



1922 REVISITED

Presented by Third Space Art Foundation

61st Venice Biennale Arte

Preview Week, 5th - 9th May, 2026

Curated by: Dr. Janine Sytsma

In collaboration with:

The African Art in Venice Forum, Venice, Italy
The European Cultural Centre, Venice, Italy

Additional partners include:

The Africa Center, NYC, USA
Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos, Nigeria
Foundation for Contemporary Art, Accra, Ghana
School of Art, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, USA
NEWMEDIA.COM, USA

BACKGROUND

In 1922, the Venice Biennale presented a special exhibition of thirty-three African sculptures, drawn from the Luigi Pigorini National Museum (now part of the Museum of Civilizations) in Rome and the Ethnographic Museum in Florence.

The surviving archive, including Carlo Anti's introductory text and a single black-and-white photograph of a sculpture by a Luba artist set against a stark white backdrop, presents a familiar colonial narrative.

While acknowledging the artistic merits of these works as evidence of the "absolute ingenuity" of African art, the text simultaneously casts them in derogatory terms as "primitive," reinforcing the racial hierarchies underpinning the imperial world order.

THE PROGRAM

1922 Revisited, a live arts program staged during the opening week of the 61st Edition of the Venice Biennale Arte, 2026, is conceived as an invitation to mine this fragmented archive: to poetically confront the imperial logic of the Biennale; to amplify long-silenced voices; and to propose new conceptual frameworks grounded in African epistemologies.

Featuring artists including Bernard Akoi-Jackson, ruby onyinyechi amanze, Jelili Atiku, Va-Bene Elikem Fiatsi [aka crazinisT artisT], Jermay Michael Gabriel, Tsedaye Makonnen, Wilfried Nakeu, Wura-Natasha Ogunji, Zora Snake, and Victoria-Idongesit Udondian, the program unfolds across Venice as a series of live performances, a screening, and a panel discussion staged at Hotel Monaco, the European Cultural Centre's Marinaressa Gardens, and other sites throughout the city.

The program reanimates this history in the present, positioning performance as a critical method for engaging the 1922 exhibition and the wider imperial histories within which it is situated, while opening new narrative pathways. Through embodied, time-based practices, artists move between archive and

action, drawing out the tensions at work within the 1922 exhibition while insisting on alternative modes of knowing.

In dialogue with Artistic Director Koyo Kouoh's vision, it becomes not only a site of reflection, but a space for "repairing wounds and worlds."

THE FOUNDATION

1922 Revisited is presented by Third Space Art Foundation, which supports artistic exchange and collective engagement through the cultivation of third spaces, or dynamic zones of encounter, negotiation, and creative transformation.

Drawing from the widely embraced concept of third space as a site for dialogue, as well as Homi K. Bhabha's decolonial formulation of the "third space" as a liminal ground that challenges fixed hierarchies and dominant narratives, the Foundation advances practices that expand cultural understanding and foster new frameworks for connection.

Through colloquia, performances, exhibitions, residencies, and other collaborative initiatives, it brings together artists, curators, and scholars across geographic and cultural divides, working to catalyze critical inquiry, mutual understanding, and new structures of solidarity.

THE EVENTS

Performance 1

Artist: Jelili Atiku
Title: *Eyes No Dey Forget Wetin Heart See (Enact 1)*
Date: Tuesday, May 5
Time: 5:30pm–6:30pm
Venue: Hotel Monaco, Sala Vallaresso

Screening and Panel Discussion

Moderator: Tsige Tafesse

Artists: Tsedaye Makonnen and Jermay Michael Gabriel

Topic: *Waves of Ash: Navigating Liminal Waters and the Unfinished Archive*

Date: Wednesday, May 6

Time: 8:45am–9:30am

Venue: Hotel Monaco, Sala Corte

Performance 2

Artists: Wura-Natasha Ogunji and ruby onyinyechi amanze

Title: *The Dash*

Date: Wednesday, May 6

Time: 10:00am–11:15am

Venue: Hotel Monaco, Sala Corte

Performance 3

Artists: Zora Snake and Wilfried Nakeu

Title: *ESCAPE THE BOXES*

Date: Wednesday, May 6

Time: 11:45am–1:00pm

Venue: Hotel Monaco, Sala Corte

Performance 4

Artist: Jelili Atiku

Title: *Eyes No Dey Forget Wetin Heart See (Enact 2)*

Date: Thursday, May 7

Time: 2:00pm–3:00pm

Venue: European Cultural Centre, Marinaressa Gardens

Performance 5

Artists: Tsedaye Makonnen and Jermay Michael Gabriel

Title: *Waves of Ash*

Date: Thursday, May 7

Time: 4:30pm–5:30pm
Venue: European Cultural Centre, Marinaressa Gardens

Performance 6

Artist: Bernard Akoi-Jackson
Title: *Untitled: Flaggings IN MEMORIAM in the BLUES on some CUES and when WAX ain't so LOST (a sketchy score for some processional gestures and an eventual celebratory discussion)*
Date: Saturday, May 9
Time: 12:00pm–1:00pm
Venue: European Cultural Centre, Giardini Marinaressa

Performance 7

Artist: Victoria-Idongesit Udondian
Title: *Kayeyei: Archive embodied*
Date: Saturday, May 9
Time: 4:30pm–6:00pm

Additional performances planned for Fall 2026.

Follow the program [@thirdspaceartfoundation](https://twitter.com/thirdspaceartfoundation) and visit www.thirdspaceartfoundation.org for full performance details and to register for updates.

THE ARTISTS

High-resolution images attached below.