

Efie Gallery at Art Dubai 2024

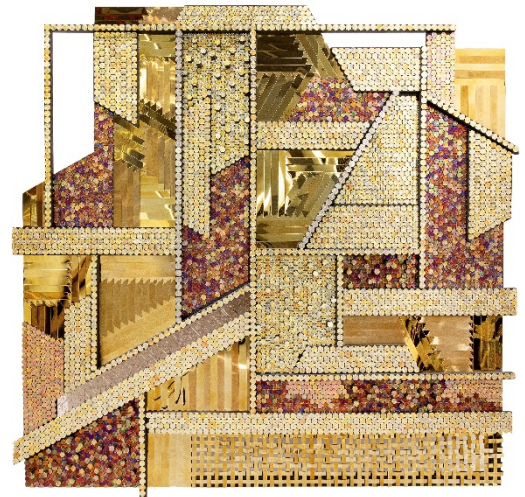
- Art Dubai booth (B14) includes new work by El Anatsui, Aïda Muluneh, Maggie Otieno and Yaw Owusu
- Parallel group exhibition at Efie Gallery, curated by Faridah Folawiyo, examines hybridity of influence and output
- El Anatsui's collection of vinyl records displayed for the first time



*Aïda Muluneh, Steps (2018),
courtesy of the artist and Efie
Gallery*



*Kesewa Aboah, A Lightness 5
(2023), courtesy of the artist and
Efie Gallery*



*Yaw Owusu, Golden Hour (2022),
courtesy of the artist and Efie
Gallery*

Efie Gallery participates in **Art Dubai** (1-3 March 2024) for the second consecutive year, with a display reflecting the gallery's commitment to championing contemporary African art on the global market. The booth showcases some of the finest in artistic practice from Africa and its diaspora, featuring new works by globally acclaimed artist **El Anatsui** (b. 1944, Gold Coast - now Ghana), award-winning photographer **Aïda Muluneh** (b. 1974, Ethiopia), sculptor **Maggie Otieno** (b. 1974, Kenya) and New York-based multidisciplinary artist **Yaw Owusu** (b. 1992, Ghana), in a powerful convergence of artistic vision across generations.

In parallel, Efie Gallery presents a group exhibition, *Elastic Visions*, curated by **Faridah Folawiyo** (b. 1993, UK), showcasing the dynamism of artistic expression emerging from practitioners of African origin across the world. Running 27 February – 27 May 2024, the exhibition examines how artists from Africa and the diaspora overlook the restrictive concepts of Eurocentric cultural superiority. Folawiyo, a Nigerian curator with a background in Middle Eastern studies, is also exploring the historic dichotomy created by Orientalism and its interrogation by Edward Said (1935-2003), who urged Western intellectuals to rethink how they observed, understood and depicted the Middle East. The show aims to stretch audiences' limits and perceptions, inviting them to consider the elasticity and hybridity of influence and output.

The exhibited artists include: **Kesewa Aboah** (b. 1994, UK), a Ghanaian-British artist and model who uses her own body as a paintbrush; **Kevin Claiborne** (b. 1989, USA), a New York-based conceptual artist whose work examines intersections of identity, social environment and mental health within the Black American experience; **Fadekemi Ogunsanya** (b. 1995, Nigeria), a multidisciplinary artist who explores African culture, blended with mythology and folk art; **Enam Gbewonyo** (b. 1980, UK), a British-Ghanaian textile and performance artist exploring womanhood and humanity while advocating the healing benefits of craft; and **Amina Kadous** (b. 1991, Egypt), a Cairo-based artist exploring memory, identity and the ephemerality of experience.



Aretha Franklin With Rev. James Cleveland & The Southern California Community Choir, Amazing Grace, Atlantic, 1972, courtesy of El Anatsui and Efié Gallery



Fela Kuti and Egypt 80, Original Suffer Head, Lagos International Records, 1981, courtesy of El Anatsui and Efié Gallery

Also displayed at Efié Gallery from 27 February – 27 May 2024 are over 70 vinyl records belonging to **El Anatsui**, exhibited to the public for the first time, offering a unique glimpse into the cultural inspirations that have shaped the artist's remarkable career. Records by the likes of Johnson Adjan & His Opiri Group, Aretha Franklin, Smart Nkansah's Black Hustlers of Ghana Fela Kuti, and Vicky 'Manze Onuba from the artist's personal collection are displayed alongside some of the artist's early sketches that include song lyrics, music titles and poetry. The exhibition invites viewers to explore the intersections between visual art and music that have influenced one of Africa's foremost contemporary artists.

Kwame Mintah, director of Efié Gallery, says: "Building on our debut at Art Dubai last year, Efié Gallery's work this year takes a varied and inventive look at some of the most significant artists of African origin working today. Our booth at the fair reflects the significance of African artists of various generations within today's art market, while the group exhibition at our gallery champions the rich and varied creative talent emerging from Africa and its diaspora today and their potential impact on the future of art globally. Finally, it's a true honour to display El Anatsui's record collection to the public for the first time, revealing a less known side of this highly esteemed artist."

Faridah Folawiyo, curator, says: "Artists are constantly operating through hybrid lenses. This exhibition provokes viewers to stretch past imagination and pre-conceptions, and to be open to

influence, wherever it comes from, rejecting the discourse of us vs them. The art historian Linda Nochlin wrote about how Orientalist art gave the impression of an absence of history in certain parts of the world – so we are looking in contrast at artists whose work stretches history, or at least our conception of it.”

Since its inception in 2021, Efie Gallery has been establishing itself as a global platform for some of Africa’s most significant artists, working with the likes of El Anatsui, Victor Ekpuk, Abdoulaye Konate, Isshaq Ismail, Aida Muluneh, Maggie Otieno, Yaw Owusu, J. K. Bruce-Vanderpuije and Slawn. Through its wide-ranging roster of artists and exhibitions, as well as its dynamic residency programme, the gallery aims to create a more vibrant ecosystem for artists of African origin in the Middle East. Located in Al Khayat Art Avenue, Efie Gallery is part of Dubai’s Al Quoz Creative Zone, set to become a world-leading hub for creativity and entrepreneurship.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Listing information:

Efie Gallery group exhibition

27 February – 27 May 2024

11-7pm, daily

Efie Gallery, Unit 2 Al Khayat Art Avenue, 19th Street – Al Quoz 1

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

***Private view:** 26 February 2024, 6-9pm*

Efie Gallery at Art Dubai (Booth B14)

Friday 1 – Sunday 3 March 2024

1-2 March – 2-9pm

3 March – 10am-12pm (by invitation only), 12-4pm (public)

Madinat Jumeirah Conference & Events Centre, King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud St

Al Sufouh 1, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

***Preview days (by invitation only):** Wednesday 28 – Thursday 29 Feb 2024, 2-9pm daily*

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About Efie Gallery:

Efie Gallery is a contemporary art gallery in Dubai specialising in the representation and advancement of artists of African origin, both from the African continent and its global diaspora. Since its inception in 2021, and the opening of its permanent space in 2022 in Al Khayat Art Avenue, the gallery has been establishing itself as a global platform for some of Africa's most significant artists, working with the likes of El Anatsui, Aïda Muluneh, Maggie Otieno, Isshaq Ismail and Yaw Owusu.

Efie Gallery enables and supports cross-cultural exchange between Africa, the Middle East and beyond. In addition to its wide-ranging roster of artists and exhibitions, the gallery operates a dynamic residency programme that facilitates collaborations with local artists, institutions and community members, supporting artists in the narrative and vision of their work. Part of Dubai's Al Quoz Creative Zone, set to become a world-leading hub for creativity and entrepreneurship, Efie Gallery aims to create a vibrant ecosystem for contemporary African art in the UAE. The space also displays the gallery's founders' collection of rare vinyl and shellac records from around the world, celebrating the intersection of art and music.

Efie is the Twi word for 'home', addressing the notion of belonging and how it can be determined by culture, history and identity for communities across the world. Founded by Ghanaian family Valentina, Kwame and Kobi Mintah, Efie Gallery is committed to fostering dialogue between African artists and the wider world.

About Faridah Folowiyo:

Faridah Folawiyo is the founder of FF Projects, and an independent curator and researcher with a special focus on contemporary art from the Black world. She received an undergraduate degree in Near Eastern Studies from Princeton University and her Master's in History of Art from the Courtauld Institute of Art.

Her recent curatorial work includes the independently produced Image Impressions at the Vaughan-Richards House in Lagos. In 2022, she also curated Manifold, an exhibition that focuses on emerging black female artists, as well as the second edition, Manifold (Deluxe) at Frieze No. 9 Cork Street in April 2023. She has also curated solo exhibitions by Fadekemi Ogunsanya in London and Lagos, as well as the past four editions of Art X Live in Lagos. Her next curatorial project will be an exhibition with Efie Gallery in Dubai, opening in March 2023.

Her postgraduate dissertation titled "Diaspora, Identity and Representation in Non-Figurative African Photography" was published in *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies*, a peer-reviewed journal published at UCLA. She has also written for *Mousse Magazine*, *Nka Journal*, *TSA Art Magazine* and *Service95*.