



La Biennale di Venezia

58. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali

The Open Shadows of Memory

Art lovers were able to appreciate the exhibition ***Les maîtres de la sculpture de Côte d'Ivoire*** (The masters of sculpture of Côte d'Ivoire) presented in 2015 at the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris. Composed of some 300 works, this exhibition highlighted the work of 40 artists from Côte d'Ivoire. It confirmed the high quality of Ivorian traditional arts, which are among the most appreciated in Africa.

While developing outside the techniques of their predecessors, opening new doors and new aesthetics, the artists of Côte d'Ivoire keep their eyes turned towards their roots. Quest for landmarks. Quest for Identity. Quest for regenerative energies to protect oneself and others. In a world that no longer respects anything, that destroys the environment, that makes life disappear, and that dreams of destroying the earth for life on Mars, the path to the past represents a beautiful oxygen.

There are things said with a throat that has cried. The words then search for the mother's face. They summon her protective name. The past preserved in the mother's memories helps to overcome despair and to face the future.

The theme of the 2019 edition, ***The Open Shadows of Memory***, presents works that speak of the mother earth as a collection of the memories of humanity. **Ernest Dükü** works on the borders of painting, sculpture and installation, around the notion of "masquerade". The spider, hero of tales in Africa, is the philosophical foundation of his creations. The metaphors of his works are a mirror that allows the viewer to face the questions of his articulated world. **Ananias Léki Dago**, photographer, works in the old-fashioned way. He walks his camera along African roads and offers us black and white renderings. His work tells the story of the oversights and controversial aspirations of the new generations of Africans. **Valérie Oka**, who started with furniture design, uses drawing and photography to tell, with great enthusiasm, about the forgotten heroes of her land and the erased beauties of Africa. She sometimes highlights her images with hand-drawn highlights that strongly recall the gestures of the ancestors reading their future on the sand. **Tong Yanrunan** with his pictorial portraits that go beyond realism reveals the memory of humanity without revealing feelings and social differences, thus leaving the viewer free to meet his own "Alter ego".

The ancestors are the fathers of Hypnos and Hades. They sleep on the night. They talk in the shadows, they talk to the shadows. Our artists know this. That is why they also capture the energies of yesterday's worlds. They transform them into light to illuminate the path linking their works to the next day. Because they are open shadows of memory.

Commissioner: Henri Nkoumo

Curator: Massimo Scaringella