



# THE ART NEWSPAPER

## 1-54 Contemporary African art fair pops up at Christie's in Paris as Marrakech edition is postponed

French fair is a “one-off”, according to its founding director, though a good opportunity to “test the market”

ANNY SHAW

17th December 2020 19:53 GMT



1-54 will take over Christie's Paris headquarters in January 2021 Courtesy of Christie's

As the coronavirus pandemic eats its ways into 2021's art fair calendar, 1-54 is once again proving to be a trailblazer in how to adapt.

While the Marrakech edition of the contemporary African art fair, due to be held at the upmarket La Mamounia hotel in February, has been postponed, the fair is popping up in Paris at the end of January instead. Extending its partnership with Christie's, the fair will exhibit 18 galleries at the auction house's Paris's headquarters at Avenue Matignon (20-23 January 2021). Christie's is also hosting 1-54 on its website, allowing the fair access to its 300,000 subscribers.

1-54's founding director Touria El-Glaoui says: “With Marrakech we need to fly galleries and collectors out, whereas in Paris there is an established collector base.” She adds that the fair may yet happen in Morocco, at Easter in April or in late June.

As with 1-54 London in October, the Paris fair is looking to local exhibitors. “We changed tactic slightly,” El-Glaoui says. “We invited galleries to participate, rather than following the open application process, and we made sure that we targeted galleries in France and countries that don't have travel bans.”

El-Glaoui stresses the Paris fair is a one-off, though concedes it is a good opportunity to “test the market” there. She says: “We are rethinking the fair, looking at partnerships and collaborations with other spaces, which might take us in different directions.”