

## **Creative Entrepreneur and Cultural Curator Ugoma Ebilah hosts an Exclusive Evening with Resident Artists at G.A.S. Foundation**

On Sunday 23rd April distinguished guests and connoisseurs from Lagos' buzzing arts ecosystem gathered at Guest Artists Space Foundation for an evening celebrating international creativity and culture. The special moment was generously organised and facilitated by creative entrepreneur, cultural curator and founder of BLOOM Art, Ugoma Ebilah and offered visitors the opportunity to get an intimate glimpse into the practice of current G.A.S. residents Tunji Adeniyi-Jones, Laeila Ajovi, Chiizii, and Tobi Onabolu.

Following an open address and presentations from the resident artists who, though currently convened in Lagos, are typically based across Benin, the US and the UK, guests were taken on tours of the impressive G.A.S. Lagos building. The structure set across four floors was designed by British-Ghanaian architect Elsie Owusu in collaboration with Nigerian architect Nihinlola Shonibare and includes a library, live/work units for the residents, a studio/events space, and courtyard where a jazz trio entertained the small crowd throughout the evening. Meanwhile, the dynamic studio spaces showcasing evolving sketches, collages and paintings by practitioners Laeila Adjovi and Chiizii proved to be a popular gathering point for conversation and networking and allowed the artists to meet some of the most important professionals and tastemakers working and living in Lagos.

The Foundation itself is a Nigerian non-profit dedicated to facilitating international cultural exchange and developing creative and research practices through residencies and collaborations. It was established in 2019 by British Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare CBE RA and an esteemed board of Directors. G.A.S. would like to extend heartfelt thanks to Ugoma Ebilah and BLOOM Art for their generous support and guidance in delivering an unforgettable evening that will no doubt germinate further flourishing connections.



## ABOUT UGOMA EBILAH

Ugoma Ebilah (Lagos, Nigeria) is a veritable multi-hyphenate. Trained in economics and business, she started her career as an oil and gas analyst before gaining further work experience in real estate and principal investments. Her first entrepreneurial foray was in hospitality which saw the setting up of the eclectic and multi-function space, The Life House.

Ugoma's current venture is BLOOM Art, a portfolio gallery and private art salon set in the heart of Victoria Island. In her role as Founding Director and Chief Curator at BLOOM Art, she has curated and produced exhibitions with some of the most exciting and accomplished modern and contemporary artists including Muraina Oyelami, Tam Fiofori, Marcia Kure, Uchay Joel Chima, Lemi Ghariokwu, Gbenga Offo, Victor Ehikhamenor, Angela Isiuwe, Rom Isichei, Olu Ajayi and Tega Akpokona. She has also executed the biggest private secondary market art sale in Nigeria to date.

Ugoma has been identified as a veritable tastemaker and dynamic force on the Nigerian art scene which has seen her curate numerous art and culture projects for clients including Constant Capital, First Bank, Microsoft, Stanbic IBTC, Rand Merchant Bank, Helios Investment Partners, Heritage Bank, McKinsey and Coronation. She is currently building Mbari Kola; a house of development for artists and people who enjoy the arts, which is set to impact many angles of the Nigerian and African art space.

## ABOUT GUEST ARTISTS SPACE FOUNDATION

Guest Artists Space (G.A.S.) Foundation is a Nigerian non-profit founded in 2019 by Yinka Shonibare CBE RA and an esteemed board of Directors. It delivers residency and public programmes across two sites located in Lagos and Ijebu. The multi-use live/work spaces host multidisciplinary artists, researchers and curators from all over the world in awarded residencies for up to three months. In Lagos, the Foundation is hosted in an award-winning building designed by Elsie Owusu in collaboration with Nihinlola Shonibare. The secondary location designed by Papa Omotayo sits on a 54-acre working farm that produces crops ranging from yams and cassava to peppers and cashew.

The Foundation's mission is underpinned by an ethos that strives to create a platform for creative and career development and knowledge exchange. Through the support of international partnerships, G.A.S. hopes to break down traditional barriers of privilege, wealth and lack of infrastructure and provide opportunities for both participants and the local community. G.A.S. delivers its programmes with oversight and support from UK registered charity Yinka Shonibare Foundation (Charity No. 1183321).

Guest Artists Space Foundation would like to thank its Board of Directors; Yinka Shonibare CBE RA; Managing Principal of W8 Advisory, Adebimpe Nkontchou; entrepreneur and Founder and CEO of Art X Lagos, Tokini Peterside; Nigerian American artist and curator, Temitayo Ogunbiyi and Executive Director of VFD Group Plc, Adeniyi Adenubi. G.A.S. would also like to extend heartfelt thanks to our new Founding Patron Still Earth Holdings and our supporting advisors during the genesis of this exciting journey; Dudun Peterside, Jane Cohan, Stephen Friedman and Femi Lijadu. We are looking forward to continuing to build and develop the project with supporters and collaborators in Nigeria, the wider West African region and internationally.

**Further Background Information:** [guestartistspace.com](http://guestartistspace.com) | [yinkashonibarefoundation.com](http://yinkashonibarefoundation.com)



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