

PRESS RELEASE: For immediate release.

Performance Becomes a Vehicle for Afrofuturist Space Exploration During Steloolive's Residency

The internationally renowned Ghanaian artist launches an ambitious new work with Guest Projects Digital.

From 1st to 27th November Guest Projects Digital will be revealing the process behind the realisation of *Oracle Afronaut*, an ambitious new work by internationally renowned Ghanaian performance artist and Guest Projects Digital Artist in Residence, Steloolive. The development of the expansive piece, a dynamic convergence of sculpture, installation, performance and community engagement will be documented across the Guest Projects website and social media channels.

The project draws inspiration from the true story of 'Afronaut', founder of the Zambian Space Programme and arguably one of the earliest Afrofuturist, Edward Mukuka Nkoloso. The programme will culminate in a performance by Steloolive live-streamed from his 5-foot purpose-built interactive space rocket. Taking advantage of our increasing propensity to connect digitally, it will act as a global invitation for exploration of the cosmos using the imagination of the audience as its limitless vehicle and joining the dots between Ghana and the rest of the digitally tethered world.

The meticulous construction of the spaceship will be documented and shared on social media throughout the residency. Built from sheet metal in collaboration with local craftsmen, its rusty texture will mirror that of its 'space base', the Nima settlement in Accra, Ghana. The transformation of the substrate, used for construction in the area yet often associated with decay and dilapidation, is intended to inspire new possibilities and reconnect the predominantly Muslim and marginalised community inhabiting this locale with the material in a positive way. The residents will be amongst the first people invited inside the rocket where they will be encouraged to share their imagined perceptions of space. The resulting audio will be digitally accessible worldwide and will form the outline of a new audio piece by Steloolive.

Guest Projects Digital 2021 is generously supported by the British Council SSA Arts Digital Catalyst Fund, which supports UK and overseas cultural partnerships to develop digitally innovative ways of collaborating. The programme was conceived in collaboration with The Yinka Shonibare Foundation, Guest Artists Space Foundation (Nigeria), International Curators Forum and Foundation for Contemporary Art, Ghana.

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Image Links: bit.ly/gpdsteloolive

More

Further Background Information - guestprojects.com | guestartistspace.com | yinkashonibarefoundation.com

Yinka Shonibare CBE (RA) is a British-Nigerian artist based in London, whose multi-disciplinary practice explores colonialism and post-colonialism within the context of globalisation. Through examining race, class and the construction of cultural identity, Shonibare's works comment on the tangled interrelationship between Africa and Europe, and their respective economic and political histories.

For the past decade, Shonibare has been running Guest Projects from his London studio, offering emerging artists of any discipline the opportunity to propose collaborations, have access to a free project space for one month – a laboratory of ideas; a testing ground for new thoughts and actions. As a result of the current global crisis affecting arts spaces across the globe, Guest Projects London had to close its doors shifting to a digital residency format in 2020.

The Yinka Shonibare Foundation is a UK registered charity, established in 2019 to provide fundraising and strategic support for the Guest Artists Space (G. A. S.) Foundation in Nigeria, and Guest Projects in London amongst other initiatives. The Foundation's vision is implemented through hosting and supporting residencies, education and professional development programmes in the UK and Nigeria.

In Nigeria, the Guest Artists Space (G. A. S.) Foundation will provide multi-use live/work residency spaces in the heart of the dynamic city of Lagos and on a rural working farm in Ijebu in Ogun State. It will host multidisciplinary artists, researchers and curators awarded residencies for up to three months commencing mid-2022.

British Council - britishcouncil.org

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We build connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language. Last year we reached over 80 million people directly and 791 million people overall including online, broadcasts and publications. Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. We receive a 15 per cent core funding grant from the UK government.

International Curators Forum - internationalcuratorsforum.org

International Curators Forum (ICF) was founded by artists and curators in 2007 to offer a dynamic and evolving programme that responds to the conditions and contexts impacting creative practitioners through commissions, exhibitions, projects, publications and events. We provide tools and platforms for professional development and facilitate an open peer-to-peer network inviting participants to be part of a generative system of skills and knowledge transfer. Across all of our work, both critically and practically, we aim to challenge the barriers to equality and inclusivity within our industry.

Foundation for Contemporary Art Ghana - fcaghana.org

Foundation for Contemporary Art–Ghana is a network of artists created in 2004 to offer a platform for the critical presentation, development, and promotion of contemporary art in Ghana. As a membership-based non-profit institution, FCA-Ghana serves as a laboratory that provides resources necessary for the growth of artists creatively and intellectually through a knowledge centre/library, exhibitions, workshops, seminars, artist presentations, residencies and publications.