Contemporary African art to take centre stage at Fondation Louis Vuitton

Three major shows are planned for Paris museum next year, including one featuring collection of Jean Pigozzi

by Gareth Harris | 4 August 2016


Interest in contemporary African art keeps growing, with a series of large-scale exhibitions planned for the Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris fuelling the trend.

The Art Newspaper understands that three shows are due to open at the museum in the Bois de Boulogne park next April, including an exhibition dedicated to 15 emerging artists from South Africa and a display of works drawn from the permanent collection of the museum.

The third exhibition will be of works from the collection of Jean Pigozzi—by artists including Romuald Hazoumé, Abu Bakarr Mansaray and Chéri Samba—is also on the roster for next spring.
Over the past 25 years, Pigozzi has amassed one of the world’s largest contemporary African art collections. André Magnin, who helped the Paris-born collector build up his holdings, is the artistic advisor to the exhibition. Magnin co-organised the influential 1989 show Magiciens de la Terre at Paris’s Centre Pompidou, which showed work by more than 100 artists—half of which, crucially, were non-Western.

Pigozzi has put his collection on show before; in 2011, the Belgian artist-curator Carsten Höller selected 16 pieces by Congolese artists such as Pierre Bodo and Cheik Ledy for the exhibition JapanCongo at the Magasin Centre National d'Art Contemporain in Grenoble. The same year, Tate Modern mounted a one-room display of works by the Ivorian artist Frédéric Bruly Bouabré drawn from Pigozzi’s collection.

The French luxury goods tycoon Bernard Arnault opened the Frank Gehry-designed Fondation Louis Vuitton in 2014. The museum’s next exhibition—Icons of Modern Art: the Shchukin Collection (22 October-20 February 2017)—will reunite the early Modern masterpieces amassed by the wealthy tsarist-era businessman and arts patron, Sergei Shchukin.