

REOPENING OF THE EXHIBITION 'ART OF BENIN FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT: FROM RESTITUTION TO REVELATION'.

EXHIBITION FROM JUNE 16 TO AUGUST 28, 2022,
PALAIS DE LA MARINA, COTONOU, BENIN

'ART OF BENIN FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT: FROM RESTITUTION TO REVELATION'

Unveiled on February 19th past by the President of the Republic of Benin, Patrice Talon, the exhibition 'Art of Benin from the past to the present: from Restitution to Revelation' will reopen from July 16th to August 28th in the Palais de la Marina, Cotonou.

This internationally significant event represents an historic milestone with regard to the restitution of Beninese art and wider recognition of the contemporary Beninese arts scene. This twin-faceted public exhibition shines a spotlight both on traditional art from Benin – the 26 royal Beninese treasures recently returned by France – and the contemporary arts scene in Benin and amongst the Beninese diaspora, with both big names and new talents featuring in a 2,000m²-plus exhibition space.

An enthusiastic response from art-lovers, experts and the wider public

The 40 day-long exhibition welcomed 187,285 visitors (over 4,600 visitors a day on average) and was overseen by a team of more than 80, from managers and mediators to reception staff and security personnel...

The exhibition 'Art of Benin from the past to the present' has been received enthusiastically and well-attended by a wide spectrum of society: professionals from the world of the arts and heritage, collectors, gallery curators, institutions, diplomats, journalists from mainstream media and the specialist press, members of the teaching profession, students, schoolchildren, young people, craftspeople, artists, older people, working-age adults and pensioners, tourists, private sector actors, dignitaries, traditional sectors of society...

Coming from all walks of life, from Benin and further afield, these visitors, whether experts or simple amateurs, the merely curious or real connoisseurs, all had one thing in common: wonder and delight at an artistic event that showcased the art of Benin, past and present, in all its splendour, displayed in an elegant, yet understated way, with a thought-provoking and educational itinerary.

A reopening designed to enable more to enjoy the Exhibition experience

To enable a wider section of the public (holiday-makers, art tourists, professionals from the arts

world and Beninese living abroad) to experience this unique – and highly significant – exhibition, 'Art of Benin from the past to the present - from restitution to revelation: royal treasures and contemporary art of Benin', the Palais de la Marina's exhibition space will reopen from Saturday 16th July to Sunday 28th August 2022.

On the programme: guided tours led by cultural mediators, hands-on art workshops for children organized by artists and activity leaders, special late-night events initiating a dialogue between the spoken word as art and the visual arts, online booking for added convenience and a generally immersive cultural experience.

Benin showcases its art and heritage on an international stage

The exhibition and major cultural event, 'Art of Benin from the past to the present: from restitution to revelation' has been a great start to a wider programme initiated by the government of Benin to raise the country's profile on an international stage in a way that brings together culture, museums and the tourist industry. It fits neatly into a wider drive by Benin – both through the restitution of its heritage and through the showcasing of its contemporary arts scene - to create four local museums of international significance:

- the Musée International de la Mémoire et de l'Esclavage, Ouidah (the International Museum of Remembrance and Slavery - MIME);
- le Musée de l'Épopée des Amazones et des Rois du Danxomé, Abomey (the Museum of the Saga of the Amazons and the Kings of Dahomey - MEARD);
- le Musée International du Vodou à Porto-Novo (MIV);
- le Musée d'Art Contemporain de Cotonou (MACC).

Attendance figures so far offer ample evidence to support this drive and demonstrate Benin's collective appetite for the creation of a cultural, artistic and heritage offering that perfectly complements what's available on the international arts scene.

The Fondation des Musées du Maroc will host the contemporary art component of the 'Art of Benin', exhibition, displaying it come the new school year at the Musée Mohamed VI, Rabat. This international tour will help give contemporary Beninese art a genuinely African-wide audience.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION:

from Saturday 16th July to Sunday 28th August 2022

- Thursdays and Fridays from 3pm to 6.30pm
- Saturdays and Sundays from 10am to 6.30pm
- monthly late night openings
- hands-on art workshops for 4 to 12 year olds on Saturdays and Sundays from 10am to 12pm and 2pm to 4pm

Book online via the official exhibition website: www.expoartbenin.bj

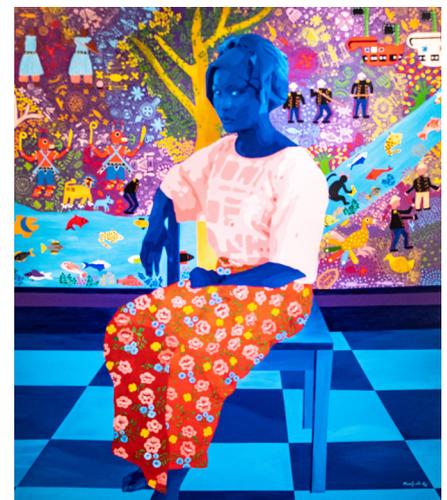
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Moufouli Bello, Tassi Hangbé, 2020
250 x 200 cm
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COMMUNIQUÉ DE PRESSE
JUIN 2022



PRÉSIDENTE
DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE
DU BÉNIN

