

Public Programme, Guest Artists Space (G.A.S.) Foundation — November 6, 2024, Annotations Public Programme, Guest Artists Space (G.A.S.) Foundation November 6, 2024, Annotations Public Programme (G.A.S.)
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Study Day

Calendar Festival



Annotations

Annotations is the first chapter of the Re:assemblages programme at Guest Artists Space (G.A.S.) Foundation. It explores major African cultural festivals and their dual nature as historical events and repositories of postcolonial pan-African encounters. Led by curators Naima Hassan and Maryam Kazeem, the project activates experimental approaches towards archival research and publishing by engaging the complex histories of FESMAN, PANAF, Zaire 74, and FESTAC'77.

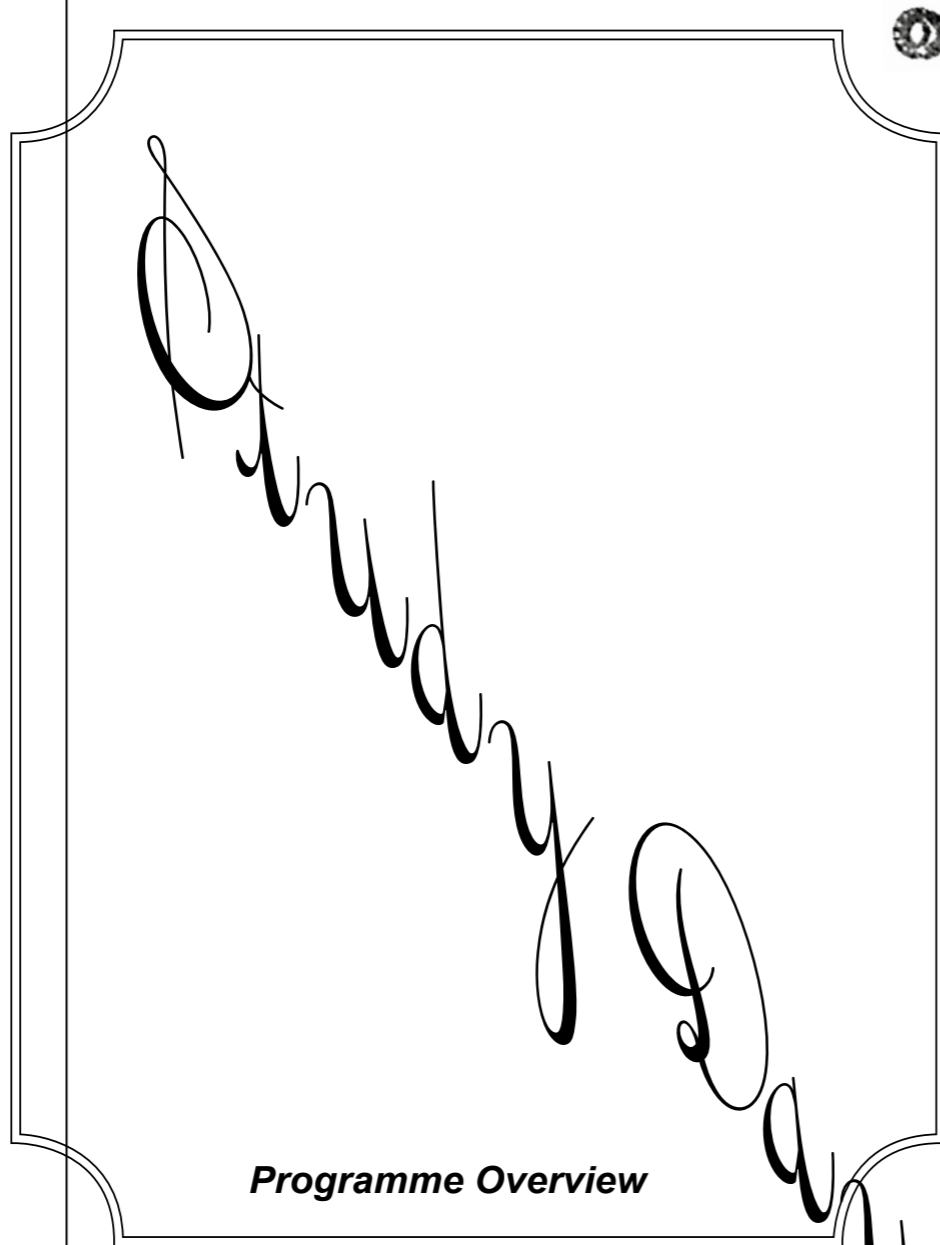
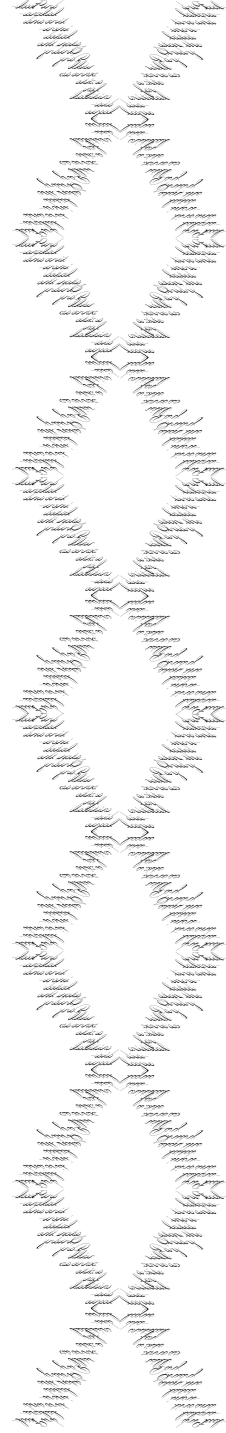
Annotations began in June 2024 with a research associates programme hosting six early-career researchers from the United States and Lagos. Through two chapters hosting multiple actors including Annotations artists-in-residence Liz Kobusinge and Theophilus Imani, Annotations has explored the capacity of the annotation as minutia and marginalia through a collaborative and subjective approach to knowledge production. The harvest of the project will culminate in a publication.

École du Festival: Study Day Annotations Public Programme

École du Festival is a collaborative and experimental Study Day focused on re-examining and reactivating the cultural, political, and artistic legacies of pan-African festivals. Organized in the framework of G.A.S. Foundation's Annotations programme, the Study Day serves as a site for critical dialogue between artists and researchers working on pan-African festivals and interested publics.

The school draws inspiration from Christian Nyampeta's École du soir (The Evening Academy), a multiform hosting structure consisting of a scriptorium (a place for writing), an exhibition, and public programs concerned with "thinking Africa" historically and in the present, hosting cooperative thinking and mutual action. The framework for the school builds upon Senegalese writer and film director Ousmane Sembène's "evening school" tradition, which positions the concept of cinema as a 'night school' or l'école du soir for collective study. Sembène and Nyampeta's offerings frame the activation of École du Festival, as a devoted ground for the examination and deliberation of pan-African festival archives, memories and traces, historically and in the present. Informed by the original school's traditions of orality, sensuality and conviviality, the Study Day offers a likewise space for collective learning and gathering.

École du Festival is grounded in the political and aesthetic histories of pan-Africanism as enacted through the major pan-African festivals, such as FESTAC '77 (Lagos 1977), Zaire 74 (Kinshasa 1974), PANAF (Algiers, 1969) and FESMAN (Dakar, 1966).



École du Festival: Curator's Talk
Annotations as Method with Programme Curators Maryam Kazeem and Naima Hassan

A curators introduction with reflections on the Annotations project, publication and its harvest. The curators will speak to the curatorial influences, intentions, and methodology of the project, and how the project is articulated through the tenets of social practice.

Scriptorium! A Gathering for Writing on pan-African Festivals: Workshop with Tosin Adeosun, Rufus Nwoko, Seyi Olusanya and Timilehin Oludare

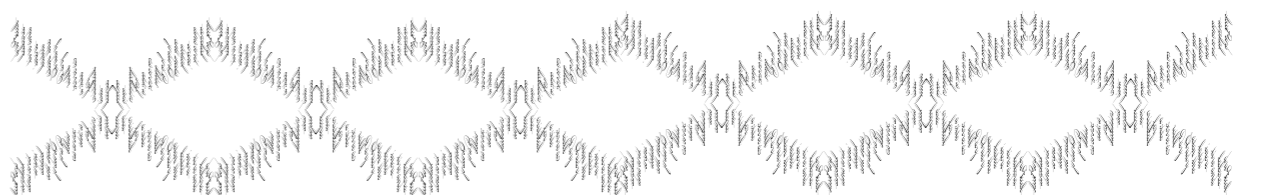
Historically, a scriptorium was a writing room in mediaeval contexts for the copying and illuminating of manuscripts. The scriptorium as a space for "writing" conceptualised by the artist and writer Christian Nyampeta focuses on the act of encountering, translating writing and interpreting texts related to African thought and life practices. In a recent scriptorium convened in Shanghai, Nyampeta worked with local collaborators to translate a text by Senegalese philosopher Souleyman Bachir Diagne, "*Penser de langue à langue*" (Thinking from Language to Language), into Chinese. Departing with Nyampeta's Shanghai scriptorium manuscript, this workshop aims to facilitate writing practices on pan-African festivals. Testing new formats for reading and encountering their related archives, the scriptorium will feature a *plurilogue*.

As a gathering, plurilogues facilitate writing acts as an exercise of self-documentation themed upon witness accounts, historical repositories, and stories left out of the conventional norms of documentation. Etymologically, the "pluri" in a "plurilogue" derives from literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of *polyphony*, as the multiplicity of different voices sounding equally and simultaneously. Presented as a roundtable, the workshop's plurilogue will host invited speakers who will share works-in-progress and reflective interventions. In response, workshop participants will take part in a collective writing exercise interpreting the offerings through their own positionalities, research practices and geographies.

Writings produced during the scriptorium will be archived in the Annotations publication.

Archival Choreographies: Annotations Shadow Archives with Theophilus Imani and Liz Kobusinge

Hosted by Annotations artists-in-residence Theophilus Imani and Liz Kobusinge, this session examines the residents' archival research and encounters in Lagos and Ibadan. Through experimental spatial strategies, the residents will present their "Annotations Shadow Box," a mobile archive unit each resident carried throughout research trips and visits. The audience will be invited to re-enact the residents' speculative research processes and practices as they discover clandestine and lesser-known histories of twentieth century pan-African festivals.



1:00 - 1:30

Introduction with lunch appetizers

1:30 - 2:15

Annotations as Method: Curator's Talk

2:30 - 4:30

Scriptorium! A Gathering for Writing on pan-African Festivals

5:00 - 6:00

Break with appetizers

6:00 - 7:30

Archival Choreographies with Theophilus Imani and Liz Kobusinge

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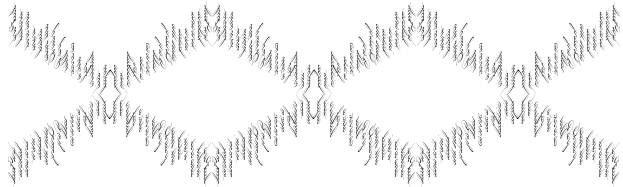
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The act of annotating allows us to see the world through a different lens. It is a process of discovery, of finding meaning in the ordinary. It is a way of connecting the past to the present, and the present to the future.

Demas Nwoko, from Children of Paradise. Demas Nwoko, from Children of Paradise. Demas Nwoko, from Children of Paradise.





Contemporary

Annotations artists-in-residence

Theophilus Imani is a visual researcher based in Verona, Italy who examines the representation of the Black body in diasporic visual culture. His research, mainly focused on the Italian context, is articulated through the exploration of digital and physical archives, paying particular attention to the production of black vernacular images. Adopting a critical gaze, informed by his political identity as a diasporic subject, he proposes new ways of reading known and lesser-known images through the creation of visual rhymes and dialogues between image and text.

Liz Kobusinge is a community-taught artist based in Kampala, Uganda, who positions the textured possibilities of eco-printing and painting methods on hand-made bark cloth paper as a ritual of remembrance, layering paper, dyes, ink and video to mimic how our skin holds and disperses memory. Kobusinge work has been exhibited with the Njabala Foundation for their annual exhibition at the Makerere University Art Gallery, as part of KLA ART 2021 in Kampala, with the Salooni Collective at Institut National de Formation Artistique et Culturelle in Burkina Faso and the N'GOLA Biennial of Arts and Culture in São Tomé e Príncipe, with 32 Degrees East for their members' exhibition and with poet Gloria Kiconco for Return to Sender in Kampala.

The Annotations residency is supported by Outset Contemporary Art Fund.

Tosin Adeosun

Tosin Adeosun is a London-based researcher and curator dedicated to preserving African fashion history. As the founder of African Style Archive, she researches and documents African fashion history, through photography, dress, textiles, moving image, and ephemera. Through archival research, exhibitions, and education, Tosin highlights African designers and artists. With expertise in African visual culture, she's collaborated with renowned institutions like Byredo, Google, and London College of Fashion to elevate African fashion, history, and culture globally.

Rufus Nwoko

Rufus Ofunochukwu Nwoko is a theatre artist and photographer who is passionate about fostering the organic growth and spread of Nigerian Art. Having grown up in Ibadan, Rufus serves as the Creative Director and Curator of the New Culture Studio located on Oremeji Hill, Ibadan, a space that his grandfather founded. Since 2017, Rufus has revived and transformed the studio into a hub for artists in the city, where creatives gather to collaborate and explore new ideas. His work at the studio also involves archiving his grandfather's extensive collection, including works from the renowned Mbari Club and the School of Drama from the 1960s—an era that shaped modern Nigerian art and drama.

Seyi Olusanya

Seyi Olusanya is a graphic designer based in Lagos. He is the founder of Afrotype, a studio that intends to subvert cliches around African graphic design by creating typefaces grounded in African history and culture. David Udoh and Eyiemi Adegbite collaborated on the design and drawing work. Tac was produced with Mirko Velimirović, who provided technical, drawing, and font engineering assistance. Tac One is the initial release of a single style, bold weight, sans serif typeface project that is inspired by the wordmark of one of the most significant festivals in Africa's post-colonial history, Festac '77. As a inspired revival, it expands upon the six lowercase letters, single quotes and numeral 7 in the festival's wordmark, and the result is a contemporary font with comprehensive language support for all African languages that are commonly written with the Latin writing system. Tac is the second project from Afrotype.

Timilehin Oludare Osanyintolu

Timilehin Oludare Osanyintolu is a multimedia artist and art facilitator based in Lagos, Nigeria. Timilehin has exhibited his work at Boomer Art Gallery (London, 2020), Nomascape project (Chicago, 2020) amongst others. He launched "WETIN DEY COOK", a curatorial project by Lynhan Balatbat- Helbock at GAS Foundation (Lagos, 2022) as the first artist to cook and share his work in an intimate gathering. His second show in Lagos was a celebration of his charcoal portraits at 16by16, curated by Tushar Hathiramani. He also exhibited works at AWCA (Lagos, 2022), Tribe X (Lagos, 2022), ART-TO-GO (Basel, 2023), foreign objekt publications (Berlin, 2023). In 2024 Ala praxis was awarded the ST+ART for Africa residency in which they embarked in a journey to Dar es salaam to explore and examine sand mining and its effects on coastal regions in Dar with an artistic output at the end of the six months residency.

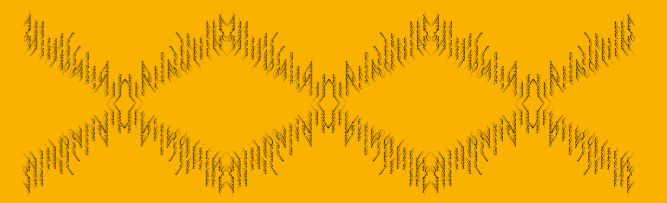
Annotations Curators

Maryam Kazeem is a writer, and the founder of iranti press, a publishing experiment based in Lagos, which convenes FESTAC 2077: A Speculative Writing Exercise. Her creative work makes connections between abstraction, archival research, and the materiality of language and has appeared in platforms including Criterion, Literary Hub, Catapult, Another Gaze, Apogee, and Joyland amongst others. Her writing has been nominated for The Best of the Net, and she is a recipient of a Prince Claus Seed Award (2024).

Naima Hassan is a researcher and curator, who works primarily with archives. Since 2022, she has led the development of the G.A.S. Library and Picton Archive at G.A.S. Foundation Lagos as Associate Curator and Archivist. Under the foundation's multi-year programme Re:assemblages, she aims to connect the collections to a transnational network of communities, artists, scholars, and institutions. With an interest in building infrastructures for research on African cultural collections, Hassan is a member of TheMuseumsLab's Steering Committee and Nieuwe Instituut's Indian Ocean Working Group.

Re:assemblages

Re:assemblages is a roaming body and multi-year cultural development programme designed to platform new, critical questions focused on the preservation and creative potential of African art libraries.



Re:assemblages is a roaming body and multi-year cultural development programme designed to platform new, critical questions focused on the preservation and creative potential of African art libraries. The programme was developed in response to the wealth of material housed in the G.A.S. Library and Picton Archive and its rare constellation of African published journals, magazines, and manuscripts. The programme will play host to numerous artistic interventions, strengthening the connections between artists, publishers, and art initiatives with library collections in Africa by fostering cross-disciplinary dialogue with various organisations holding African and Afro-diasporic art and cultural heritage collections.

Supported by

The Guest Artists Space (G. A. S.) Foundation (Nigeria) was established in 2019 and is supported by the Yinka Shonibare Foundation (UK). G.A.S. Foundation is a non-profit dedicated to facilitating international cultural exchange, developing creative and research practices through residencies and collaborations.

This pamphlet co-produced with Two Queens, an artist-run and community-owned gallery and studios based in Leicester, UK. The project was made possible by public funding from The National Lottery through Arts Council England. The forthcoming Annotations publication (2025) will be co-published by Two Queens and Yinka Shonibare Foundation.

Designed by Rose Nordin

G. A.
S. GUEST. ARTISTS.
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FOUNDATION

Y. S.
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Two
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