

IMPACT REPORT

2024-25



Y. S.

F. YINKA
SHONIBARE
FOUNDATION

G. A.

S. GUEST. ARTIST.
SPACE.
FOUNDATION

WELCOME

“What once felt utopian is now a lived reality — a space for freedom, dialogue, and imagination to shape more equitable futures.”

Three years on, it is hard to believe that G.A.S. has already welcomed over 85 residents to Lagos and the farm in Ikise. What began as an idea has become a living experiment in cultural exchange, research, and community engagement. What once felt utopian is now a working reality, and one we continue to build upon with curiosity and determination.

G.A.S. was founded to bring together artists, designers, curators, academics, scientists and ecologists; to encourage collaboration across cultures, disciplines and geographies; and to open up new ways of thinking and making. Our role is not simply to host residencies, but to create a stage for under-represented voices, and to expand access to resources, networks and opportunities for those too often excluded. We do this not as charity, but as a way of enabling artists and thinkers to flourish; to take risks; and to shape more equitable futures.

This work is made possible thanks to our committed partners. The Terra Foundation for American Arts has enabled ten American

artists to spend time on the farm over two years. Deutsche Bank is supporting a three-year programme of professional development and residencies for creative communities in Lagos and Ikise. Our patron Olufemi Akinsanya has generously supported the archiving and opening of the library as a resource for residents and the wider community. I am also grateful to our American Friends Circle, inaugurated by Kent Kelley, and the Global Circle, launched in June with Osahon Okunbo.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the extraordinary team at Y.S.F. and G.A.S. Together, we are challenging geographic and disciplinary silos; creating space for reflection, research and dialogue; and holding open a place for artistic freedom and social imagination. This is how we build resilient cultural ecosystems where artists, ideas and communities can truly thrive.

YINKA SHONIBARE CBE
Founder and Chair, Yinka Shonibare Foundation (Y.S.F.) and Guest Artists Space, Foundation (G.A.S.)



Portrait of Yinka Shonibare CBE. Photography courtesy of ThisDay Style.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



Welcome to our second Impact Report charting the past 18 months from January 2024

to June 2025. Highlights include Annotations in 2024, reflecting on legacy, memory and the politics of preservation in African and diaspora contexts. Broadening the Farm Residency, which has opened vital conversations on ecology, food security and regenerative land use. Rooted in both our urban hub in Lagos and our rural farm in Ikise, these strands intersect to foster critical engagement with urban-rural dynamics and to envision diverse, evolving African futures.

Our foundations and residency model occupy an agile, catalytic position within the arts ecosystem. Unconstrained

by commercial or institutional bureaucracy, we take risks, foster unexpected collaborations, and uphold values of care, reciprocity and wellbeing, prioritising lasting impact over transient visibility.

At the heart of Yinka Shonibare Foundation (Y.S.F.) and Guest Artists Space (G.A.S.) lies an ongoing inquiry into alternative infrastructures for art and knowledge production. We are not merely managing sites or residencies; we are cultivating adaptive, porous frameworks that encourage cultural exchange, interdisciplinary collaboration and creative risk-taking.

Looking ahead, we will host the inaugural *Re:assemblages Symposium* in November 2025, bringing together artists and scholars to reimagine archives and knowledge systems. At the

“We take risks, foster unexpected collaborations, and uphold values of care, reciprocity and wellbeing, prioritising lasting impact over transient visibility.”

same time, we are strengthening our endowment and philanthropic networks to ensure long-term resilience, while continuing to nurture our communities through residencies, mentoring and collaborative programmes.

BELINDA HOLDEN
CEO, Yinka Shonibare Foundation (Y.S.F.) and Guest Artists Space Foundation (G.A.S.)

A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR



Stepping into the role of Executive Director of G.A.S. in March 2024 has been

a transformative experience, I did so with equal parts excitement and humility, deeply aware of the privilege of stewarding an organisation with such a vital mission. Over this period, we have focused on deepening our local footprint by embedding ourselves more fully within the communities that sustain us while continuing to connect outward across borders.

This year, we focused on strengthening our immediate art community through targeted resident events, educational development sessions and collaborations with schools and local organisations. Partnerships with St. John's Primary School, Wecyclers, BASF, and the warm

welcome extended by the Ayobo ceramic artists during the residencies of Katesi Kalenge and Bisila Noha, reminded us of the power of shared knowledge and collective creativity. We also continued to build a strong and supportive local donor and patron community, whose commitment underpins the sustainability of our mission.

The launch of the Ìmòrà Arts Intensive was a defining moment, bringing together a diverse cohort of practitioners for exchange, experimentation and growth. Alongside this, strategic partnerships have helped us expand our cultural capital. Our collaboration with Olongo Africa introduced the complete Black Orpheus Collection to the G.A.S. Library. These moments underscore our commitment to building cultural infrastructure for future generations.

“We are not only inviting our community in, we are actively building a home that they can see as theirs.”

At G.A.S., we are intentional about bridging gaps, nurturing connections and building with care. We run our race not against others, but at our own rhythm, guided by our local context. As our first report declared, ẹ káàbọ sílẹ̀ wa, meaning “welcome to our house.” Today, that welcome feels even more resonant. We are not only inviting our community in, we are actively building a home that they can see as theirs.

MONI AISIDA
Executive Director, Guest Artists Space Foundation (G.A.S.)

ACHIEVEMENTS

G.A.S. Foundation remains committed to facilitating global cultural exchange and building a resilient creative infrastructure.

May 2022 to Jun 2025 G.A.S. hosted:

4,047
VISITORS

111
EVENTS

85
RESIDENTS

Jan 2024 to Jun 2025 G.A.S. hosted:

2,097
VISITORS

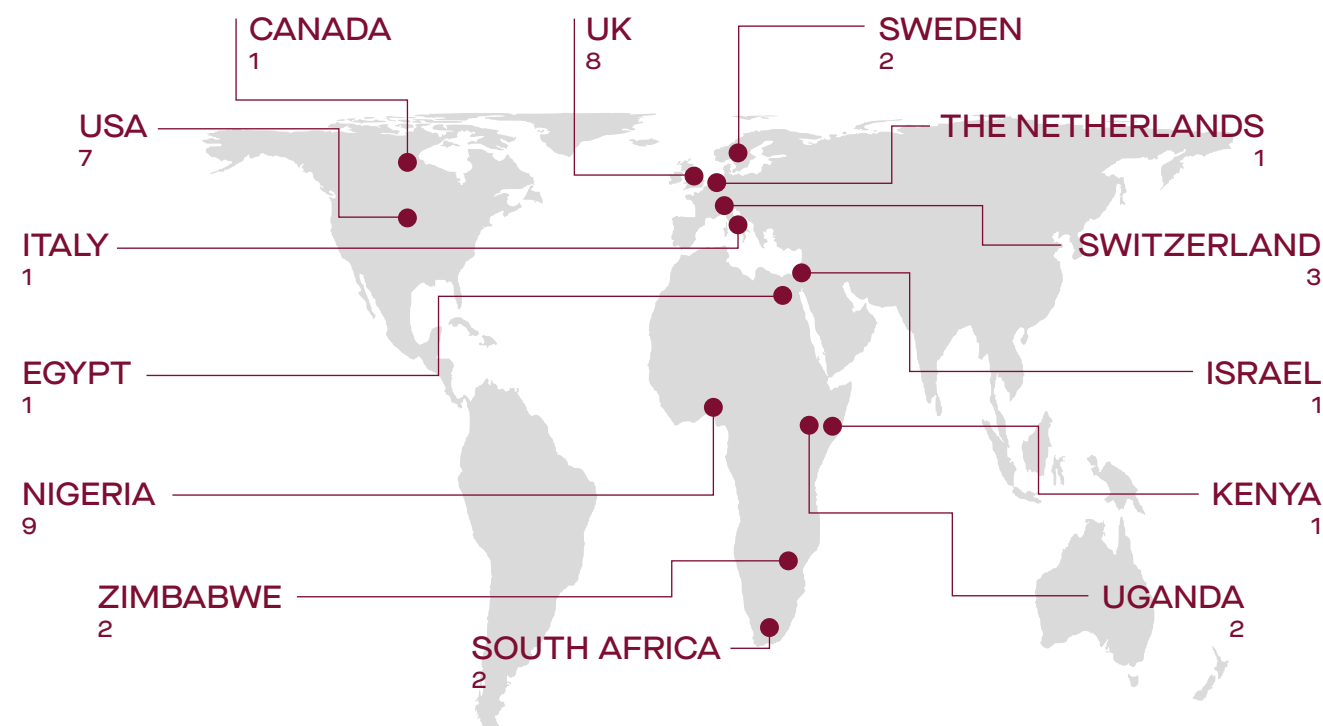
56
EVENTS

42
RESIDENTS

Our visitors were from:

48% Lagos Island
44% Lagos Mainland
4% Outside of Lagos
3% Lagos outskirts
2% International

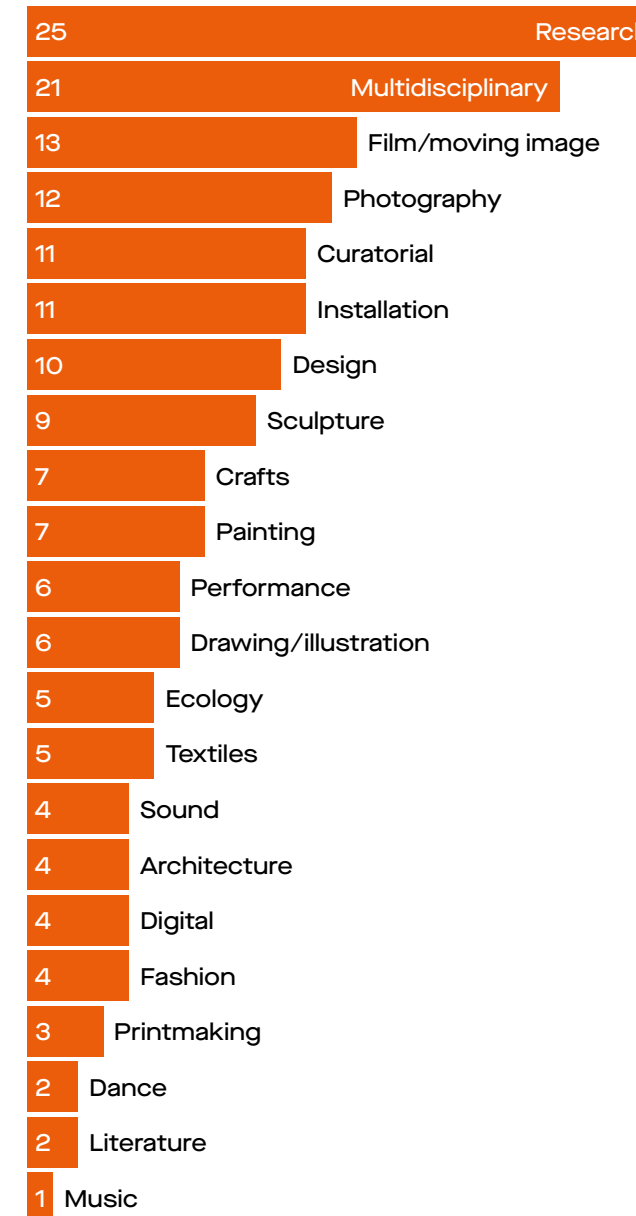
WHERE OUR RESIDENTS LIVE AND WORK



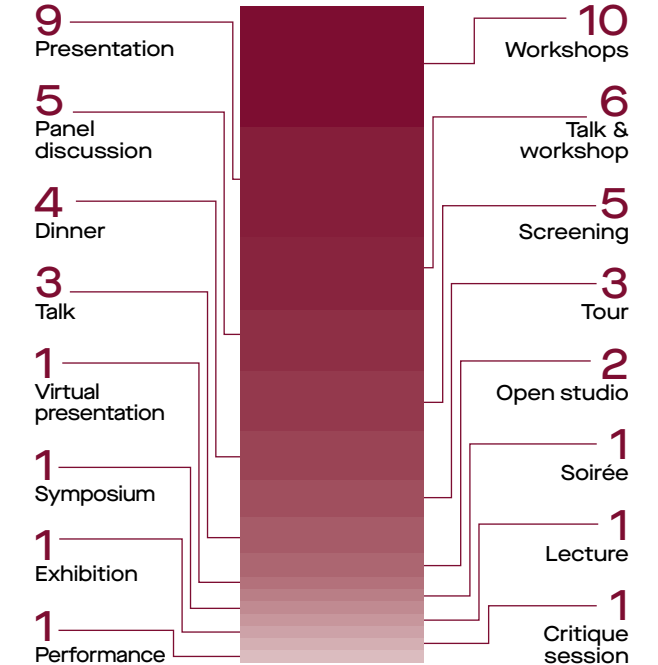
RESIDENTS' NATIONALITIES

10 Nigerian
7 American
5 British
3 Swiss
2 South African
2 Swedish
2 Ugandan
2 Zimbabwean
1 British, Canadian
1 Bulgarian, British
1 Egyptian
1 Eritrean
1 Italian
1 Kenyan
1 Salvadorian, Dutch
1 Spanish, British

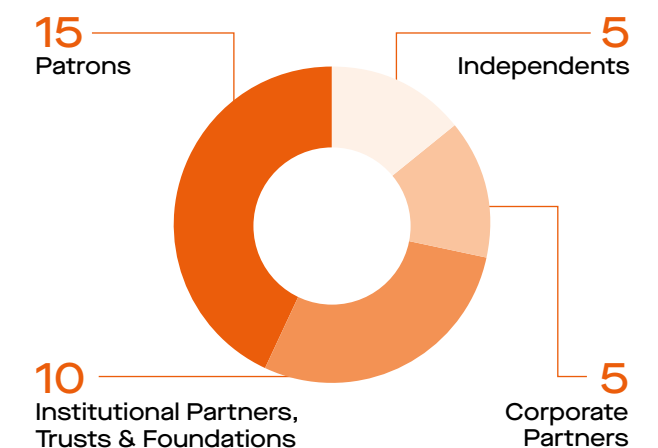
Residents' practices:



Types of event:



Residencies funded by:



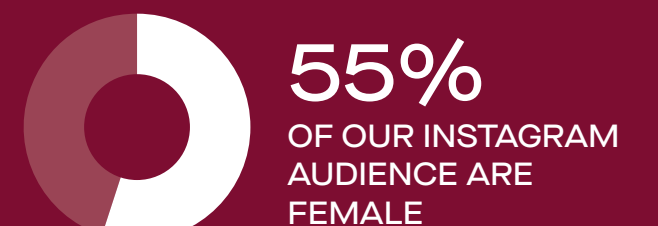
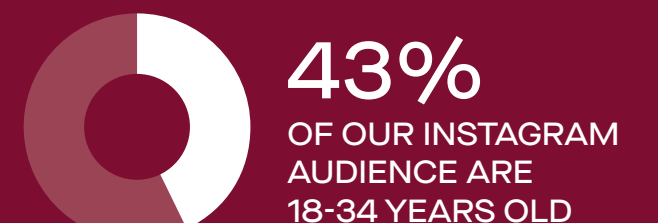
OUR ONLINE IMPACT

Between January 2024 and June 2025 Y.S.F. and G.A.S. have generated:

706,131
REACH ON INSTAGRAM

117,025
COMBINED WEBSITE VIEWS

10,280
NEW SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS



G.A.S. FOUNDATION FARM RESIDENCIES

Since its inception in 2018, the G.A.S. Foundation Farm in Ijebu has become an invaluable site for artistic inquiry, ecological engagement and community exchange. The residency programme brings together local and international artists whose practices intersect with farming, food systems, craft, ecology and sustainable futures.

By embedding artistic research within the rhythms of agricultural life, the farm fosters experimentation, cross-disciplinary dialogue and new approaches to thinking about materiality, climate change and culture.

The following timeline outlines recent and ongoing residencies at the farm and milestones in programme development. It captures the layered impact of these residencies on local communities, partners, and global audiences.

Misheck Masamvu at his open studio event at the G.A.S. Farm House, Ikiş. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.



■ FUNMILOLA OGUNSHINA

New Farm Residency Manager | January 2025

Earlier this year, the foundation welcomed Funmi Ogunshina as Farm Residency Manager. A multidisciplinary artist with over seven years of experience across creative industries, cultural strategy and project management, Funmi has quickly become integral to the success of the farm programme. She has overseen resident projects, managed Lagos-to-farm visits, coordinated partner activations and overseen the construction of new facilities, including a kiln for Bisila Noha and a herb garden designed by Jonn Gale. With professional experience in digital marketing, cultural strategy, and community management at organisations, her work bridges operational leadership with creative practice across music, fashion, and poetry.

RESIDENTS SUPPORTED UNDER HER TENURE SO FAR:

BISILA NOHA explored heritage and craft through clay, culminating in *Ile Òkan: A Gathering at the House of the Soul*.

JONN GALE PHD researcher focused on ethnobotanical knowledge and biocultural conservation, engaging the community through herbarium practices, workshops, and an *Understanding Plants* event.

COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS:

Engagement with St. John's Primary School and other beneficiaries through resident-led workshops and Deutsche Bank's *My Story of Food* programme (delivered with Five Cowries Initiative).



Botanical archiving in the spiral garden planted by Jonn Gale at the G.A.S. Farm House, Ikiş. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation.

■ TERRA FOUNDATION AWARD

- CULTIVATION PROGRAMME

February 2025

The Terra Foundation for American Art awarded \$149,000 to support *CULTIVATION: Art, Environment & Materiality*, a two-year residency programme piloted on our working farm. It brings together artists, researchers, farmers, and artisans to explore the intersections of ecology, food, agriculture, and traditional craft with contemporary art. With the first resident arriving in August 2025, the programme will welcome 10 US-based artists, particularly those of Indigenous, African, or multicultural heritage and 10 from Nigeria. These residencies will facilitate interdisciplinary exploration and collaboration across art, ecology, agriculture and sustainable material practices, fostering reciprocal exchanges between international artists, Nigerian peers and local farming communities.

■ OFEM UBI

October–December 2024

Returning for a second residency, artist and researcher Ofem Ubi continued his inquiry into performance, humour and collective memory. His time at the farm built upon earlier collaborations, culminating in a live presentation, *Functions of Humor*, which invited audiences to reflect on the social and political power of laughter.

■ MISHECK MASAMVU

August–October 2024

Zimbabwean artist Misheck Masamvu began his three-month residency at the farm, where he explored the interconnections between farming and artistic practice. His residency was marked by deep engagement with the environment, reflecting on agriculture not only as sustenance but as a metaphor for cultural growth and resilience. The residency culminated in an *Open Studio* at the Farm House, which offered local audiences and peers insight into his creative process and evolving body of work.

■ KOSISOCHUKWU NNEBE

October–December 2024

Canadian-Nigerian artist Kosisochukwu Nnebe's residency investigated cassava and bananas as a "counter-archive" of colonial histories, exploring food as a lens for examining displacement, survival, and memory. Through printing on banana leaves, dialogues and public programmes, she drew connections between Nigeria's agricultural heritage and its broader cultural narratives.



Image printed on a banana leaf by 2024 G.A.S. Fellow Kosisochukwu Nnebe. Photographer: Kosisochukwu Nnebe.

2025



G.A.S. Farm House residency building in Ikiş. Photographer: Andrew Esiebo.

2024

■ BISILA NOHA

London-based ceramicist and researcher Bisila Noha undertook the G.A.S. Farm Residency in early 2025, immersing herself in Nigerian ceramic traditions. She combined preliminary research in Lagos with field visits to Ilorin and Osogbo, and sustained engagement at the Ikise Farm House. In Igànrán, she worked alongside women potters, praised as their “best student so far”, while also experimenting with clay from the farm, embracing material impermanence as part of her practice.

Noha described the residency as unlocking new creative and spiritual directions, giving shape to her forthcoming London solo exhibition and expanding her global archive of women-led pottery traditions. Some of Noha’s research films have now been acquired by the High Museum of Art Atlanta.



Bisila Noha at the G.A.S. Farm House, Ikise. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.

Her residency culminated in *Ile Okàn*, a sculptural installation and communal gathering inspired by Igbo Mbari houses, where guests contributed ceramic offerings and joined

conversations on clay’s spiritual and symbolic dimensions. She also presented *The Clay Women of Igànrán*, documenting potters’ techniques through photography and film.



Event attendees at Ile Okàn – A Gathering at the House of the Soul at the G.A.S. Farm House, Ikise. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.

■ SHABU MWANGI

Kenyan multidisciplinary artist Shabu Mwangi, co-founder of the Wajukuu Art Project, joined G.A.S. Lagos in 2024 as recipient of the Access Bank ART X Prize. His project explored fortune and power, embedding Nigerian contexts into his socially engaged practice. Mwangi created new work for ART X Lagos 2024, delivered an artist talk and workshop *My Journey in Art*, and collaborated with local artist Dennis Osadebe at Protest Art Studio.

He described the experience of presenting to fellow artists for the first time as transformative, shifting his confidence and approach to public engagement. The residency deepened his socially engaged methods, broadened his Lagos networks, and reinforced his belief in art as a tool for memory and justice. Mwangi left with renewed clarity about his artistic role as both creator and advocate, linking personal history with collective futures.

Shabu Mwangi at the G.A.S. Farm House, Ikise. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.



■ LIZ KOBUSINGE AND THEOPHILUS IMANI

RECOVERING PAN-AFRICAN FESTIVAL HISTORIES

Researchers and artists Liz Kobusinge (Uganda) and Theophilus Imani (Italy) joined the Annotations residency in October 2024, exploring Pan-African festival histories with a focus on FESTAC ’77. Rooted in the G.A.S. Library and Picton Archive, their work examined archival traces and silences, and what emerges when artists “annotate” the margins of history. Kobusinge consulted a range of festival archives from the 1960s to the 1980s in Lagos and Ibadan and connected with international scholars, while Imani investigated FESTAC’s cultural and social impact. Both also engaged in Lagos’s wider art scene, including ART X.

They co-led *Archival Choreographies*, a study day lecture performance blending archival research, storytelling and performance, where audiences engaged with live music, hibiscus petals and bark cloth as tools for co-creation. Imani valued the conviviality of shared meals and exchanges, while Kobusinge described the experience as practice-affirming, sharpening her skills as a reader, listener and writer.

Their reflections will feature in the book *Annotations in Four Acts* (2025), extending the project’s reach. The residency highlighted the power of collaboration and demonstrated how archival absence can spark dialogue, connecting past legacies with present-day cultural debates in Lagos and beyond.



Liz Kobusinge and Theophilus Imani at G.A.S. Lagos. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.



Participants immersed in a Scriptorium workshop at the École du Festival Study Day. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.

RE:ASSEMBLAGES

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN ART ARCHIVES

Re:assemblages is a research and curatorial initiative of Y.S.F. and G.A.S. that explores the intersections of African and diasporic art archives and libraries. This multi-year programme creates space for experimentation and collaboration between artists, publishers, and research institutions across Africa, while providing a meeting ground for dialogue on African and Afro-diasporic art archives in international settings.

The programme was developed in response to the Picton Archive, currently housed at G.A.S. Foundation. Established in 2022, this important resource includes the personal library of Emeritus Professor of African Art John Picton and Sue Picton. It provides a vital framework for rethinking African modernism and contemporary African art within the wider currents of the 20th century. The collection traces intellectual and aesthetic pathways from post-independence to the present day, situating African art practices within movements such as Pan-Africanism, Negritude and radical left intellectual formations, and linking them to global cultural and political histories.

As Naima Hassan, Curator of *Re:assemblages*, reflects: "The curatorial vision for *Re:assemblages* begins with the question: What does it mean to think with African and Afro-diasporic art archives as living, contested, and future-shaping spaces?"

CHAPTER I REFLECTIONS ON ANNOTATIONS

REACTIVATING PAN-AFRICAN FESTIVAL ARCHIVES

The first curatorial chapter, *Annotations*, supported by the Outset Contemporary Art Fund, was developed in collaboration with Spelman College. It began with a research associates programme and evolved into a residency and public series examining the legacies of four major Pan-African festivals of the 20th century: FESMAN, PANAF, Zaire 74, and FESTAC '77.

In November 2024, *Annotations* culminated in *École du Festival: A Study Day*, an international gathering that drew on Christian Nyampeta's *École du soir* and Ousmane Sembène's pedagogical models to propose new archival and artistic approaches to Pan-African festivals. The event brought together artists, scholars and cultural practitioners from Lagos, Ibadan, London and Kampala. The work continues through a forthcoming publication, *Annotations in Four Acts*, to be released in Autumn 2025.

CHAPTER II RE:ASSEMBLAGES 2025-2026

Building on the success of Chapter I, the programme now moves into its next phase. From 2025 to 2026, *Re:assemblages* will expand its scope and infrastructure, strengthening African art archives, libraries and publishing platforms through four thematic strands: *The Short Century*, *Annotations*, *The Living Archive* and *Ecotones*. These strands will advance experimental archival practices and deepen transnational collaborations across Africa and the global diaspora.

Highlights of this phase include:

■ African Art Libraries (AAL) Lab and Affiliates Network

Launching in 2025, this international network of African art libraries, archives and publishers will critically examine the role of collections in shaping African and Afro-diasporic knowledge. The AAL Lab will challenge conventional models of preservation and activation through experimental, collaborative practice.

■ The Short Century Intensive (2025)

A fellowship programme hosting five US-based artists, writers and scholars working with African and Afro-diasporic archive collections from the mid to late 20th century. Anchored by the seminal exhibition *The Short Century* curated by Okwui Enwezor in 2001-2002, the intensive builds on the Terra Foundation's commitment to

foster inclusive narratives of American art. It focuses on intersections between transnational exchanges between the U.S. and African movements for freedom, aesthetic innovation and decolonial thought.

■ Re:assemblages Symposia

November 2025: The inaugural symposium will take place in Lagos, bringing together archivists, researchers, artists, writers and cultural practitioners for two days of panels, conversations and site-responsive interventions.

Autumn 2026: A capstone symposium will consolidate the programme's learnings, sharing a toolkit of adaptive archival practices shaped through collective work across the cycle.

■ AAL Lab Convenings (2025-2026)

Across two years, 10 international gatherings will be shaped by *Re:assemblages* 2025-26's themes: *The Short Century*, *Annotations*, *The Living Archive* and *Ecotones*. Designed as hybrid forums, the convenings will foster dialogue across contemporary art, archival practice, pedagogy and ecology. Bringing together practitioners from Africa and its diaspora, the series, titled Contemporary Art and Archive Practices (CAAP) will activate transnational exchange and institutional collaboration. Each convening will be accompanied by a micro-publication advancing the programme's commitment to experimental publishing, co-authorship and critical reflection.

SHAPING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

Over the coming years, *Re:assemblages* will catalyse a new global infrastructure for African and diasporic art archives through the AAL Lab and Affiliates Network. The programme aims to affirm the central role of African-led archival institutions in shaping knowledge, reframing art histories and influencing cultural discourse worldwide.

The programme is guided by a core team from Y.S.F. and G.A.S., comprising Belinda Holden (CEO, Y.S.F.), Moni Aisida (Director, G.A.S.) and Naima Hassan (Re:assemblages Curator and Associate Curator and Archivist, G.A.S. and Y.S.F.).

Curatorial contributions include Ann Marie Peña (Y.S.F. Advisor), Jonn Gale (Re:assemblages PhD Researcher, supported by CHASE Doctoral Training Partnership) and Maryam Kazeem (Guest Curator).

The international advisory committee – Dr. Oluwatoyin Zainab Sogbesan, Dr. Beatrix Gassman de Sousa, Serubiri Moses, Natasha Ginwala and Rangoato Hlasane – provides vital expertise, shaping the programme's vision and impact.

We invite cultural institutions, philanthropic partners and practitioners to collaborate with us. By contributing expertise, participating in convenings, supporting experimental publishing, or investing strategically, we can strengthen resilient infrastructures, redefine narratives of African art and build enduring frameworks of global cultural understanding.

Katesi Kalange with a volunteer group during her community cleaning drive. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation.



LOCAL CONNECTIONS SUSTAINED IMPACT

Named by Artnet as one of the world's top 35 residencies, G.A.S. continues to build long-term collaborations that span art, education, sustainability and community engagement.

Supported by local donors such as Femi Akinsanya and Shamballa FZE, residencies generate trust, resources and ambition for bold projects. By weaving together institutions, businesses and neighbourhoods, G.A.S. demonstrates how local connections underpin global exchange.

STRENGTHENING NIGERIA'S CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM

At the heart of G.A.S.'s mission is a commitment to building bridges between institutions, communities and individuals. In 2024, G.A.S. deepened its role as a convener in Lagos, ensuring residencies remained embedded in the city's cultural life.

RESIDENT-LED CONNECTIONS

Residents embedding their practice within Lagos communities:

- **KATESI KALANGE** forged strong community ties in Bariga, Lagos, leading a local clean-up and repurposing collected waste into sculptural and architectural materials. Her collaborative approach culminated in a public discussion on sustainability and community-led art practices.
- **AMANDA IHME** fostered dialogue on urban heritage with local historians and practitioners.
- **BISILA NOHA** co-hosted workshops with ceramicists in Ayobo.

Circular Heroes workshop by Rafael Kouto in partnership with the Eran Jije Project. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation.



Understanding Plants – Botany and Herbarium Practice workshop by Jonn Gale. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation.

EVENTS

UNDERSTANDING PLANTS BOTANY AND HERBARIUM PRACTICE

by Jonn Gale

On 27 March 2025, ethnobotanist Jonn Gale led a workshop for 17 pupils from St. John's Primary School at the G.A.S. Farm House. Students learned plant anatomy, taxonomy and herbarium methods through hands-on activities, linking scientific method with Nigeria's ethnobotanical traditions.

The event demonstrated the ecological and cultural significance of plants, nurturing early awareness of environmental stewardship. It also connected directly to Gale's broader residency on traditional plant knowledge and medicinal practices. By engaging a rural school community, the programme bridged research and grassroots knowledge, capturing G.A.S.'s ethos of linking disciplines, geographies and generations.

Students from St. John's Primary School, Ikiş, participating in the Understanding Plants – Botany and Herbarium Practice workshop by Jonn Gale. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation.



IMPACTFUL RESIDENT EVENTS

G.A.S. hosted a wide range of public programmes that extended residencies beyond the studio into community engagement. These events allowed residents to share research, test ideas and connect with audiences, while also reflecting G.A.S.'s role as a convener of urgent conversations in contemporary art and society.

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborations with organisations such as Goethe-Institut and Tiwani Contemporary gave residents visibility, networks and public platforms, while a partnership with CBAAC and Olongo Africa brought the full *Black Orpheus* archive into the G.A.S. Library, linking residents' work with critical African and diasporic histories.



Images printed onto banana leaves by artist Kosisochukwu Nnebe. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Ofem Ubi.

EVENTS

IN DIALOGUE

by Kosisochukwu Nnebe

In Dialogue was a virtual conversation between resident artist Kosisochukwu Nnebe and Ghanaian artist Ibrahim Mahama, attended by 65 participants across borders. The discussion connected Nnebe's research on food and colonial residue with Mahama's use of jute sacks to narrate trade and labour histories.

The exchange demonstrated how art can act as a tool for agency in contexts of state failure. Strategically, it extended G.A.S.'s reach into Pan-African dialogue, situating Nnebe's residency in a wider continental context while highlighting the Foundation's ability to convene critical artistic voices digitally.

Participants in the pilot edition of the Ìmòrà Arts Intensive. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation.



FUNDERS & PARTNERS FOCUS

DEUTSCHE BANK: ÌMÒRÀ ARTS INTENSIVE

In March 2025, Yinka Shonibare Foundation and G.A.S. launched the pilot edition of the Ìmòrà Arts Intensive, a professional development initiative for emerging Nigerian artists generously supported by Deutsche Bank. Taking its name from the Yoruba word Ìmòrà (support, guidance, mentorship), the programme forms part of Project Nexus, a three-year residency and education platform designed to empower artists, educators and curators.

From over 100 applicants, ten early-career artists were selected by a panel of experts to join a week-long intensive at G.A.S. Lagos. Over five days, participants engaged in workshops and mentoring sessions with curators, artists and cultural workers, covering themes such as business acumen (intellectual property, contracts, financial literacy), professional practice (artist statements, portfolios, documentation, and research), and navigating opportunities (open calls, project proposals, and public presentation). Sessions also introduced wider art histories and ecosystems, situating practice within both Nigerian and international contexts.

The Ìmòrà Arts Intensive provided participants with practical tools, peer networks and critical confidence to advance their careers, while reinforcing Lagos as a hub for artistic innovation and exchange. For G.A.S. and Y.S.F., the initiative exemplifies how Deutsche Bank's support is nurturing the next generation of artists and laying the foundation for sustained cultural infrastructure in Nigeria.

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Since its founding, Y.S.F. on behalf of G.A.S. has worked to connect African artists to international networks while opening pathways for global practitioners to engage deeply with Lagos and Ikise. These partnerships prioritise long-term relationships that strengthen practice, cultural infrastructure and dialogue.

G.A.S. Lagos Art Tour 2024 at Tilga Art prize salon. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation and Yinka Shonibare Foundation. Photographer: Olanrewaju Ali.



FUNDERS & PARTNERS FOCUS

YALE UNIVERSITY: EDUCATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

The first Yale MFA resident, Avery Youngblood, joined G.A.S. in late 2024. Her six week residency culminated in *Primitive Hypertext*, a public presentation that drew wide participation despite infrastructure challenges.

Youngblood described the residency as transformative, sparking a desire to return and base future projects in Nigeria. The collaboration demonstrated how embedding students in new contexts can reshape postgraduate education, blending research, practice and lived experience. G.A.S. continues to expand partnerships with higher education institutions, preparing the next generation of cultural leaders through global engagement.



Participants engaging with printed materials at *Primitive Hypertext*, a final residency engagement event led by Avery Youngblood at G.A.S. Lagos. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.

“The collaboration demonstrated how embedding students in new contexts can reshape postgraduate education, blending research, practice and lived experience.”

EVENTS

EKPHRASIS

by Dawit L. Petros

On 23 May 2024, Dawit L. Petros presented Ekphrasis in collaboration with QDance Center, transforming Tiwani Contemporary into an immersive performance and screening environment. The event, attended by around 100 people, was the most well-attended G.A.S. programme of the year.

Petros worked with 14 dancers and musicians through daily workshops, translating Lagos's urban environment into movement and sound. Exercises such as choreographing tangled electrical wires reflected the resilience of city life. The programme also offered professional development on navigating global art ecosystems. Ekphrasis created memorable public performance while equipping participants with new tools, embedding Lagos within Petros' exploration of diasporic identity.



A performance by QDance Centre in collaboration with Dawit L. Petros at Ekphrasis, held at Tiwani Contemporary, Lagos. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.



FUNDERS & PARTNERS FOCUS

RCA BLK: KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE ACROSS CONTINENTS

In 2024, Y.S.F. launched a multi-year residency partnership with the Royal College of Art's Association of Black Students, Alumni and Friends (RCA BLK). The collaboration reflects a shared belief that artists thrive through international exchange and dialogue across contexts. In its first two years, the programme supported four artists – Graeme Smith (Ceramics & Glass), Remi Kuforiji (Architecture), Gaia Ozwyn (Painting) and Aisha Seriki (Photography) – each engaging critically with place and perspective while building relationships with Lagos's artistic community.

The partnership extended into public dialogue during Yinka Shonibare's *Suspended States* exhibition at the Serpentine Pavilion (2024), with Smith and Kuforiji in conversation with Y.S.F. CEO Belinda Holden on ecology, land and cultural memory. This demonstrated how residencies in Nigeria reverberate internationally, shaping debates on sustainability, heritage and identity.

“The partnership highlights the importance of sharing knowledge, skills and expertise across continents for our wider community. It encourages innovation and cross-cultural dialogue as an inherent currency and a thriving backbone to the work we are doing.”

Emily Moore,
Chair of RCA BLK

FUNDERS & PARTNERS FOCUS

GOODMAN GALLERY: RESIDENCIES AS CATALYSTS FOR NEW WORK

The collaboration between G.A.S. and Goodman Gallery, one of Africa's leading commercial galleries, has already produced significant new work and visibility for artists.

In late 2024, Zimbabwean artist Misheck Masamvu spent seven weeks at the G.A.S. Farm House in Ikise. Immersed in the local environment, he translated impressions of light, landscape and everyday details into paintings later unveiled at Goodman Gallery's London flagship under the title *Mbato (Handle)*. Masamvu, who also runs a farm cooperative in Zimbabwe, described the residency as reshaping his perception of environment and community. His stay concluded with an open studio at the Farm House attended by local cultural stakeholders.

The first Goodman Gallery resident, Nolan Oswald Dennis, undertook residencies in Lagos in 2023 and 2024. Their practice, interrogating a “black consciousness of space,” fed directly into work shown at the 2024 Lagos Biennial and later into *throwers*, a solo exhibition at Gasworks, London (2025). Dennis acknowledged how their time at G.A.S. shaped the trajectory of these projects.

As Goodman Gallery Senior Director Jo Stella-Sawicka noted, “fostering cross-cultural partnerships and community engagement” is critical to resilience and growth. Support from partners such as Goodman Gallery is instrumental in building lasting creative infrastructure in Africa.

FUNDERS & PARTNERS FOCUS

TIWANI CONTEMPORARY: RESEARCH-LED EXCHANGE

Since 2022, Tiwani and G.A.S. have co-hosted residencies for eight artists, creating opportunities for artistic enquiry that extend into exhibitions and public events. The partnership has supported eight artists – Emma Prempeh, Gideon Gomo, Portia Zvavahera, Umar Rashid, Leo Robinson, Gareth Nyandoro, Dawit L. Petros and Joy Labinjo. These residencies have become a catalyst for artistic enquiry and global exchange, with many extending into collaborative events during or after the residency period.



FUNDERS & PARTNERS FOCUS

PRO HELVETIA: SWISS NIGERIAN ARTISTIC DIALOGUES

In January 2024, G.A.S. Foundation launched a new residency partnership with Pro Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council, offering Swiss artists opportunities to work in Lagos. Pro Helvetia champions contemporary art while fostering dialogue across cultures, values

that align with Y.S.F. and G.A.S.'s mission to dismantle barriers of privilege and geography.

At the heart of the partnership is a shared commitment to nurturing transnational connections and supporting artists who expand practice

through intercultural exchange. So far, three residents – Rafael Kouto (2024), Nathalie Eggenschwiler (2025) and Eva-Maria Bertschy (2025) – have used their time at G.A.S. to explore craftsmanship, textiles and materiality in relation to sustainability, global trade and local practice.

RAFAEL KOUTO

Swiss designer Rafael Kouto, supported by Pro Helvetia, undertook a residency across Lagos, Ikise and Ibadan in 2024, deepening his engagement with Yoruba material culture and sustainability. He collaborated with Adeju Thompson of Lagos Space Programme and others, and led *Circular Heroes*, a series of upcycling workshops in Lagos teaching embroidery, appliqué and weaving with salvaged textiles. He also worked with environmentalist Peter Abayomi on waste management, linking fashion with ecological concerns.

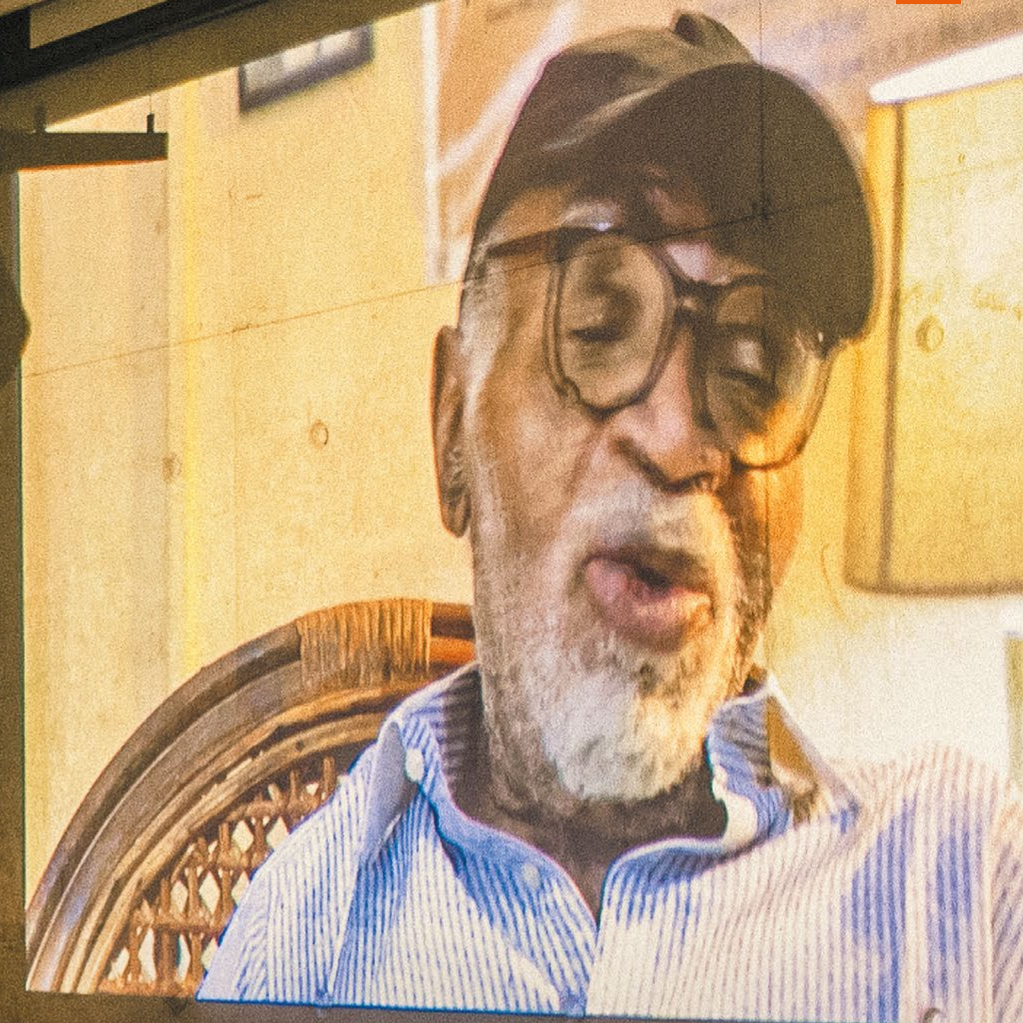
The residency generated experimental works later exhibited at *Maison Shift* in Zurich and at *PhotoVogue Festival* in Milan. Nigerian collaborators he met in Lagos were included in these global presentations, ensuring their voices were heard internationally. For Kouto, whose father once lived in Lagos, the residency reshaped his perception of Nigeria and was personally transformative. It combined environmental advocacy, grassroots collaboration and international presentation, leaving a legacy across communities and platforms.

The collaboration is set to grow through continued residencies and joint programming, creating new opportunities for Swiss and Nigerian artists to reflect critically on culture, identity and artistic responsibility.



Workshop participants at Circular Heroes identifying upcycled materials in finished fashion products. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation.

COLLABORATIONS ART EXCHANGE: MOVING IMAGE



Film installation at Monangambees AfterImages, presented at G.A.S. Lagos as the culminating exhibition of the Art Exchange: Moving Image programme. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.

“The overall programme demonstrated the power of residencies to generate new knowledge, foster collaboration and situate African perspectives at the centre of global cultural dialogue.”

Art Exchange: Moving Image, led by LUX in partnership with Y.S.F., G.A.S. and the British Council, ran from 2023–25 as a cross-continental programme for mid-career practitioners in Africa. Centred on peer-to-peer learning, it enabled curators to engage with the British Council Visual Arts Collection while strengthening moving image practice and curatorial networks across the continent.

Six curators were selected through an open call: Abbey IT-A (Ghana), Ese Emmanuel (Nigeria), Jesse Gerard Mpango (Tanzania), Kefiloe Siwisa (South Africa), E.N. Mirembe (Uganda) and Rosie Olang' Odhiambo (Kenya).

BUILDING A LASTING NETWORK

In December 2023, the group travelled to the UK for an intensive research residency. Across one

week, they met with leading curators such as Shanay Jhaveri (Barbican), Sepake Angiama (Iniva), Valentine Umansky (Tate) and Melissa Blanchflower (Turner Contemporary). They also engaged directly with internationally recognised artists including Larry Achiampong and Mark Leckey, gaining insight into practice, collections and the broader field.

This intensive research residency, supported by Y.S.F. in London, seeded relationships and ideas that directly informed the ambitious projects later realised across five African countries. The overall programme demonstrated the power of residencies to generate new knowledge, foster collaboration and situate African perspectives at the centre of global cultural dialogue. By combining research, curatorial innovation and community

engagement, Art Exchange: Moving Image created a lasting network of practitioners and projects across Africa and internationally.

Programme highlights included: workshops in East Africa with artist Larry Achiampong; *In the Midst* in Kampala (August 2024), merging Baganda craft with moving image; *In Transit Under Another Sky*, exploring transience and identity, later travelling to London and Coventry; *Kuna Mende Kwenye Mashine* in Dar es Salaam, rethinking moving image histories; *To Break a Bitter Fever* in Johannesburg (Jan–Feb 2025), tackling gendered violence through workshops and performances; *Konset Pāti* in Accra, reimagining moving image in public space; and *After Images* in Lagos (July 2025), a screening series on African national cinemas.



Amanda Iheme's presentation at Ugwu-001, her final residency engagement event. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation.

■ AMANDA IHEME

EXPANDING PRACTICE THROUGH RESEARCH AND DIALOGUE

Nigerian Architectural photographer Amanda Iheme undertook an eight-week G.A.S. Fellowship residency in Lagos (April–May 2024), researching southwestern Nigerian architecture and tropical modernism. She used the G.A.S. Library and Picton Archive to situate Nigerian scholarship within architectural discourse, positioning her practice at the intersection of visual culture, history and pedagogy.

Iheme convened an Art and Research Workshop with archivists, curators and creatives, and curated Focus on Four, a platform mentoring four Lagos-based photographers to expand narratives on identity and urban space. Her residency concluded with *Ugwu-001* (“dignity” in Igbo), a lecture on Nigeria’s housing crisis and contradictions within tropical modernism, which attracted some of the residency programme’s most engaged audiences.

Describing the residency as a turning point, Iheme has expanded her practice into pedagogy and philosophical inquiry. She discovered joy in teaching and valued sharing her practice locally. The experience and access to the library and archive laid the foundation for a monograph on Nigerian architecture, strengthened her role as a mentor and connector, and broadened her networks and visibility. Iheme left with new methodological tools for storytelling and advocacy that will shape her future work.

“I realised that aside from being an artist, I am interested in art education and the development of African art philosophy and sharing that with young artists seeking guidance,” she explained. “I learnt that I enjoy teaching and that sometimes, the process is a gift. Progress is not always about the final product. I enjoyed building connections with other artists

“I learnt that I enjoy teaching and that sometimes, the process is a gift. Progress is not always about the final product. I enjoyed building connections with other artists and being exposed to their work techniques and ethics.”

and being exposed to their work techniques and ethics.” Importantly, she valued the chance to share her practice locally: “Being able to show and share my artistic practice with my community was one of the best things.”

■ OSEI BONSU

BUILDING CONNECTIONS WITH ARTISTS AND INSTITUTIONS

Osei Bonsu, Curator of International Art at Tate Modern, undertook a residency at G.A.S. Lagos in late 2024 to research *Nigerian Modernism* for Tate’s 2025 exhibition. The show explores the emergence of modern Nigerian art in the years surrounding independence in 1960. He used the G.A.S. Library and Picton Archive and through G.A.S. connected with key artists such as Bruce Onobrakpeya and Chief Nike Okundaye-Davies, and the estates of Uche Okeke and Yusuf Grillo, alongside institutions such as the Yemisi Shyllon Museum and the Museum of West African Art (MOWAA), the New Culture Studio in Ibadan and Demas Nwoko’s studio in Delta State.

Supported by the Art Fund, the residency underscored how residencies connect international institutions with local expertise, ensuring curatorial frameworks are grounded in lived Nigerian histories and affirming Nigeria’s place in global modernism.

➔ EVENTS

Bonsu convened *Building Artists’ Estates and Legacies*, a landmark dialogue with descendants of Nigeria’s modernist pioneers and the enduring influence of the Zaria Art Society, centred on the life and work of Uche Okeke, Demas Nwoko, Bruce Onobrakpeya and Yusuf Grillo.

Panellists offered first-hand insights into the challenges of legacy preservation in the contemporary moment, creating a rare intergenerational exchange on safeguarding cultural history and the creation of cultural institutions. The conversation carried significance beyond scholarship. It created a space for family members and institutions to connect, fostering dialogue that had been absent for decades. The audience Q&A underscored the urgency of collaborative archival practices and the collective effort required to safeguard Nigeria’s modernist heritage.

Participants reported renewed strategies for sustaining their parents’ legacies, while Bonsu gained first-hand insights directly informing Tate’s exhibition.



Osei Bonsu at G.A.S. Lagos. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.

PROGRAMMES AND RESIDENCIES

Upcycled tile prototype by Tilga Art Prizewinner, Katesi Kalege. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation.

G.A.S. provides a platform for experimentation, collaboration and professional development, with a commitment to cross-cultural exchange and support for practitioners at all career stages.

As a site for artistic dialogue in West Africa, our programming responds to the specificities of our residency locations while building connections across global networks.

Our work is organised around three programming strands: Materiality, Ecology, Farming and Food; and Archives and Publishing. These thematic anchors allow us to cultivate transnational relationships, amplify underrepresented perspectives and encourage critical engagement across disciplines.



Glass works on display by RCA BLK resident, Graeme Smith, at his event African Glass Futures, at G.A.S. Lagos. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.

RESIDENCY ENTRY POINTS

Residents join G.A.S. through multiple pathways that reflect our commitment to accessibility and collaboration while ensuring alignment with our programming strands.

OPEN CALLS

Our annual G.A.S. Fellowship Award supports creative practitioners living and working on the African continent. We also run partner-led open calls, previously with Tilga Art Fund and the ART X Diaspora Prize.

RESIDENCY PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborations with institutions, galleries, and cultural organisations worldwide enable us to host residents through long-term partnerships such as with Deutsche Bank, Pro Helvetia and RCA BLK. Candidates are selected via open calls with the partner or nomination processes jointly reviewed by partners, G.A.S. and Y.S.F.

INDEPENDENT RESIDENCIES

Occasionally, we invite practitioners whose work resonates strongly with our programmes or support individuals who self-fund residencies at G.A.S. These often involve focused explorations of Nigerian culture, history, and context, pursued by practitioners from Africa, the diaspora and beyond.



ECOLOGY, FARMING AND FOOD

This strand encourages critical engagement with environmental and agricultural systems. Residents explore ecological sustainability, regenerative farming and food sovereignty through research-driven practice and collaboration with local communities. Projects often connect land-based practices and culinary traditions with creative production, generating interdisciplinary approaches to environmental stewardship.

The strand also promotes strategies that strengthen biodiversity and support local livelihoods. In doing so, it bridges ecological responsibility with cultural and economic sustainability.

ARCHIVES AND PUBLISHING

This strand foregrounds the preservation, interpretation and circulation of cultural knowledge. Through residencies, digitisation and public programming, we highlight rare and vulnerable materials while encouraging new ways of engaging with archives as living, generative spaces.

Pan-African fellowships and artistic exchanges expand cross-cultural dialogue, while publishing remains a central focus. By supporting experimental approaches to documentation and critical writing, the strand enriches global understandings of African art, history and heritage.

MATERIALITY, CRAFT AND IDENTITY

This strand supports artists and designers in exploring a wide range of materials and techniques, with Nigeria's rich material culture serving as a point of departure. Residents are invited to experiment with both traditional and contemporary media, often working closely with local artisans to encourage knowledge exchange and embed creative processes within craft traditions.

Going forward, we aim to strengthen this strand through infrastructure development at the G.A.S. Farm House. Fundraising efforts are underway to establish dedicated craft workshops, beginning with pottery and aso oke weaving, that will support artisanal heritage while fostering skill-sharing and sustainable modes of making.

OUR RESIDENTS

Since we opened, these are all the residents we have hosted.

Seyi Adelekun
Adeyosola Adeniran
Tunji Adeniyi-Jones
Shatha Affy
Nate Agbetu
Ugo Ahiakwo
Okiki Akinfe
Rachel Anyo
Mariam Hava Aslam
Jeebesh Bagchi
Lynhan Balatbat-Helbock
Sarafadeen Bello
Eva-Maria Berschy
Miriam Bettin
Osei Bonsu
Chiizii
Nolan Oswald Dennis
Nathalie Eggenschwiler
Osayame Emokpae-Ozoro
Billy Fowo
Jonn Gale
Nina Gilbert
Gideon Gomo
Neil Grasty
Miranda Hagborg
Naima Hassan

Evan Ifekoya
Amanda Iheme
Theophilus Imani
Elsa James
Femi Johnson
Katesi Jacqueline Kalange
Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński
Liz Kobusinge
Rafael Kouto
Remi Kuforiji
Dr Mahret Ifeoma Kupka
Joy Labinjo
Meri Linna
Amaya Loubeau
Misheck Masamvu
Tinashe Mushakavanhu
Shabu Mwangi
Monica Narula
Alison Naturele
Nengi Nelson
Kosisochukwu Nnebe
Samuel Nnorom
Bisila Noha
Gareth Nyandoro
Rosie Olang' Odhiambo
Eric Oetterli

Ufuoma Ogbemudje
Ana Ogunsanya
Mobolaji Ogunrosoye
Karl Ohiri
Tobi Onabolu
Antoinette Oni
Gaia Ozwyn
Dawit L. Petros
Raymond Pinto
Emma Prempeh
Umar Rashid
Savannah Woodson Reeves
Leo Robinson
Aisha Seriki
Alexandra Martens Serrano
Shuddhabrata Sengupta
Phokeng Setai
Robyn Simpson
Graeme Spencer Smith
TK Smith
Victor Svenson
Ofem Ubi
Uzor Ugoala
Alberta Whittle
Avery Youngblood
Portia Zvavahera

Annotations interns Osayame Emokpae-Ozoro, Neil Grasty, Robyn Simpson, Amaya Loubeau, and Adeyosola Adeniran at New Culture Studios, Ibadan. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation.

OUR TEAMS

In the UK, Yinka Shonibare Foundation Y.S.F. (charity no: 1183321) fundraises, develops international partnerships and programmes, and offers strategic support, governance and oversight to our delivery partner Guest Artists Space Foundation G.A.S. (Nigeria). Both organisations are governed by a board of trustees chaired by Yinka Shonibare CBE.

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THANK YOU

We extend our utmost thanks to our committed donors and funders for their belief in our work at Y.S.F. and G.A.S. Foundation in Lagos and Farm House in Ikise, Nigeria.

What began as an initiative for artists has grown to address pressing issues of food security, climate change, identity and intergenerational material and archival practices. It has attracted researchers, academics, curators and practitioners from across diverse disciplines to our spaces. Collectively, we are shaping the creative infrastructure for generations to come.

This list acknowledges donations of £1,000 and above received from January 2024 to June 2025. Our sincere gratitude also goes out to those who wish to remain anonymous.

“Whether it is through Y.S.F.’s commitment to breaking down barriers in the art world or our efforts to provide scholarships and vocational training, we believe in creating pathways for success that might otherwise remain closed. Our patronage of Y.S.F. is not just about supporting art; it is about reinforcing the importance of culture as a vehicle for education, empowerment and global connection – principles that define everything we do at the Ilesha Charitable Trust.”

Tunji Akintokun MBE
Ilesha Charitable Trust

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PROGRAMME PARTNERS

Five Cowries Initiative

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



G.A.S. Patrons during Lagos Art Tour 2024, at Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art. Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation and Yinka Shonibare Foundation. Photographer: Olanrewaju Ali.



Portrait of Yinka Shonibare CBE.
Photography courtesy of ThisDay Style.

As we look ahead, I am reminded that the work of artists and cultural practitioners is never finished: it is always a dialogue between past, present and future. What we have achieved together in these first years of G.A.S. is only the beginning.

Our task now is to strengthen the foundations we have built: to deepen our residency programmes, expand the reach of our library and archive, further develop the farm in Ikise as a site of ecology, food and creativity, nurture our communities through professional development and mentoring, and grow an international circle of friends and supporters who share our vision.

I am profoundly grateful to everyone who has been part of this journey: residents, partners, patrons, staff and supporters. Your belief makes it possible for G.A.S. to exist not only as a physical space, but as a living idea: a place where imagination is taken seriously, where new knowledge is made, and where the seemingly impossible can, at last, take shape.

Together we will keep imagining, keep experimenting, and keep building the ecosystems in which art and ideas can truly thrive.

YINKA SHONIBARE CBE

Founder and Chair, Yinka Shonibare Foundation (Y.S.F.)
and Guest Artists Space, Foundation (G.A.S.)

Y. S.

F. YINKA
SHONIBARE
FOUNDATION

G. A.

S. GUEST. ARTIST.
SPACE.
FOUNDATION

Cover image: Event attendees at Ile Okàn – A Gathering at the House of the Soul,
the final residency presentation by Bisila Noha at the G.A.S. Farm House, Ikişę.
Image courtesy of G.A.S. Foundation. Photographer: Sylvester Bayode.

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