into the fire*) the artist explores the idea of "urban phantoms", images that fade away in light. The inspiration for the title and concept came from a conversation the artist had with a store owner in Vienna, who described art as staring into a fire and seeing shapes emerge. Baghriche's work explores representation, reinterpretation and collective symbols.

Fayçal Baghriche has exhibited at Beijing Outpost for Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, the Museum of Modern Art of Algiers (Algeria) and the **Gwangju Biennale**, and his work will be shown at **Palais de Tokyo** in Paris.

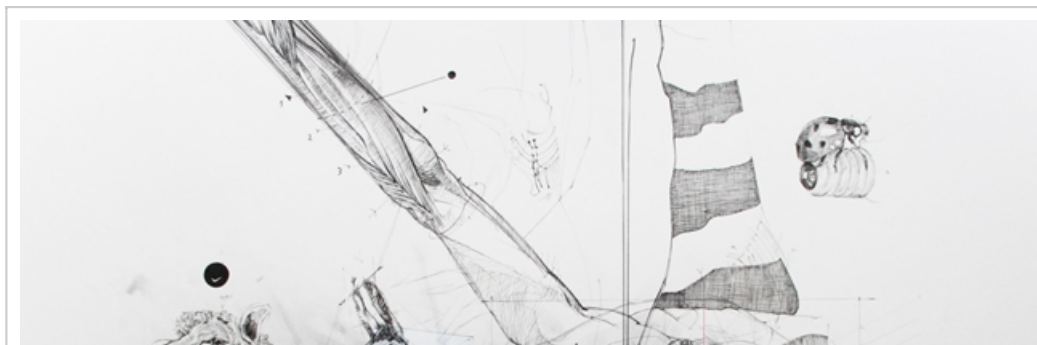


Meriem Bouderbala, 'Karakuz the Locus Geni (Or the wisdom of popular small disturbances)', 2013, print on plexiglass, 32 x 20 x 5 cm each. Image courtesy the artist and Dak'Art 2014.

Meriem Bouderbala

Meriem Bouderbala (b. 1960, Tunisia) is an influential artist, interested in exploring minority art or that which is beyond the traditional, as well as issues such as femininity, chaos and culture. In *Karakuz the Locus Geni (Or the wisdom of popular small disturbances)*, she uses the symbol of refusal, the "karakuz", which is a mischievous and immoral character in oriental traditions.

Bouderbala studied art at the Academy of Fine Arts in Aix in Provence, and the Chelsea Art School in London. Her work has been exhibited in Tunisia, France, the USA, Morocco, and Portugal, and is included in the permanent collection of the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris.





Nidhal Chamekh, 'De quoi rêvent les martyrs? (What martyrs dream of?)', 2012-2013, ink, graphite and transfer, series of 6, 40 x 60 cm each. Image courtesy the artist and Dak'Art 2014.

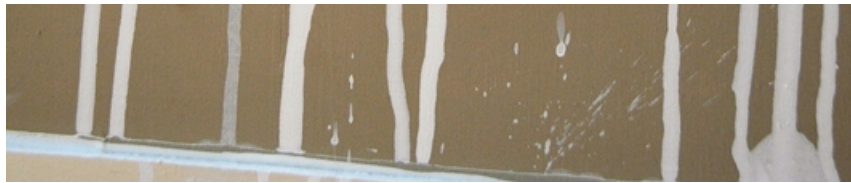
Nidhal Chamekh

A visual artist and painter, Nidhal Chamekh (b. 1985, Tunisia) began exhibiting his work at the age of twelve in Tunisia, and later in France and internationally. The persecution of his militant family in Tunis had a deep impact on his art, which is fragmented, figurative and complex. The series *De quoi rêvent les martyrs?* (*What martyrs dream of?*) are ink drawings combining various techniques. According to his profile, his work explores the "chaos of history" and

has to do with introducing the montage as a tool to see the social temporality and to collect in the same space the visual dislocation of the world.

Chamekh's work has been exhibited in Tunisia, France, Switzerland and Italy. He is currently researching for his PhD at the Sorbonne in Paris.





Arlene Wandera, 'I've Always Wanted a [Dolls] House', 2013, sculpture, modelling, woodwork, 70 x 114 x 49 cm. Image courtesy the artist and Dak'Art 2014.

Arlene Wandera

Arlene Wandera (b. 1981, Kenya) is based in London and is a graduate of the Slade School of Fine Art. Her work explores socio-political themes and she uses various media such as sculpture, print, performance and installations. Her artwork *I've Always Wanted a [Doll] House* disrupts the innocent allusion to a child's toy, dripping with white paint down to the exhibition floor. The figurines in the house are faceless and unidentifiable, and placed in unusual positions rather than depicting a perfect quotidian lifestyle, thus representing the larger struggles of people. The work opens up conversations on the dreams of childhood, expectations from adulthood and issues such as housing and status quo.

Wandera has performed and exhibited internationally, with group shows in South Africa, South Korea, Germany and London, and performances in Glasgow and at Tate Modern. She has recently completed artist residencies in Spain and South Korea.



Baudouin Mouanda, 'Congolesse Dream', 2013, series of 5 photographs, 60 x 90 cm each. Image courtesy the artist and Dak'Art 2014.

Baudouin Mouanda

Photographer Baudouin Mouanda (b. 1981, Congo) is known for the sensitivity of his photographs. Starting his career as a news photographer, he was attracted to documenting more emotional stories, leading to his first series, "The Aftermath of the War", which won him the award for Best Photographer at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kinshasa.

Mouanda's series "Rêve" ("Dream") involves female models photographed in unusual locations while wearing a wedding gown. The title is ironic, a meditation on the motivation behind the institution – and illusions – of marriage. The project was featured in a six-part documentary series for *Al Jazeera* named *Artscape: The New African Photography*. Mouanda also collaborates with several magazines including *Jeune Afrique*, *Le Monde*, *Magazine Photo* and *Afrique Asie*.





Candice Breitz, 'Extra', 2011, single-channel video, commissioned by the Standard Bank Gallery. Image courtesy the artist, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg and Dak'Art 2014.

Candice Breitz

Candice Breitz (b. 1972, Johannesburg) is a Berlin-based video artist who often explores issues of identity in Apartheid and post-Apartheid South Africa through images and visual culture. According to her profile, questions such as "how an individual 'becomes' him or herself in relation to a larger community" and the role of mainstream media such as cinema, television and music in shaping this community identity are central to her work.

In her 2011 single-channel video *Extra*, Breitz superimposes herself in scenes from one of South Africa's most popular soap operas, *Generations*. The show is primarily about "an aspect of post-Apartheid black middle class reality". As a white South African, Breitz's presence in these scenes from the show is not as a character but as an extra, often exaggerating the idea of anonymity to comedy by inserting disembodied limbs in scenes rather than her entire body. The awkwardness of her presence makes the fact that she is invisible to the characters glaringly obvious, and makes a strong comment on what institutional media representation during the Apartheid era was like through a role reversal of sorts.

Candice Breitz has exhibited globally in prestigious museums as well as biennales, including the Venice Biennale in 2005. Her work has also been shown at the Sundance Film Festival (2009) and Toronto International Film Festival (2013).

Kriti Bajaj

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on **09/05/2014 at 12:41 PM** said:

So excited o be going. Looking forward to seeing the works of these artists.