

PRESS RELEASE

Berlin, 18 May 2021

C/O BERLIN TALENT AWARD

Adji Dieye . *Culture Lost and Learned by Heart*

C/O Berlin is pleased to present this year's **C/O Berlin Talent Award** in the category **Artist** to the Italian-Senegalese artist **Adji Dieye**. Her award-winning work **Culture Lost and Learned by Heart** will be presented in a solo exhibition from **December 11, 2021, to March 5, 2022**, at **C/O Berlin** in the **Amerika Haus** at Hardenbergstraße 22-24, 10623 Berlin. The four artists **Leonard Suryajaya** (USA), **Marina Caneve** (IT), **Max Colson** (GB), and **Salma Abedin Prithi** (BGD) were selected for the **Shortlist 2021**.

The **C/O Berlin Talent Award 2021** in the category **Theorist** goes to the Nigerian writer **Emmanuel Iduma**. He will be writing the first theoretical essay on the work **Culture Lost and Learned by Heart** by Adji Dieye which will appear alongside an interview with the artist in the upcoming monograph published by **Spector Books**.

In our digital epoch, in which we produce and consume more images than ever before in human history, the archive has become emblematic for the rejection of this form of consumption. The *C/O Berlin Talent Award 2021* recognizes a more contemporary strategy of extended documentary practice and honors a project based on the editing of existing images. *Culture Lost and Learned by Heart* by the Italian-Senegalese artist Adji Dieye (b.1991) enters into a critical dialog with a colonial institution like the image archive, which is commonly associated with the visual documentation of history and regarded as the gatekeeper of historical truth. The project draws on found archival material from the National Archives of Senegal (*Archives Nationales du Sénégal*), a collection deeply inscribed with the history of French colonial rule. In re-reading this material, the artist deconstructs the hierarchies contained within it. Using additional, present-day visual materials, she further confronts new forms of displacement and exclusion: to what extent does the visual framing of a historical narrative lead to the exercise of political control today? From roughly 100 international artists, the jury unequivocally and unanimously selected Adji Dieye for her striking and provocative work, which deepens the exploration of decolonization begun in last year's winning project and continues it in a very different material way.

The *C/O Berlin Talent Award 2021* in the category *Theory* honors Emmanuel Iduma (b. 1989), a versatile writer and art critic. Iduma's focus on issues in photography and new media as well as contemporary African art and colonial history provide an ideal art critical reflection of the award-winning artistic project. He was selected from a field of 26 highly qualified international competitors. The jury was particularly impressed by Iduma's ability to explore current (socio-)political topics within their historical context and to present complex ideas in a compelling and rigorously researched manner.

Since 2018, the overarching theme of the *C/O Berlin Talent Award* has been *New Documentary Strategies*. The aim of the award is to promote the critical examination of traditional documentary narratives and to make these perspectives visible in

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exhibitions and publications. C/O Berlin is the only institution in Europe to offer a funding program aimed at the next generation of artists and art theorists. The *C/O Berlin Talent Award* is awarded each year in the categories of *Art* and *Theory* to individuals under thirty-five years of age. The award carries a cash prize for both winners as well as a solo exhibition and an individually designed publication. A joint talk rounds off this union of theory and practice.

The expert jury in the category *Art*, consisting of Azu Nwagbogu (founder and director, LagosPhoto Festival/African Artists' Foundation), Dr. Eva-Maria Fahrner-Tutsek (chairperson, Alexander Tutsek-Stiftung, Munich), Jan Wenzel (publisher, Spector Books, Leipzig), Dr. Kathrin Schöneegg (head of C/O Berlin Talent Award, C/O Berlin Foundation), Maren Lübbke-Tidow (freelance writer and curator, Berlin), and Wolfgang Tillmans (photographer and artist, Berlin) selected this year's winners and shortlist. The works of the shortlisted artists will be presented in the fall issue of the C/O Berlin Newspaper and online in cooperation with the magazine *Der Greif*.

The expert jury in the category *Theory*, consisting of Nela Eggenberger (editor-in-chief, EIKON, Vienna) and Dr. Kathrin Schöneegg (head of C/O Berlin Talent Award, C/O Berlin Foundation), made their decision unanimously.

Since 2020, the *C/O Berlin Talent Award* has been made possible by the Alexander Tutsek-Stiftung.

Biographies

Adji Dieye (b. 1991, IT/SEN) studied New Technologies for Art at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan and completed a Master of Fine Arts at the Zurich University of the Arts. Her work has been included in international group exhibitions at FOAM Amsterdam (2020), Kunsthalle Wien (2020), as well as the African Photo Biennale in Bamako, Mali (2019) and the Lagos Photo Festival (2017). C/O Berlin is presenting her first institutional solo exhibition. Adji Dieye divides her time between Milan, Zurich, and Dakar.

Emmanuel Iduma (b. 1989, NG) completed a Master of Fine Arts in Art Criticism and Writing at the School of Visual Arts in New York after earning his law degree in Nigeria. In addition to his own writing, such as his traveling book *A Stranger's Pose*, and editing, he devotes his time to art criticism, which has been published in *ART-News*, *Art in America*, and the *British Journal of Photography*, and has been featured in publications by *Aperture*, *Artforum*, *The New York Review of Books* and the *Walther Collection*. Iduma was listed as *Apollo International Art Magazine's* 40 under 40 Africa in 2020 for the broad social impact of his work. He lives in New York and Lagos.

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Shortlist 2021

Leonard Suryajaya

In his colorful works, the Chinese-Indonesian artist Leonard Suryajaya (b. 1988), who lives in the United States, takes up the specific aesthetics of the US commodity world and references fitness industry fetishes. His project *Quarantine Blues, 2020* engages humorously with cultural codes in large-format tableaux, countering the forced isolation of people worldwide with cheerful images of brightly colored living spaces that the artist staged during the pandemic with people in his personal circle. The jury was convinced that this optimism is by no means to be understood as an ironic commentary on the general climate of fear; rather, with his extravagant images, Suryajaya is working earnestly to create a distinctive visual language and to convey a deeply held feeling that cannot be described as anything other than hopeful.

Marina Caneve

The project *Beautiful Bridges. A Migration System Breaking All European Borders* by the Italian artist Marina Caneve (b. 1988) explores the intersection between documentary photography and artistic research. As both a search for visual traces and a theoretical exploration, the work investigates ecological bridges, paths, and crossings built on the edges of our countries, cities, and highways to allow animals to follow their migratory routes through urbanized landscapes. Caneve's project impressed the jury as both an unusual and critical commentary on infrastructure, surveillance, and migration in the EU.

Max Colson

As an artist with roots in documentary photography, Max Colson (b. 1985) deals in *Blitz'd Britain* with the current socio-political state of his home country, Great Britain. The project addresses the crisis precipitated by Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic, overlaying the country's current mood with the period of the Second World War, whose ideology of (national) unity and cohesion has recently experienced a revival in British popular culture. The project was selected for the shortlist not only for the artist's courageous exploration of this theme, but also for his extension of the classic photographic medium into new technologies such as 3D software and digital renderings.

Salma Abedin Prithi

In *Torn*, Bangladeshi-born photographer Salma Abedin Prithi (b. 1985) explores the mental state of society during the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the limited possibilities to work, the artist drew on news images and found footage from Bangladesh's heavily regulated social media and used them to create elaborately staged counter-images focusing not on the everyday horrors but on people's mental health. The jury found the project to be a striking and timely examination of this topic, foregrounding aspects of people's psychological condition that are often sidelined by incidence rates and vaccination campaigns.

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Exhibition 11 December 2021–05 March 2022
Press tour 10 December 2021 . 11 a.m.
Opening 10 December 2021 . 7 p.m.

Opening hours Daily . 11 a.m.–8 p.m.
Admission 10 euros . reduced 6 euros

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