

ARTIST OF THE YEAR AT ROYAL DJURGÅRDEN IN STOCKHOLM: YINKA SHONIBARE CBE RA

The Princess Estelle Cultural Foundation is pleased to present Yinka Shonibare – one of the world’s most acclaimed and successful artists today. Thanks to a private donation, the Foundation is acquiring a new site-specific sculpture, the third work in the permanent sculpture park that the Foundation, together with the Royal Djurgården Administration, is establishing in the Rosendal area.

Shonibare’s sculpture will be inaugurated on 2 June, and a programme of educational activities and events will be offered until 25 September, in collaboration with other institutions. Confirmed partners for 2022 are: Drottningholm Slottsteater, the Embassy of Nigeria, the Konstfack University of Arts, Craft and Design, Liljevalchs, Moderna Museet, Nationalmuseum, Rosendal Garden, the Stockholm School of Economics, the British Embassy, the Museum of Ethnography and the National Museum of Science and Technology in Stockholm.



Photo: Marcus Leith RA

Yinka Shonibare was born in London in 1962. He grew up in Nigeria and then returned to the UK to study art and has had an outstanding career since the early 1990s.

CBE is a title that Shonibare added to his name two years ago, when he was awarded the decoration of “Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire”. This is just one of many prestigious awards he has received over the years. He was shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 2004, became a member of the Royal Academy in 2013 and is represented in several of the most important art collections around the globe. Shonibare has participated in the Venice Biennale, documenta XI, and in international exhibitions at leading museums worldwide.

Through painting, photography, performance, film, and sculpture, Shonibare uses citations of Western art history and literature to explore the validity of contemporary cultural and national identity within the context of globalisation. His trademark material is the brightly-coloured batik fabric that today is considered authentically African despite having a completely different origin. The fabric was, in fact, inspired by Indonesian designs, mass-produced by the Dutch in the 19th century, who eventually sold them to European colonies in West Africa. There, the textiles became very popular, which ironically led to them to becoming a symbol of African identity and independence in the 1960s.

Shonibare, who calls himself a “postcolonial hybrid”, explains that the pseudo-African cotton batik can be seen as a metaphor for migration. *“The material has the ability to be Dutch, Indonesian and African at the same time. For me, the fabrics are a symbol of cross-cultural connections.”*

Sara Sandström Nilsson, director of the Princess Estelle Cultural Foundation, adds, *“Most cultures have evolved from several, people are multifaceted, and therefore it is important to challenge stereotypical notions of ethnicity. We hope Yinka Shonibare’s new sculpture and our collaborative activities will inspire many exciting conversations and insights.”*

The sculpture, which will be installed in the Rosendal area, can be seen as a continuation of a journey that began in 2004, when Shonibare had a IASPIS scholarship* in Stockholm. During his stay, he created a work for Moderna Museet in the form of a giant model of the famous 17th-century ship Vasa in a bottle. In 2010, Shonibare made a similar replica, “Nelson’s Ship in a Bottle”, which was displayed on the fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square, London. In both works, the white sails are replaced with batik fabrics, and it is these motley textiles that also inspired the new sculpture at Royal Djurgården.

“To have the opportunity to make sculpture in the public space feels extra important. You can engage people in so many different ways. Unlike institutions that can sometimes be considered elitist, public art is accessible to everyone, and that’s something that’s important to me,” says Yinka Shonibare.

The artists are selected by the Board of the Princess Estelle Cultural Foundation, in consultation with an Artistic Council consisting of Richard Julin, Artistic Director, Accelerator in Stockholm, Iris Müller-Westermann, Director, Moderna Museet in Malmö and Lars Nittve, former Director, Tate Modern in London, Moderna Museet in Stockholm, and M+ in Hong Kong. The Artistic Council’s motivation for 2022 reads:

“The works of Yinka Shonibare can be perceived as playful and seductive, but beneath the surface they carry layers of history. Shonibare is a storyteller, and his personal language is the fabric prints that, despite other origins, have come to epitomise an entire continent. By questioning our traditional cultural codes, Shonibare highlights complex global relationships and conveys a new picture of the ingrained and self-evident.”

Opening: 2 June, 2022.

Activity period: 2 June – 25 September

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ABOUT PRINCESS ESTELLE CULTURAL FOUNDATION

The Princess Estelle Cultural Foundation was established in autumn 2019 on the initiative of the Crown Princess Victoria and Prince Daniel. Its purpose is to promote cultural activities in Sweden. This is in line with a royal tradition in Sweden to support culture and the conviction that art and culture activities are essential to an open, modern society. The Crown Princess Couple wish to highlight this and demonstrate their long-term commitment by establishing the Foundation. The initial focus will be on developing a permanent sculpture park at Royal Djurgården, a project which is run together with the Royal Djurgården Administration. With the sculpture project, the Foundation wants to make contemporary art available to everyone.

The Foundation relies on private donations for its activities. The first piece in the collection, Alice Aycock’s “Hoop-La” was donated by the Foundation’s Patrons. Elmgreen & Dragset’s sculpture “Life Rings” was donated by the families Båge, Frankenius and one donor who wishes to be anonymous.

The Foundation’s Board of Directors consists of H.R.H. Prince Daniel, Elin Anwall, Lena Josefsson and Staffan Larsson. Chairman: Johan Ericsson.

ABOUT YINKA SHONIBARE CBE RA

Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Royal Academician
Born 1962 in London

- 1984–89 Byam Shan School of Art, London
- 1989–91 MFA, Goldsmiths College, London
- 2002 documenta XI, Kassel, curator Okwui Enwezor
- 2003 Fellow, Goldsmiths College, London
- 2004 Nominated to the Turner-prize, Tate Britain, London
- 2004 *IASPIS, The International Artists' Studio Program in Stockholm
- 2004 Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- 2004 The film "Un Ballo in Maschera", produced in collaboration with the Moderna Museet and SVT, Swedish Television, Stockholm
- 2005 Member of the most excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE)
- 2007 The 52nd Venice Biennale
- 2007 Honorary Doctor, Huron University, Ontario,
- 2009 Founded "Guest Projects", Artist Residency Project Space in London
- 2010 "Nelson's Ship in a Bottle", the Fourth Plinth, Trafalgar Square, London
- 2010 Honorary Doctor, the Royal College of Art, London
- 2012 Fellow, University of the Arts, London
- 2013 Royal Academician, the Royal Academy of Arts, London
- 2016 African Art Award, National Museum of African Art, Washington D.C.
- 2019 Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE)
- 2019 Founded Yinka Shonibare Foundation och Guest Artists Space Foundation in Lagos
- 2020 Robson Orr TenTen Award, London
- 2021 Art Icon Award, Whitechapel Gallery, London

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Yinka Shonibare CBE, 2019. In front of *The British Library*, 2014
Photographer: Oliver Cowling, Tate Photography



Nelson's Ship in a Bottle, 2010
Photographer: Stephen White & Co.



Un Ballo in Maschera (A Masked Ball), 2004
Co-Produced by SVT Fiktion in collaboration with Moderna Museet, Stockholm.



The Swing (after Fragonard), 2001
Photographer: Stephen White & Co.



Yinka Shonibare CBE RA, 2014
Photographer: Marcus Leith RA