

Press Kit

Prize for Visual Arts

**FONDATION TAURUS
POUR L'ART
ET LES SCIENCES**

01.2020

Since 2013, the Taurus Foundation promotes Arts and Sciences in Switzerland and beyond. It highlights practices of outstanding artists and scientists.

Every two years, the Taurus Prize for Visual Arts is awarded to a video artist, a photographer, or a contemporary visual artist. As for the scientific field, the Foundation supports projects and publications related to paleoanthropology and prehistory.

The 2019-20 Taurus Prize for Visual Arts was awarded to:

ANTHONY AYODELE OBAYOMI
for his project, *Give Us this Day*



Since 2013, Taurus Foundation for Arts and Sciences, a non-profit organization based in Lausanne, promoted arts and sciences. In 2019, its board, of which I am a member, along with University Professor, Paleoanthropologist Michel Haas, the President of the Foundation, and Alan Hugues, Lawyer, launched a new, ambitious project: the Taurus Prize for Visual Arts.

We are incredibly proud to announce Anthony Ayodele Obayomi as the 2019-20 laureate of the Taurus Prize for Visual Arts and to initiate a collaboration with the Bienne Festival of Photography; the LagosPhoto Festival and the Photoforum Pasquart, one we foresee as a fruitful, diverse, and long-lasting.

We hope that these partnerships will allow Anthony Ayodele Obayomi to serenely develop his incredible project *Give Us this Day*, which awarded him the prize, and supporting this project, we renew our commitment towards a contemporary culture that defends art and artists, and meets them where they are.

Myriam Viallefont-Haas
Project Director



Blue Letter series
(exhibited during the 2019 LagosPhoto Festival)
© Anthony Ayodele Obayomi

Taurus Prize for Visual Arts

The Taurus Prize for Visual Arts is awarded every 2 years to a contemporary artist by a selection committee from within or outside the art world. Dedicated to a geographical area instead of a theme, the prize rejects the imposition of exterior narratives onto territories and promotes relevance and accuracy.

Every 2 years, a new area is designated. It can be the size of a street, a region or a country. The selection committee is renewed accordingly and composed of people from the area, or having thorough knowledge about it. All artists, who are familiar with it, who have a project about it or that it inspires, are invited to apply.

The territory is announced in May, the jury meets in October and the laureate announced in November. 10.000 CHF are awarded to him/her/them by the jury.

The project must be completed within a year. Once completed, the project is presented on the area and in Switzerland, with partnering institutions actively supporting the laureate’s work.

With this prize, the Foundation supports its laureates in the long run, developping a support system around their projects and fostering collaborations between Swiss and foreign institutions.

The 2019-20 Taurus Prize for Visual Arts, dedicated to Lagos mainland, was awarded to Anthony Ayodele Obayomi by a jury of 5 experts.

2019-20 Laureate



Anthony Ayodele Obayomi

Born in 1994 in Lagos
Lives and works in Lagos

Anthony Ayodele Obayomi holds a B.A. in Creative Arts from the University of Lagos and explores storytelling techniques that combine art and technology in immersive installations and through experimental media. In 2017, he was awarded the LagosPhoto National Geographic Portfolio Review Prize, and was selected for the Electric South New Dimensions Lab in 2018, before winning the Taurus Prize for Visual Arts.

2019 Selection committee

- Inua Ellams, Poet and playwright
- Azu Nwagbogu, Curator, Founder of LagosPhoto Festival and of African Artists Foundation, Nigeria
- Oluremi C. Onabanjo, Curator, Art historian
- Iheanyi Onwuegbucha, Curator and Director of Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA Lagos), Nigeria
- Tosin Oshinowo, Architect and co-curator of the 2019 Lagos Biennial



Give Us this Day

Hope, if considered a commodity, sells amazingly well— especially in lesser-privileged parts of Lagos.

Anthony Obayomi witnesses and participates in the daily challenges and creative solutions found by local Lagosians, who try to respond to ordinary life on the mainland. Exploring the dynamic relationship, which exists between two of the most prominent psychological coping mechanisms used by Lagosians, *Give Us this Day* is a photographic project, which will be developed over two years. The title, extracted from a line of The Lords Prayer, is in this context, a literal description of a barely sustainable “hand to mouth” living condition, hardly guaranteeing the present and certainly making no promises for a future.

Lottery games and religious zealotry are common worldly phenomena, and although existing side by side, they are usually separate. On the Lagos mainland however, they present similarities: their organizational structure, social effects and the psychological functions they occupy seem comparable, if not identical. The most prominent and lucrative venture for lotteries and majority religious institutions relies on the merchandising of Hope. Both lottery and religion have been made accessible to everyone, offered as a response to the daily struggles and lack of resources of those inhabitants from the economic capital of Nigeria with the smallest purchasing power.

Premier Lotto, also known as “Baba Ijebu” is the leading lottery and sport betting company in Nigeria. Located on the mainland, it includes over 200 agents supervising 16,000 sales representatives across the country’s western region. Simultaneously, and according to Forbes, four of the ten richest pastors in the world with a combined estimated net worth of \$249,000,000 operate or base their headquarters on the area. *Give Us This Day* explores the interlinks between these practices, their overlaps, and the functions they co-perform: to provide—at little cost—a reason to believe that tomorrow may be better than today, even when evidences strikingly point to the contrary.



2019-20 partner institutions

In 2020 and 2021, *Give Us this Day* will be presented in three world-renowned institutions:

The Bienne Festival of Photography

Every year, the Bienne Festival of Photography organizes about twenty photography exhibitions dedicated to emerging Swiss and international artists in over ten locations in Bienne. It offers a rich program of events, symposiums and performances, as well as mediated tours open to all, and lasts about three weeks. The festival is also frequently invited to contribute to like-minded art events in Switzerland and abroad.

www.bielerfototage.ch/

Photoforum Pasquart

The Photoforum Pasquart is one of the main Swiss institutions dedicated to contemporary photography. Devoted to emerging photography in the broadest sense, and both from Switzerland and abroad, the Photoforum is not only a unique institution in the Swiss photographic landscape, but also an important platform for photographers and artists in their early or mid career. It organizes between five and seven shows a year, some of which are the artists' first exhibitions, and alternates between thematic and monographic projects, exploring the photographic medium's various outlets.

www.photoforumpasquart.ch/

LagosPhoto Festival

Launched in 2010, LagosPhoto is the only international festival of photography in Nigeria. For a month, events are organized throughout the capital, including exhibitions, workshops, artist talks and in situ installations. The festival aims at reclaiming public spaces and engaging the general public with multifaceted stories of Africa, establishing a community for contemporary photography which unites local and international artists through images.

www.africanartists.org/

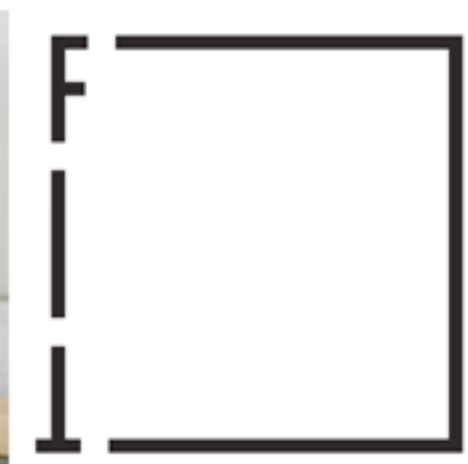
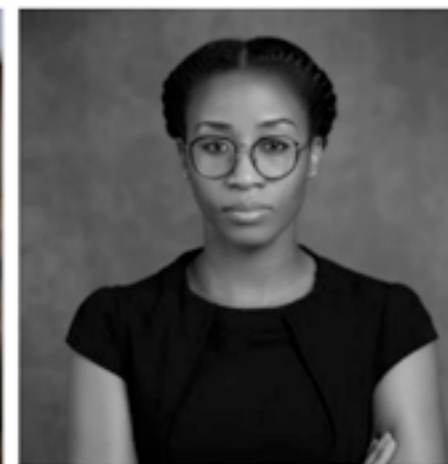
The jury

Born in Nigeria, **Inua Ellams** is a cross art form practitioner, a poet, playwright & performer, graphic artist and founder of the Midnight Run — an international, night-time, urban, walking experience. He is a Complete Works poet alumni and a designer at White Space Creative Agency. Across his work, Identity, Displacement & Destiny are reoccurring themes. He also mixes the old with the new: traditional african storytelling with contemporary poetry, pencil with pixel, texture with vector images. His poetry is published by Flipped Eye, Akashic, Nine Arches & Oberon.

Azu Nwagbogu is the Founder of (AAF) African Artists' Foundation, a non-profit organisation based in Lagos. In 2019, Nwagbogu acted as the Director of the Zeitz MOCAA in South Africa. He also founded and directs LagosPhoto Festival, an annual international festival of photography. He created Art Base Africa, a virtual space to discover and learn about contemporary African Art and served as a juror for the Dutch Doc; POPCAP Photography Award; World Press Photo; Prisma Photo Award; Greenpeace Photo Award; New York Times Portfolio Review; W. Eugene Smith Award; PhotoEspaña among others. He has curated private collections for various prominent individuals and corporate organizations in Africa.

Oluremi C. Onabanjo is a curator and scholar of photography and the arts of Africa and the African Diaspora. The former Director of Exhibitions and Collections at The Walther Collection Project Space, she has organized exhibitions in Africa, Europe, and North America. Onabanjo was a co-curator of *Recent Histories: Contemporary African Photography and Video Art*, and editor of its accompanying publication (Steidl), which was shortlisted for an ICP Infinity Award in Critical Writing and Research and named "One of the Best Photo Books of 2017" by The New York Times.

Iheanyi Onwuegbucha is Curator at the Centre for Contemporary Arts, Lagos (CCA, Lagos). He is a 2016 Chevening Scholar with an MA in Art Gallery and Museum Studies from the University of Leeds. His recent exhibition projects include: *LineGuage: Textual Imagery / Linear Allegories* and *A Collection of Stories*, both at CCA, Lagos, a project at the Kadist Foundation, Paris; and *Layers* at Labanque, Bethune, France.



Tosin Oshinowo is a registered architect in federal republic of Nigeria and also a member of the Royal Institute of the British Architects. She has been lead Architect at cmDesign Atelier (cmD+A) since 2012, the practice which recently completed the Maryland Mall in Lagos. She completed her Architecture Education at the Architecture Association London and also holds a Master's Degree in Urban Design from the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London. Her interests are in architectural history and socially responsive approaches in architecture design and urbanism. She is one of three curators selected to spearhead the second Lagos Biennial in 2019.

Taurus Prize for Visual Arts 2019-20 jury
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