

CHRISTIE'S



First NFT by a contemporary African artist to be sold by Christie's in Europe, in collaboration with 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair Somerset House, London, 14 – 17 October 2021



Osinachi, *MAN IN A POOL II* (2021). Courtesy of the artist and Daria Borisova; Osinachi, *MAN IN A POOL III* (2021). Courtesy of the artist and Daria Borisova

1-54 in collaboration with Christie's presents an auction of Nigerian crypto-artist **Osinachi's** NFT series *Different Shades of Water*. The digital artworks associated with the NFTs will be on view at 1-54 London 2021, curated by Daria Borisova. The online NFT auction will mark the first NFT by a contemporary African artist offered by Christie's in Europe and is the first NFT collaboration for 1-54. The digital artworks associated with the NFTs in *Different Shades of Water* will be exhibited at Somerset House during the fair, with the online-only auction for the NFTs, First Open: Post-War and Contemporary Art Online, taking place from 5 to 19 October. Christie's partnership with 1-54 demonstrates the auction house's commitment to showcasing contemporary African art to their global client base. This is in addition to the 1-54 Online Powered by Christie's platform that enhances exposure internationally.

Considered Africa's foremost crypto artist, Osinachi (born Prince Jacon Osinachi Igwe, 1991), is a Nigerian visual artist whose work explores personal experiences within a technological environment. Aesthetically and procedurally, Osinachi's work explores visible existence as protest by depicting and reimagining how individuals and collectives engage in advocacy for freedom of identity by thwarting societal expectations. This could be through the things they wear, the paraphernalia they adorn themselves with, or simply by being and existing in a form that society frowns upon. He was a finalist for the Bridgeman Studio Award 2019.

The five NFTs from Osinachi's ongoing series *Different Shades of Water*, are inspired by David Hockney's *Portrait of an Artist (Pool with Two Figures)* (1972). In this series, Osinachi imagines what the pool would look like with different shades of water, playing with the position of the subject's body, and exploring how daylight can change our perception of water in a pool. He builds on his signature style to emphasise the relationship between person and water in a world where people have adapted

to recreating nature and the natural body. Each piece is a commentary on the endless prioritisation of work and achievements over the wellbeing of the human body.

From a technical point of view, the series is a triumph for Osinachi in his quest to digitally create a believable water body across multiple digital paintings. He exclusively uses Microsoft Office to produce his work, pushing the programme's limited design capabilities. Osinachi believes each piece he creates is a challenge that empowers him to become an even better artist.

For the first time, Christie's will have a presence at an art fair with a booth showcasing Osinachi's NFTs. In addition, Osinachi will offer a cryptocurrency "OSINA" to reward visitors to the fair and encourage collectors to build a community, exploring and interacting with the world of crypto by scanning a QR code to receive the OSINA via an app.

A portion of the proceeds from Christie's will be donated to the African Culture fund, a pan-African organisation supporting the arts education sectors and cultural and creative industries on the African continent. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the African Culture Fund has continued to support the resilience of African artists and cultural actors who the crisis has negatively impacted.

EVENT

Thursday, October 14

7pm GMT

Panel | The Virtual Salon

Here, artists have produced a multitude of virtual forms and artefacts; NFTs, memes, and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Within these interstitial spaces, creative practitioners have found tools that have enabled new forms of expression—an agency that enables independently-driven storytelling techniques that embody queer, feminist alter-narratives to breathe in open space. PRINCESS ALIA AL-SENSUSSI, PhD (Cultural strategist, writer, patron, public speaker and academic) leads a discussion with OSINACHI (Artist), SUMAYYA VALLY (Principal Architect, Counterspace), GEMMA ROLLS-BENTLEY (Chief Curator, Avant Arte) with SPECIAL GUEST.

Register [here](#)

Notes to Editors

About 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair

With annual editions in London, New York and Marrakech, 1-54 is the leading international art fair dedicated to contemporary art from Africa and its diaspora. Drawing reference to the fifty-four countries that constitute the African continent, 1-54 is a sustainable and dynamic platform that is engaged in contemporary dialogue and exchange. Initiated by Touria El Glaoui in 2013, October 2021 will mark its ninth consecutive edition at Somerset House, London.

About Christie's

Founded in 1766, Christie's is a world-leading art and luxury business. Renowned and trusted for its expert live and online auctions, as well as its bespoke private sales, Christie's offers a full portfolio of global services to its clients, including art appraisal, art financing, international real estate and education. Christie's has a physical presence in 46 countries, throughout the Americas, Europe, Middle East, and Asia Pacific, with flagship international sales hubs in New York, London, Hong Kong, Paris and Geneva. It also is the only international auction house authorized to hold sales in mainland China (Shanghai).

Christie's [auctions](#) span more than [80 art and luxury categories](#), at price points ranging from \$200 to over \$100 million. In recent years, Christie's has achieved the world record price for an artwork at auction (Leonardo da Vinci's *Salvador Mundi*, 2017), for a single collection sale (the Collection of Peggy and David Rockefeller, 2018), and for a work by a living artist (Jeff Koons' *Rabbit*, 2019).

Christie's [Private Sales](#) offers a seamless service for buying and selling art, jewellery and watches outside of the auction calendar, working exclusively with Christie's specialists at a client's individual pace.

Recent innovations at Christie's include the groundbreaking sale of the first NFT for a digital work of art ever offered at a major auction house (Beeple's *Everydays*, March 2021), with the unprecedented acceptance of cryptocurrency as a means of payment. As an industry leader in digital

innovation, Christie's also continues to pioneer new technologies that are redefining the business of art, including the creation of viewing and bidding experiences that integrate augmented reality, global livestreaming, buy-now channels, and hybrid sales formats.

Christie's is dedicated to advancing [responsible culture](#) throughout its business and communities worldwide, including achieving sustainability through net zero carbon emissions by 2030, and actively using its platform in the art world to amplify under-represented voices and support positive change.

Browse, bid, [discover](#), and join us for the best of art and luxury at: www.christies.com or by downloading Christie's apps.

The COVID-related re-opening status of our global locations is available [here](#)

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Images available on request

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About Somerset House - London's working arts centre

Somerset House is London's working arts centre and home to the UK's largest creative community. Built on historic foundations, we are situated in the very heart of the capital.

Dedicated to backing progress, championing openness, nurturing creativity and empowering ideas, our cultural programme is ambitious in scope. We insist on relevance, but aren't afraid of irreverence, and are as keen on entertainment as enrichment. We embrace the biggest issues of our times and are committed to oxygenating new work by emerging artists. Where else can you spend an hour ice-skating while listening to a specially commissioned sound piece by a cutting-edge artist?

It is this creative tension – the way we harness our heritage, put the too-often overlooked on our central stage and use our neo-classical backdrop to showcase ground-breaking contemporary culture – that inspires our programme. Old and new, history and disruption, art and entertainment, high-tech and homemade, combined with the fact that we are home to a constantly shape-shifting working creative community: this is our point of difference. It is what we are proud of. And it is what makes the experience of visiting or working in Somerset House inspiring and energising, urgent and exciting. www.somersethouse.org.uk

About Dr.Omar Kholeif, 1-54 Forum London 2021 Curator

Born in Egypt to Egyptian and Sudanese parents, Dr.Omar Kholeif is a writer, curator, cultural historian, and Director of Collections and Senior Curator at Sharjah Art Foundation. Trained as a political scientist, Kholeif's career began as a journalist and documentary filmmaker before entering the picture palace of museums. Concerned with the means through which technologies intersect with debates around QT, postcolonial, and critical race theory. They have curated more than one hundred exhibitions of art, design, and architecture on six continents and are the author, co-author, or editor of thirty-three books, which have been translated into twelve languages. Recent volumes include Goodbye, World! Looking at Art in the Digital Age (Sternberg, 2018); The Artists Who Will Change The World (Thames and Hudson, 2018) and Art in the Age of Anxiety (SAF/Mörel/MIT Press, 2021). They are currently at work on a monograph entitled Internet Art: The First Thirty Years (Phaidon, 2022) and an anthology of essays entitled Code-Switchers: The Art of Being Invisible (2022).

Physical fair opening times

VIP & Press previews

10:00 - 18:00 Thursday 14 October

10:00 - 20:00 Friday 15 October

1-54 Public opening hours

10:00 - 20:00 Saturday 16 October

10:00 - 18:00 Sunday 17 October

1-54 Online powered by Christie's opening times

VIP & Press previews

Wednesday 13 October

1-54 Public days

Thursday 14 – Sunday 17 October

1-54 exhibition at Christie's London King Street Gallery

Saturday 9 – Friday 15 October

Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm

Weekend 12pm – 5pm

Social media

Website: 1-54.com/london

Twitter: [@154artfair](https://twitter.com/154artfair)

Instagram: [@154artfair](https://www.instagram.com/154artfair)

Facebook: [154ContemporaryAfricanArtFair](https://www.facebook.com/154ContemporaryAfricanArtFair)

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