



BLACK ROCK SENEGAL ANNOUNCES NEXT SELECTION OF ARTISTS

DAKAR, Senegal, June 27, 2022 — Black Rock Senegal announced today the 2022-2023 participants for the third year of its Artist-in-Residence program. Founded by renowned artist Kehinde Wiley in 2019, Black Rock Senegal seeks to support new artistic creation through collaborative exchange and to incite change in the global discourse about Africa. The third year of the program will run between July 2022 and March 2023 and will welcome sixteen artists from around the world.

The selected artists for Black Rock 2022-2023 are: **'Pemi Aguda** (Nigeria, Writer), **Gouled Ahmed** (Ethiopia, Textile), **Sophia Nahli Allison** (USA, Film), **Adrian L. Burrell** (USA, Film), **Panmela Castro** (Brazil, Painter), **Chinwe Chigbu** (Nigeria, Photographer), **Ayan Farah** (Sweden, Mixed Media), **Enam Gbewonyo** (United Kingdom, Textile), **Stephen Leo Hayes Jr.** (USA, Sculptor), **Amina Kadous** (Egypt, Photographer), **Mae-ling Lokko** (Ghana, Mixed Media), **Nasheeka Nedsreal** (Germany, Performance Based), **Nengi Omuku** (Nigeria, Painter), **Léonard Pongo** (Belgium, Visual Artist), **Khalif Tahir Thompson** (USA, Painter), and **Paul Verdell** (USA, Painter).

This year's residents have been selected by an esteemed committee of creative professionals: **Jeffrey Deitch**, Curator and Gallerist; **Aissa Dione**, Textile Designer; **Reni Folawiyo**, Entrepreneur; **Cathia Lawson**, Art Collector; **Glenn Ligon**, Artist; and **Katherina Olschbaur**, Artist and former Black Rock Senegal Resident.

For general inquiries, please visit blackrocksenegal.org or refer to the link to our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

For general press inquiries, please contact: info@blackrocksenegal.org or refer to the link to our [Press Kit](#).

2022-2023 ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE

'Pemi Aguda (b. 1990, Ondo, Nigeria; lives and works in Lagos, Nigeria) Aguda's partial novel-in-progress won the 2020 Deborah Rogers Foundation Writers Award. She was a 2021 fiction fellow with the Miami Book Fair, and is a 2022 MacDowell fellow. Her work has appeared in Ploughshares, Zoetrope, Granta, Zyzzyva, Tor.com, American Short Fiction, and One Story.

Gouled Ahmed (b. 1992, Djibouti City, Djibouti; lives and works in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) is an Addis Ababa-based Somali visual artist, stylist, costume designer and director. Their work explores the themes of memory and belonging through the lens of self portrait photography and self-fashioning. Their ongoing self-portrait series *Our Earth Will Remember Us Again Someday and One Day These Names Will Be Ours* explore the gaps that exist within formal language in the understanding, and contextualization of gender expressions that exist outside of the binary. Gouled's work deals with the notion of futurity and is heavily aimed at envisioning new & equitable aesthetic futures for the Horn of Africa. Gouled is a recipient of the African Cultural Fund's inaugural grant as well as the Prince Claus Fund's inaugural Seed Award. In 2021 they collaborated with Bristol based Somali poet, director and visual artist Asmaa Jama on *Before We Disappear* an interactive moving image piece commissioned by *BBC Arts* as both a costume designer and model. Gouled also collaborated on the experimental film *The Season of Burning Things* with Jama commissioned by *the Bristol Old Vic Theater* as a co-director. The piece was screened last November at the Venice Architecture Biennale in collaboration with the Goethe Institut & Theater Neumarkt's *100 Ways to Say We* program. Most recently, Gouled also featured in the documentary *The Ones Who Keep Walking* a film commissioned by Johnnie Walker, to share the stories of twenty rising creatives and boundary pushers from the African continent. They are also part of the upcoming group exhibition at the V&A Museum entitled *Africa Fashion*.

Sophia Nahli Allison (b. 1987, Los Angeles, USA; lives and works in Los Angeles, USA) is an Academy Award® nominated filmmaker and photographer. As a black queer radical dreamer she reimagines the archives by excavating hidden truths. A meditation of the spirit, her work conjures ancestral memories, mysticism, and abstraction to explore the intersection of fiction and non-fiction storytelling. Sophia was a 2020 United States Artists Fellow, a 2014 Chicago 3Arts Awardee and has held residencies at MacDowell, The Camargo Foundation in Cassis, France, POV Spark's African Interactive Art Residency, and The Center for Photography at Woodstock. She earned a Master's degree in visual communication and a Bachelor's degree in photojournalism. Sophia received a 2021 Academy Award nomination for her short experimental documentary *A Love Song For Latasha* (2019), of which she was the director, cinematographer, editor, and producer. Recently, she directed and co-wrote the 2021 HBO Max original documentary *Eyes on the Prize: Hallowed Ground*. Sophia is currently working on her ongoing self-portrait series *Dreaming Gave Us Wings* and developing a dark comedy series with her creative partner.

Adrian L. Burrell (b. 1990, Oakland, USA; lives and works in Oakland, USA) is a third-generation Oakland artist working across photography, film, installation and experimental media. His work examines issues of race, class, gender, and intergenerational dynamics to invite moments where collective storytelling can be a site for remembering. His photographic series “It’s After the End of the World, Don’t You Know That Yet?,” a collective self-portrait that examines normalized violence inflicted on Black lives, was acquired for SFMOMA’s permanent collection in 2021. His work has been featured at SXSW (2013), Photoville in New York City (2020), Pingyao International Photography Festival in China (2020), BlackStar Film Festival (2022), and in The New Yorker (2022). Burrell was the S.F. Camerawork Juror’s Choice Award recipient (2019) and a YBCA Creative Cohort fellow (2021-22). Burrell has lived and worked on four continents, he is a US Marine Corps veteran, a graduate of the San Francisco Art Institute with a BFA in film and Stanford University with an MFA from the Department of Art & Art History, where he lectured and served as the Black Graduate Student Community Outreach Chair. He is currently a visiting artist with Stanford’s Institute for Diversity in the Arts and a resident at SFFILM.

Pannela Castro (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; lives and works in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil) is a visual artist dedicated to the practice of performance, whose focus in her work is what she calls “an incessant search for affection.” Her practice, created from relations of alterity and issues related to the sense of belonging, unfolds in memories in different media, such as painting, video, photography, objects, and installations, among others. From her permanent residence in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Castro moves through cities as a flaneur, in what she calls an affective drift, leaving contributions to the development of new affective bonds up to chance, and thereby also opening up new affective relationships with art.

Chinwe Chigbu (b. 1994, Port Harcourt, Nigeria; lives and works in Lagos, Nigeria) is an experimental artist from Abia State, Nigeria. She began as a documentary/street photographer then transitioned into exploring abstract expressionism through photography and experimental media. Her works are abstract and conceptual as they revolve around themes of identity politics, the black female body, duality, mysticism, environmentalism, contemporary society and culture. In her own words: “My works come from my daily life, and are attempts to make sense of the world or environment around me. They are representations of my ideas, thoughts, experiences, pain, happiness, fears, wishes and dreams for a new world.” Chinwe is inspired by the Cosmos (Universe), Mother Nature and human nature. She is an artist using art as a tool or means of freedom through self-expression to inspire individuals regardless of race, gender, societal norms, structures and conditions. Her work has appeared in international shows including the Latitude Art fair in South Africa and the Kuenyehia Prize Exhibition in Accra, Ghana. Chigbu has a Bachelor’s degree in International Relations, Les Cours Sonou Universite, Benin Republic (2016)..

Ayan Farah (b. 1978, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates; lives and works in Stockholm, Sweden) works with found materials and earth pigments. Her work utilizes land as its medium and

it is the predominant subject of her practice. The work combines aspects of abstract painting and land art with techniques found in both west and east African art and craft, using materials consisting of historical textiles predating the industrial revolution and industrially spun linen and hemp from domestic settings. These materials often traded between Europe and its colonies reflect her interest in colonial trade history and the traces it has left on the land and the population of these locations. She collects clay and mud on-site and grows plants and flowers for pigments both outdoors and under lights in her studio. Her interest is environmental, the industrialization of ancient crops, and man's impact on the land. Her works that are painted and dyed with these pigments reflect on personal history, the geographical location of the source material, and the place of production. Socio-cultural concepts and geological properties as well as the aspect of mobility imbue the work with an ephemeral quality that manifests the passing of time.

Enam Gbewonyo (b. 1980, London, UK; lives and works in London, UK) is a British Ghanaian textile and performance artist whose practice investigates identity, womanhood, and humanity while advocating the healing benefits of craft. She uses performance as a vessel, creating live spaces of healing that deliver the collective consciousness to a positive place of awareness. Using craft as her portal she pushes audiences to face the truth of a dark past and the emotions it brings forth. Thus bringing them to a point of spiritual awareness both of self and humanity. Gbewonyo is also an emerging curator and founder of the Black British Female Artist (BBFA) Collective - a platform that supports a group of emerging black women artists and advocates for inclusivity.

Stephen Leo Hayes Jr. (b. 1983, Durham, USA; lives and works in Durham, USA) grew up in Durham with his older brother, Spence, and his mother, Lender, who were pivotal in shaping and sparking his creative approach. When Hayes was in first grade, he broke a remote-control car. His brother took it apart and attached the motor to a battery, bringing it back to life. Amazed, Hayes began breaking all kinds of things to see how they worked and what he could create with the pieces. By second grade, his mother had given him a real workbench; she and Hayes' brother would also bring home abandoned equipment for tinkering. Hayes earned a Master of Fine Arts in sculpture at Savannah College of Art and Design in Atlanta. His thesis exhibition, "Cash Crop," has been traveling and exhibiting for over a decade. Hayes uses three symbols: a pawn, a corn, and a horse to explore America's use (or misuse) of black bodies, black minds, and black labor. Artists, he believes, are as much translators as they are creators. Hayes is currently an Assistant Professor of the Practice of Art, Art History & Visual Studies at Duke University. He recently created a monument for the Colored Troops that marched through Wilmington, NC. "Boundless" was unveiled on November 13, 2021.

Amina Kadous (b. 1991, Cairo, Egypt; lives and works in Cairo, Egypt) received her Bachelor in Fine Arts from Tufts University and The School of the Museum of Fine arts in Boston. Her work tackles concepts of memory and identity. She believes in the ephemerality of experience. She believes a photograph is an object that holds memories and meanings, keepsakes that give life.

Her work is a linkage between the past and present through the layers of time as they fold and unfold. The exploration of time serves, for her, as a means of understanding who she is as a person. Characterizing herself as an explorer of ideas, she is driven by the spirit of inquiry as she seeks to comprehend the meanings and hidden ambiguities of lives, not her own, through the interactive nature of viewer, photographer, object and environment. She is driven by experience as a woman and an Egyptian. Her work has been exhibited internationally. She participated in the 12th edition of the Bamako Biennale of Photography and was awarded the Centre Soleil d'Afrique Prize for her project, "A Crack in the Memory of My Memory." She was awarded a grant from Magnum Foundation and Prince Claus Foundation, was one of the top ten finalists for the Everyday projects grant for her current ongoing project "White Gold," and was shortlisted this year for the Contemporary African photography prize.

Mae-ling Lokko (b. Taif, Saudi Arabia; lives and works in Accra, Ghana) is a biomaterials designer and educator from Ghana and the Philippines who works with agro-waste and renewable bio based materials. Through her work, Lokko explores themes of "generative justice" through the development of new models of distributed production and collaboration. Often her work deconstructs historical narratives and sites of extraction through new material vocabularies and fragmented architectural installations. Lokko is the founder of Willow based in Accra, Ghana focused on the design of bio based materials across architecture, agriculture, and food systems. Lokko holds a Ph.D. and Masters of Science in Architectural Science from the Center of Architecture, Science and Ecology, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and B.A from Tufts University. Her work was nominated for the Visible Award 2019, Royal Academy Dorfman Award 2020 and she was a finalist for the Hublot Design Prize 2019. Lokko's recent projects have been exhibited at the Stedelijk Museum, Netherlands; Museum of the Future, Dubai; Z33 House for Contemporary Art, Design and Architecture, Belgium; Sonsbeek Biennial, Netherlands; Triennale Milano, Italy; Somerset House, London; Radialsystem, Berlin; Luma Foundation, Arles; 4th Istanbul Design Biennial; Rhode Island School of Design, and at the Royal Institute of British Architects-North.

Nasheeka Nedsreal (b. 1990, Baton Rouge, USA; lives and works in Berlin, Germany) is a dancer, choreographer, and artist working with movement, music, and visual art. Often exploring subjects related to identity, ritual, futurism, and improvisation, her work incorporates uses of voice, collage, found objects, textiles, and masking. She has performed extensively throughout Europe working with artists such as Trajal Harrell, Jeremy Shaw, Ricardo de Paula, Navild Acosta, K.ZIA, Naufus Ramirez-Figueroa, and Joana Tischkau. As a video artist, her work has been showcased at Sadler's Wells London, HAU Hebbel Berlin, Kampnagel Hamburg, and Gallery Am Tacheles Berlin. Nedsreal is interested in art as a place of interrogation and activism, freedom and exploration. She is the co-founder of Soul Sisters Berlin, a collective dedicated to empowering Black women throughout Germany, and a member of the collective Santix Schwarz. In 2021, commissioned by Kampnagel Hamburg, she produced her first video-dance film entitled *Memories of Reincarnated Imaginings*. In early 2022, she directed and choreographed her first group performance entitled

Junctions, which premiered at Ballhaus Naunynstraße. Further, she has worked as a dramaturg, childhood educator, fashion model, and actress. Having dropped out of university during her second year, Nedsreal considers herself to be an autodidact. She is currently a guest performer at the Schauspielhaus Zürich.

Nengi Omuku (b. 1987 Warri, Nigeria; lives and works in Lagos, Nigeria) received her BA (2010) and MA (2012) from the Slade School of Art, University College London. Recent solo exhibitions include *Parables of Joy*, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery (2022); Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London and Berlin (2020-2021); *Stages of Collapse*, September Gray, Atlanta (2017); *A State of Mind*, Omenka Gallery, Lagos (2015). Recent group exhibitions include *What Lies Beneath: Women, Politics, Textiles*, Women's Art Collection, Murray Edwards College, Cambridge (2021-2022); *Dissolving Realms*, curated by Katy Hessel, Kasmin Gallery, New York (2022); *Self-Addressed*, curated by Kehinde Wiley at Jeffrey Deitch, Los Angeles, USA (2021); *The Invincible Hands*, Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art, Lagos, Nigeria (2021); *Karim Kal and Nengi Omuku*, La Galerie, Contemporary art Center, Noisy-le-Sec (2021); *Dancing in Dark Times*, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London, UK (2021). Omuku's work is also included in the collections of HSBC Art Collection, Beth Rudin DeWoody Collection, Loewe Art Collection, Monsoon Art Collection, Dawn Art Collection, Women's Art Collection, Easton Capital Collection and the Azman Museum.

Léonard Pongo (b. 1988, Belgium; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium) is a photographer and visual artist. His long-term project "The Uncanny" has earned him several international awards and worldwide recognition. Pongo's work has been published worldwide and featured in numerous exhibitions including the recent *IncarNations* at the Bozar Center for Fine Arts curated by Kendell Geers & Sindika Dokolo and the 3rd Beijing Photo Biennial at CAFA Art Museum. He was chosen as one of PDN's 30 New and Emerging Photographers to Watch in 2016, is a recipient of the Visura Grant 2017, the Getty Reportage Grant 2018 and participated in the Joop Swart Masterclass 2018. "Primordial Earth," his latest project, was shown at the Lubumbashi Biennale and at the Recontres de Bamako where it was awarded the "Prix de l'OIF", and exhibited at the Brussels Centre for Fine Arts for his first institutional solo show in Belgium in 2021. His career is shared between his long-term projects in Congo DR, teaching and assignment work. Pongo is also a member of The Photographic Collective's advisory board. His work is part of institutional and private collections.

Khalif Tahir Thompson (b. Brooklyn, USA; lives and works in Queens, USA) is best recognized for his powerful work concentrated in portraiture and figuration. Incorporating painting, drawing, collage, printmaking, and paper-making into his practice, he explores notions of self through varied subjectivity concerning identity, race, iconography, as well as family and relationships. Thompson graduated from Purchase College with his Bachelors in Fine arts degree and has since completed a fellowship at the EFA Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop in NYC,

the Vermont Studio Center, the Jerome Emerging Artist residency at The Anderson Center and received a 2021 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship in Painting. Thompson will be attending The Yale School of Art in pursuit of his MFA in Painting/Printmaking in the Fall of 2022

Paul Verdell (b. 1991, Long Beach, USA; lives and works in Detroit, USA) approaches drawing and painting of portraits, landscapes, and still life through chosen media of oil paints, oil pastels, and crayons, adding playful and textured mark-making to his two-dimensional works. Post-Impressionist and Fauvist influences are communicated through the abandonment of precision in favor of a more fluid form of figurative work, where unnaturally vibrant colors become flesh and limbs, and figures merge with their surroundings. For Verdell, it is the presence of the subject during their sitting that guides the conceptual framework and psychology of each piece. Focusing on the face of the figure rather than the full body, Verdell often chooses to fill the frame with the subject, including only abstracted glimpses of situational detail. A corner of a window, a small blanket thrown over furniture, or any number of natural elements peer out from behind the subject, grounding the figure within a landscape. His tendency toward working quickly to capture emotion results in the works presenting varying exposures of paper between the strokes and fields of color. This lightness is a prominent characteristic of his unique style, inspiring a feeling of ephemerality and fleeting exchange, and allowing the viewer space to explore meaning.

ABOUT BLACK ROCK SENEGAL

Named for the volcanic rocks that blanket its shoreline, Black Rock is a multidisciplinary artist-in-residence program founded by renowned artist Kehinde Wiley in 2019. The residency brings together international artists to live and work in Dakar, Senegal for 1–3 month stays. The Black Rock compound design was conceived by Senegalese architect Abib Djenne with interior collaboration between Wiley, Fatiya Djenne, and Aissa Dione. The complex includes a residence and studio space for Wiley along with three single-occupancy residency apartments with adjacent studio spaces. Our mission is to support new artistic creation through collaborative exchange and to incite change in the global discourse about Africa.

ABOUT KEHINDE WILEY

Kehinde Wiley (b. 1977, Los Angeles) is a world-renowned visual artist, best known for his vibrant portrayals of contemporary African-American and African-Diasporic individuals that subvert the hierarchies and conventions of European and American portraiture. Working in the mediums of painting, sculpture, and video, Wiley's portraits challenge and reorient art-historical narratives, awakening complex sociopolitical issues that many would prefer remain muted. In 2018 Wiley became the first African-American artist to paint an official U.S. Presidential portrait for the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery. Former U.S. President Barack Obama selected Wiley for this honor. In 2019, the artist debuted his first large-scale public sculpture in Times Square, New York, a bronze equestrian monument honoring the heroism of young black men in America. In 2020 Wiley received France's distinction of Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters. Wiley has held solo exhibitions throughout the United States and internationally and his works are included in the collections of over 40 public institutions around the world. Wiley is the Founder and President of Black Rock Senegal. He lives and works in Beijing, Dakar, and New York.