

APALAZZOGALLERY

IBRAHIM MAHAMA

IF THESE ARE THE THINGS

25 May – 22 September 2024

After ten years of close collaboration and a multitude of extraordinary projects together, **APALAZZOGALLERY** is delighted to present Ibrahim Mahama's new solo exhibition, ***IF THESE ARE THE THINGS***, at the Brescia gallery.

Mahama's artistic practice is characterised by the use of salvaged materials – paper documents, jute sacks, sewing machines and old doors – which the artist manipulates and transforms to explore themes such as labour exploitation, the phenomenon of migration and the circulation of goods. As Mahama has repeatedly explained “I am interested in how crisis and failure are absorbed into materials with strong references to global transition and the functioning of capitalist structures.”

The exhibition, the artist's fourth solo show with the gallery, features a rich body of previously unseen work, combining charcoal drawings, photographs and a monumental installation consisting of fragments of old painted plywood ceilings and wooden doors. In its grandeur, the latter recalls the famous series *Non Orientable Nkansa II. 1901–2030* (2016), made in the studio in Tamale in collaboration with SCCA, using hundreds of cobbler boxes – small wooden objects used to hold tools for polishing and mending shoes.

In photographs and drawings, hung along the walls of the space, Mahama returns to reflect on the history of the national railway network – the Ghana Railway, once known as the Gold Coast Railways – as well as its development and impact on Ghanaian society. Together with silos, rails along with locomotive repair workshops and factories are a key source of inspiration for Mahama's artistic poetics. In 2023, the artist obtained consent from the Railway Development Ministry to transport a number of disused carriages of the national railway system to Tamale, where his studio is located; transforming them into environments for research and experimentation.

The works on display immortalise athletic young men holding pieces of track with no more than the strength of their own arms, or trying to move obsolete and rusty carriages. What they seem to bear is not so much a physical weight as a symbolic one.

In conjunction with the opening, Mahama will give a **lecture** in the gallery on studio practice linked to architecture and history at work, taking both the latest public commissions and museum exhibitions as reference. Other such lecture have been held at the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid as part of the Curatorial Century seminar and at the Diriyah Biennale Foundation during the Diriyah Contemporary Art Biennale in Saudi Arabia.

The exhibition is accompanied by a **text** by **Eva Brioschi**.

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Ibrahim Mahama (1987, Tamale, Ghana) lives and works between Accra and Tamale. He studied painting and sculpture at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi (2013). Recent institutional exhibitions include *Rubber Soul*, at Mönchehaus Museum Goslar, Goslar, Germany (2024); *JANUS*, Palazzo Diedo, Venice, Italy (2024); *In the Presence of Absence*, Desert X AIUla 2024, AIUla, Saudi Arabia (2024); *TRANSFER(S)*, Kunsthalle Osnabrück, Germany (2023); *Threads*, Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol, UK (2023); *Parliament of Ghosts'*, 18th International Architecture Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia, curated by Lesley Lokko (2023); *Garden of Scars*, Oude Kerk, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2022); *The memory of love*, FRAC des Pays de la Loire, Nantes, France (2022); *Revival: Materials and Monumental Forms*, ICA Watershed, Boston, Massachusetts, USA (2022); *Christen Sveaas Art Foundation: The Unseen selected by Hurvin Anderson*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2022); *Narrow Gate of the Here-and-Now: Social Fabric*, IMMA, Dublin, Ireland (2021) and *Fourth Plinth Shortlist*, National Gallery, London, UK (2019).

Eva Brioschi, art historian and author, she is curator of Collezione La Gaia di Busca and the collection of Fondazione Antonio Dalle Nogare di Bolzano. She is on the board of directors of Carico Massimo in Livorno. Recent exhibitions and publishing projects include *Under the Spell of Duchamp*, Fondazione Antonio Dalle Nogare, Bolzano, Italy (2024-2025); *Atelier dell'Errore: Die Werkstatt*, Richard Saltoun Gallery, Rome, Italy (2024); *David Lamelas. I have to think about it*, Fondazione Antonio Dalle Nogare, Bolzano, Italy (2023); *Ibrahim Mahama. Voli-ni, E.art.h.*, Verona, Italy, (Lenz Press, 2022); *Things/Thoughts*, Fondazione Antonio Dalle Nogare, Bolzano, Italy (2021); *Henri Chopin. Body Sound Space*, Quartz Studio, Turin, Italy (2020) and *Opera Aperta, Courtesy Emilia Romagna*, Arte Fiera, Bologna, Italy (2020)

APALAZZOGALLERY was founded by Francesca Migliorati and Chiara Rusconi in 2008 in Palazzo Cigola Fenaroli in Brescia, as a meeting and conversation place to promote contemporary art in all its manifold manifestations. The gallery offers an inclusive multidisciplinary and multicultural programme, supporting international and Italian, institutional and young emerging artists. Each project is designed and constructed through a long and careful dialogue between the space and the artist, the product of which is a solo or group exhibition that engages the space and its architecture innovatively. The gallery also supports this dialogue through art residencies and the promotion of artists through art fairs and international and local curatorial projects.

The gallery represents Sonia Boyce, Ann Iren Buan, Edson Chagas, Giorgio Ciam, Raül De Nieves, Nathalie Du Pasquier, Emkal Eyongakpa, Estate of Larry Stanton, Paolo Gonzato, Ibrahim Mahama, Eva & Franco Mattes, Olivier Mosset, Servane Mary, Estate of Jonas Mekas, Lucia Pescador, Marta Pierobon, Nathlie Provosty, Alan Reid, Olympia Scarry, Augustas Serapinas, Alexandra Sukhareva, The Reader, Francesco Vezzoli and Luc Ming Yan.

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