



PRESS RELEASE

AT THE PALAIS DE LOMÉ, THE TOYOTA TSUSHO CFAO AFRICAN ART AWARD CELEBRATES A NEW GENERATION OF AFRICAN ARTISTS

Togo, Lomé, June 11, 2026 - The inaugural exhibition of **THE TOYOTA TSUSHO CFAO African Art Award** officially opens today at the Palais de Lomé in Togo. Bringing together the five winning artists of this inaugural edition, it marks the launch of an initiative aimed at promoting contemporary African artistic creation and enhancing its visibility on major international art scenes.

Organized by CFAO and Toyota Tsusho Corporation (TTC), this exhibition showcases a new generation of African artists whose works explore the contemporary transformations taking place on the continent and around the world: urbanization, memory, identity, cultural transmission, mobility, and social change.

Through a variety of artistic practices—painting, photography, installation, video, and mixed media—the artists offer unique perspectives on contemporary African realities and the major challenges facing societies across the continent today.

Hosted at the Palais de Lomé, the exhibition also highlights the growing role played by African cultural institutions in major international artistic dialogues. Beyond its heritage value, the Palais de Lomé has established itself today as a true forum for dialogue between African art scenes and international cultural networks.

In a context of growing global recognition of contemporary African art, THE TOYOTA TSUSHO CFAO African Art Award acts as an artistic bridge between Africa, Japan, and France. THE TOYOTA TSUSHO CFAO African Art Award brings together artists, institutions, and partners

around a shared ambition: to contribute to the international radiance of African art and to support the visibility of a new generation of African artists.

The exhibition presented at the Palais de Lomé marks the first step in this journey. Following the exhibition in Togo, the winning artists' works will be exhibited in Tokyo, Japan, and then in Paris, France, allowing new audiences to discover the richness and diversity of contemporary African art.

Sonia Lawson, director of the Palais de Lomé, states: "*The TOYOTA TSUSHO CFAO African Art Award is a testament to the vitality of contemporary African art. Hosting the inaugural exhibition in Lomé also reaffirms the role of African cultural institutions in major international artistic dialogues and in promoting visibility for the continent's artists.*"

Richard Bielle, Chairman and CEO of the CFAO Group, adds: "*The transformations taking place in Africa are not solely economic. They are also cultural, intellectual, and creative. Through this award, CFAO and Toyota Tsusho Corporation aim to support the visibility of a new generation of artists whose works help to tell the story of the continent's realities, aspirations, and transformations.*"

Open to the public starting June 11, 2026, at the Palais de Lomé, the exhibition showcases works by the five artists recognized in this first edition of THE TOYOTA TSUSHO CFAO African Art Award: Moffat TAKADIWA (Zimbabwe), Grand Prize - winner ; Gosette LUBONDO (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Distinguished Awards - joint second prize, Unathi MKONTO (South Africa Distinguished Awards - joint second prize ; Katlego C.L. TWALA (Botswana), Toyota Tsusho Sponsor's Award, and Tizta BERHANU (Ethiopia), CFAO Sponsor's Award.

Grand Prize



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Name: Moffat TAKADIWA

Nationality: Zimbabwe

Style: Mixed Media

Artist Biography: Moffat TAKADIWA earned a Fine Arts diploma from Harare Polytechnic College in Zimbabwe. He lives and works in Mbare (Harare), one of the country's most important hubs for recycling and the informal economy. His practice sits at the intersection of artistic creation and community empowerment. He has exhibited at the 60th Venice Biennale (2024) and the São Paulo Biennial (2025). His work has also been shown at Galerie Édouard Manet (France), Craft Contemporary (United States), and the National Gallery of Zimbabwe.

Distinguished Awards

joint second-place winners



©gosette lubondo studio

Name: Gosette LUBONDO

Nationality: Democratic Republic of the Congo

Style: Photography

Artist Biography: Gosette LUBONDO graduated in visual communication from the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Kinshasa in 2014. Her work has been exhibited at the Kampala Biennale, the Lubumbashi Biennale, and at the Hirosaki Museum in Japan in 2024. In 2021, she received the Maison Ruinart Prize, awarded annually to an emerging artist exhibiting at Paris Photo. In 2022, her work was presented at the Fowler Museum at UCLA. Her works are part of collections including the Musée du Quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, Canal – Centre Pompidou, the Saint Louis Art Museum (Missouri), and the MAST Foundation (Bologna). She is currently representing the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the 61st Venice Biennale.



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Name: Unathi MKONTO

Nationality: South Africa

Style: Mixed Media

Artist Biography: Unathi MKONTO studied architecture at Nelson Mandela University and was a design fellow with Architecture for Humanity in Johannesburg. His practice operates at the intersection of art, design, and architecture. He has participated in several residencies at the A4 Arts Foundation (2018) and Alma Martha (2017) in Cape Town. Unathi Mkonto recently completed an eight-month studio residency at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (Zeitz MOCAA). He is also engaged in performance art, notably through mentorship cycles at the Centre for the Less Good Idea.

Sponsor Awards



Name: Tizta BERHANU

Nationality: Ethiopia

Style: Painting

Artist Biography: Tizta BERHANU graduated from the Alle School of Fine Arts and Design at Addis Ababa University (2013). Her work has been exhibited in various group and solo exhibitions in Nigeria, South Africa, Sweden, the United States, and the United Kingdom.



Name: Katlego C.L. TWALA

Nationality: Botswana

Style: Painting

Artist Biography: Katlego C.L. TWALA studied at the Swedish Academy of Realist Art and the Barcelona Academy of Art, where she developed a strong technical foundation. She was awarded the New Emergence Art Prize in 2024.

About CFAO

A leading player in Africa, the CFAO Group's mission is to offer affordable, high-quality products and services to as many people as possible in the sectors of mobility, infrastructure and renewable energy, healthcare, and consumer goods. Involved at every stage of the value chain - import, production, and distribution - we comply with the highest international standards to guarantee the reliability of our offering.

Thanks to our in-depth knowledge of local markets, the diversity of our business expertise, and our extensive pan-African distribution network, we are a strategic partner for leading global brands expanding across the continent.

Our purpose, ***With Africa For Africa***, unites every employee around a common goal: building a sustainable future in Africa.

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With Africa For Africa

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About Toyota Tsusho Corporation

Founded in 1948 and headquartered in Nagoya (Japan), Toyota Tsusho Corporation is the trading company of the Toyota Group. Present in over 130 countries, it operates across multiple sectors—mobility, energy, infrastructure, healthcare, and consumer goods—with a vision centered on innovation and sustainable development.

<https://www.toyota-tsusho.com>


About Palais de Lomé

The Palais de Lomé is a major cultural institution in West Africa, based in Togo's capital city. Located in a restored historical palace overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, within a lush 11-hectare park, it has been transformed into a multidisciplinary arts and culture center dedicated to contemporary African creativity and to the promotion of Togo's architectural, cultural and natural heritage, as well as the richness of artistic expression across the Continent.

For more information about *THE TOYOTA TSUSHO CFAO African Art Award*:

<https://www.toyota-tsusho.com/english/african-art-award/>

 THE TOYOTA TSUSHO CFAO African Art Award

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