

APALAZZOGALLERY

FRAGMENTS OF A WORLD AFTER ITS OWN IMAGE

Fragments of a World After Its Own Image features works by members and affiliates of blaxTARLINES KUMASI—the transgenerational, transcultural, and sharing community founded in 2015 at the Department of Painting and Sculpture, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi, Ghana. The birth pangs of this post-Western paradigm and art labour movement can be traced back to the early 1990s, culminating in 2003 when the artist-intellectual kaŕi'kaçhä seid'õu launched his Emancipatory Art Teaching project at KNUST. Since then, exponents of the coalition have played leading roles in developing the intellectual and material substructure of international contemporary art on the continent and abroad through the co-development of curriculums, public access art spaces, cultural platforms, residencies, studios, and much more. Hitherto, the education, thought, and practice of art in Ghana had unconsciously acceded to the authority of the Euro-Western canon of Beaux Arts and atelier norms and skillsets. Breaking out of this mould has set the terms for new conditions out of which exponents of the coalition and their allies conceive of art as a site of multiplicity. Presently, blaxTARLINES upholds the maxim that “if anything can be said to be art today it must necessarily be invented.” This complex interplay between the necessity of contingency and its obverse is what has provided the impetus for creating new possibilities and forging concrete realities out of a conformist status quo.

The exhibition's title alludes to passages in Karl Marx's and Friedrich Engels's *Communist Manifesto* (1848) which critique the globalized world market system as a construct of bourgeois hegemony designed to “create a world after its own image.” This analysis reveals how the universalism propagated under capitalism is not truly universal but rather a totalising force that flattens diverse realities into the binary logic of capital-versus-labour—or broadly, center-versus-periphery—perpetuating dependency, dispossession, and exploitation. *Fragments of a World After Its Own Image* interrogates this false universalism, seeking instead to articulate a radical inclusivity that privileges no singular centre in affirmation of pre-emptive equality. The exhibition finds its precursors in the lineage of blaxTARLINES exhibitions that engage the politics of universalism by strategically foregrounding the immanentism and affirmative dimensions of facing paradoxical, contradictory, and impossible situations. One such antecedent was *Silence Between the Lines: Anagrams of Emancipated Futures* (2015), a group exhibition that took place in Kumasi. In this show, seid'õu proffered a dialectical analysis of the well-known Sankofa trope. Conventionally,

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Sankɔfa—a bird with its body facing forward and its head turned backward to fetch an egg—symbolizes the importance of learning from the past in the worldview of Akans. However, seid'ōu's reinterpretation subverts the latent historicist nostalgia, suggesting instead that the bird's gaze is not fixed on any particular direction—past, present, or future. Rather, Sankɔfa “attempts to grasp what it might have forgotten from futures that are to come.” This summarises the spirit by which the coalition resituates universalism—the space for none in particular—from its monogenetic (imperialist-capitalist-colonialist) schema to a radical inclusivity that is ex-centred and affirms pre-emptive equality.

Fragments of a World After Its Own Image, therefore, taps into this model of tactical indifference to critique the equivocation of radical difference with diversity, solidarity with consensus, and multiplicity with pluralism, while politicising aesthetics by way of the aforementioned analysis of the “image” as an affect co-present with the forces of production, distribution, and consumption. It is out of this vitalism and ethos of transgenerational discourse that the artists' visions collide, birthing situations that embrace the quotidian, fantastical, naturalistic, artificial, anthropocentric, virtual, grotesque, uncanny, and beyond. The exhibition is hosted by APALAZZOGALLERY in Brescia, Italy, and will be realised in two editions between 2025 and 2026.

- Curatorial statement by Kwasi Ohene-Ayeh

Curator:

Kwasi Ohene-Ayeh

Curatorial Assistants:

Maria Olivia Nakato, Zitoni Kayonga Tristan Tani

Participating artists:

Afrane Akwasi Bediako, Felicia Abban (née Ansah), Dennis Ankamah Addo, James Barnor, Ernestina Mansa Doku, Isshaq Ismail, Samuel Baah Kortey, Tegene Kunbi, Maame Adjoa Ohemeng, Jeffrey Otoo, Edward Prah, Naomi Boahemaa Sakyi Jnr.

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