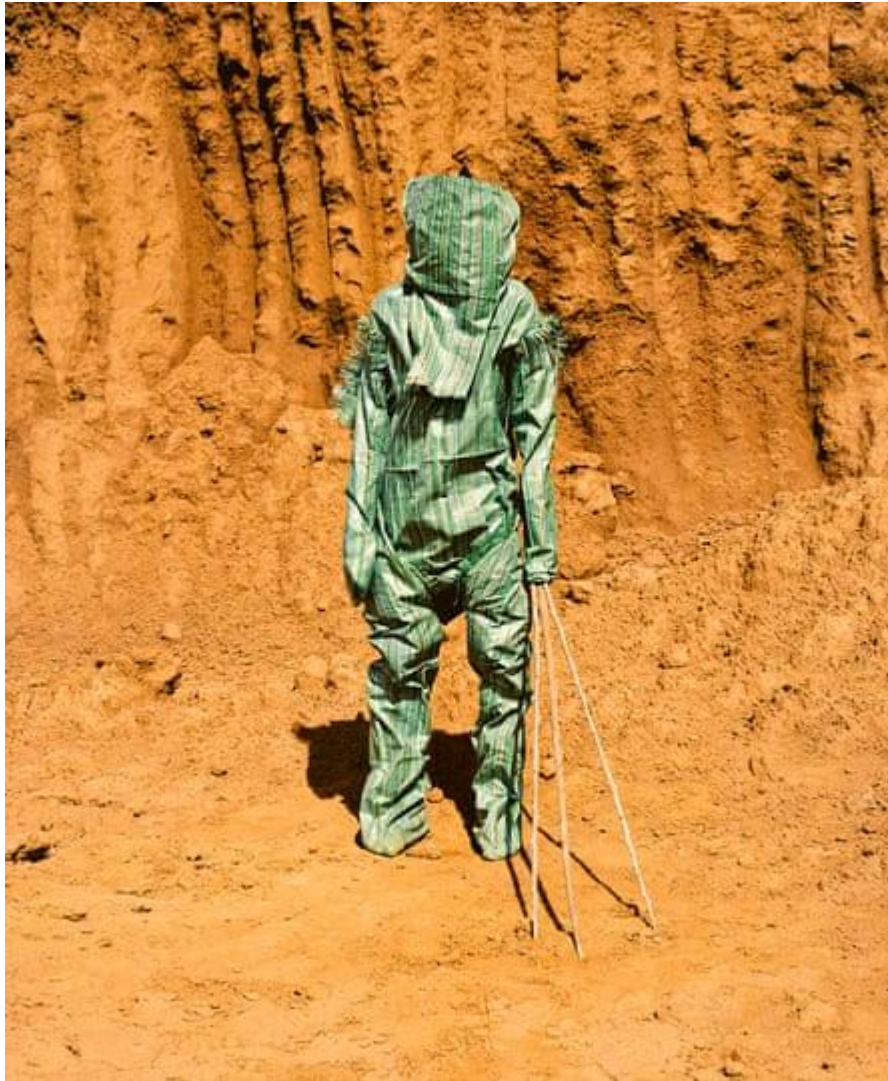


The exhibition Africa Is No Island has been curated by the online platform Afrique in visu to encourage a dialogue about the contemporary African experience that transcends borders. The exhibition takes the spirit of Afrique in visu – which is dedicated to connecting and nurturing artists with different viewpoints and practices – to present a kaleidoscope of images that makes the visitor reconsider geography, representation and history.

A need to record disappearing cultures and question historical constructs runs through the exhibition. It also uses storytelling and performance to question identity and written history.





- Statuette Nganga SaleLaye and Statuette Kafigeledio Prince – Guinea, 2011, Ya Kala Ben series, by Namsa Leuba.

Marrakech has an uneven history with contemporary art. A few years ago there was great excitement over plans for a [photography museum](#) which would hold one of the biggest collections of visual art in the world. The building was to be designed by David Chipperfield and feature an ambitious programme of exhibitions, but the project was never realised. The seventh edition of the [Marrakech Biennial](#) was also due to take place this year but has been postponed indefinitely due to a lack of funds. No surprise then that there is a buzz around Africa is No Island in the local art galleries and at the [1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair](#), which launched its first African edition in Marrakech last month.



- Khamlia, southern Morocco #1, 2014, the Moroccans series, by Leila Alaoui  
[Leila Alaoui](#)'s series The Moroccans includes a striking portrait of a woman in Khamlia, a desert village in the south of the country. Alaoui travelled with a mobile studio, photographing people in village squares in front of the same black backdrop. It is a beautiful series that celebrates local culture and forms a visual archive of faces and traditional dress. It is also all the more remarkable given that many Moroccans are superstitious about having their photograph taken.





- Portrait of David Godonou-Dossou, a rich merchant and founder of the Godonou-Dossou dynasty, Porto Novo, Benin, 2011, and Idelphonse Adogbagbe, a priestess of Mami Tchamba (a form of Voodoo), Grand-Popo, Benin, 2011, by Nicola Lo Calzo



- Pied Piper, 2013, Ke Lefa Laka series by Lebohang Kganye  
Lebohang Kganye uses old family photographs and archive images enlarged to life size to create dioramas that she steps into dressed as her grandfather. These playful and theatrical images are a retelling of Kganye's family history through stories she

remembers hearing as a child. They also tell a collective history of apartheid. *Pied Piper* shows the movement of black people to the Transvaal and inevitably the Soweto township, the looming city behind the figures stays separate and unreachable.



- Mme Djeneba, Hââbré, the Last Generation series, 2013-2014 by Joana Choumali  
Joana Choumali's portraits of people with scarification are a record of a disappearing culture but they also tell a story of migration and xenophobia. The people she photographs are Burkinabés living in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. The scarification makes them instantly recognisable in a city where they experience prejudice against their class and their association with the civil war. The scars were once something to be proud of but this is no longer true.



- Back to Authenticity, a view of the pagoda of President Mobutu, N'sele, Kinshasa, with a photo from the archive of Dr Fourche taken in 1935 by Sammy Baloji 2013

Questioning the writing of history is at the heart of Sammy Baloji's work on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. His triptych shows the ruins of dictator Mobutu Sese Seko's reign; a pagoda, a landing strip and an electrical plant juxtaposed with an archive photograph of a Congolese woman taken at the time of the Belgian Congo.





- Untitled from the Classroom series, 1994-2002 by Hicham Benohoud  
Hicham Benohoud photographed his Classroom series when he was an art teacher in a Marrakech school. The surreal and disarming photographs show students calmly posing with strange props or in odd positions as the rest of the class works on around them. This collaborative performance project resulted in more than 100 images.