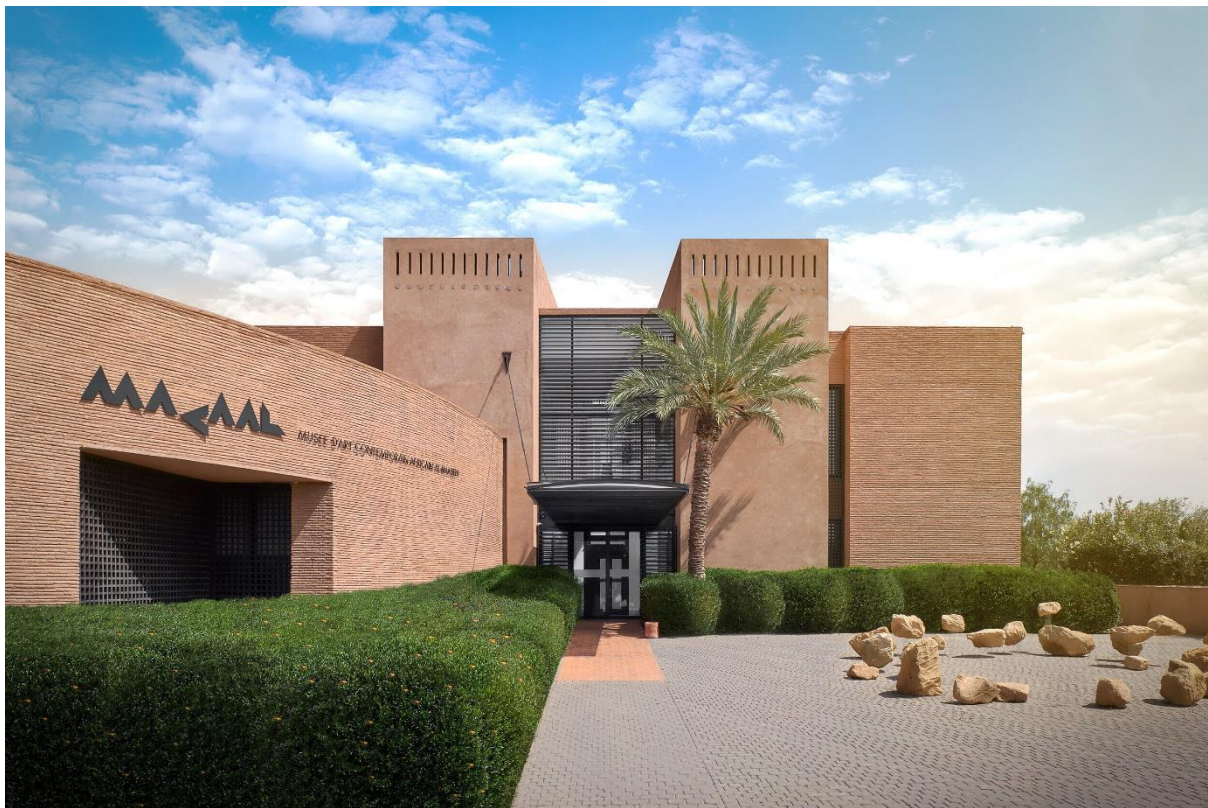




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**MACAAL in Marrakech to re-open following major developments, transforming its gallery spaces into the home for one of the world's leading African art collections**

- Opening to the public on 2 February 2025, this new permanent display will showcase the museum's rare and comprehensive collection of contemporary African art
- The museum is also evolving to include annual site-specific installations, a new media library, and other transformed public and gallery spaces
- Supported by a significant investment by Fondation Alliances, founder of MACAAL, these developments emphasise the museum's commitment to providing a dynamic, accessible and insightful platform for African art
- New spaces and initiatives will offer integral educational resources for the public, collectors, academics and researchers
- Along with continued residencies and community workshops, these new offerings cement MACAAL as a global gateway to the continent's art scene



The Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL) in Marrakech announces a series of major developments at the museum following a significant investment by its founder, Fondation Alliances. These will include a new permanent home for one of the rarest and most comprehensive collections of contemporary African art in the world, opening to the public on 2 February 2025 as part of an extensive transformation of the museum's gallery spaces.

Other new offerings at the museum include annual site-specific installations, a new media library, and redesigned public and gallery spaces, promising an enhanced

experience for visitors. Together, these initiatives mark an ambitious milestone in MACAAL's ongoing mission to provide a dynamic, accessible and educational platform that promotes African art and creativity on a global stage.

The inaugural permanent exhibition *Seven Contours, One Collection* will mark the first dedicated home for the museum's collection, built up by the Lazraq family for over four decades. It will feature over 150 works that rotate over time, spanning painting, sculpture, textiles, photography, installations and multimedia. Drawn from the wider MACAAL - Fondation Alliances collection of over 2,000 pieces, it celebrates the cultural richness and creative energy of the African continent and its diaspora from the past century to the present day. Organised into themed galleries, the exhibition will explore topics such as decolonisation, globalisation and the environment.



Visitors will experience the works of emerging and established artists such as **Salah El Mur**, **Hassan Hajjaj**, **Abdoulaye Konaté**, **Daniel Otero Torres**, **Chéri Samba**, **Malick Sidibé**, **Maya Ines Touam**, **Chris Soal**, and **Billie Zangewa**, displayed alongside Moroccan modernist pioneers like **Farid Belkahia**, **Ahmed Cherkaoui**, **Jilali Gharbaoui**, **Mohamed Melehi**, **Chaïbia Talal** and **Malika Aguezmay**. Each gallery will be framed around the perspectives of key academics and thinkers like **Nadia Yala Kisukidi** and **Ariella Aïsha Azoulay**, creating new dialogues around the collection and inviting fresh interpretations. Curated by **Morad Montazami** and **Madeleine de Colnet (Zâman Books and Curating)** in collaboration with MACAAL's Artistic Director, **Meriem Berrada**, the redesigned space has been envisioned by scenographer **Franck Houndégla**.

As part of these developments, MACAAL will commission two annual site-specific installations, with monumental works by **Salima Naji** and **Aïcha Snoussi** set to enrich the museum's spaces next year. Further enhancing its artistic programme – which will





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continue to comprise residencies and community workshops – the museum will also launch an Artist Room dedicated to solo and group exhibitions, opening with a show by French-Moroccan artist **Sara Ouhammadou** in 2025. Additionally, visitors will also have access to a new café and terrace on the first floor, and redesigned green areas with sculptures.

Strengthening the museum's educational resources, MACAAL will unveil a Timeline Room, based on extensive research and highlighting key moments on the continent by linking historical events with major artistic and cultural milestones. There will also be a New Media Library (BNM), offering a rich archive of video, digital, sound and performance art by African artists from the 1990s to the present; and a new open library dedicated to contemporary African art.



*'This is an exciting new chapter in the evolution of MACAAL,' says Othman Lazraq, President of MACAAL and Fondation Alliances. 'For almost a decade, the museum has served as a hub fostering global understanding of the continent's artistic heritage, and these new developments will bring more artists, conversations and stories to the fore. Creating accessibility around art is something my family and I care strongly about, and we look forward to sharing works from the collection with local, regional and international visitors.'*

#### **Notes to editors**

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#### Image captions:

1. MACAAL (artwork: Fatiha Zemmouri, *La pesanteur et la grâce*, 2019) © Omar Tajmouati
2. Hassan Hajjaj, *Arfoud Brother*, 2012. Lambda metal print, wooden frame with canned olives. Courtesy of MACAAL and the artist.
3. Mohamed Melehi, *Untitled*, 2001. Oil on canvas. Courtesy of MACAAL and the estate of the artist.
4. Malick Sidibé, *Dansez-le Twist*, 1965. Baryta silver print. Courtesy of MACAAL and the estate of the artist.
5. Joël Andrianomearisoa, *OUR LAND JUST LIKE A DREAM*, 2022. Painted metal sculpture. Courtesy of MACAAL and the artist.

#### About MACAAL

The Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL) in Marrakech is an independent, not-for-profit contemporary art museum. One of the first of its kind on the continent, MACAAL is dedicated to the promotion of African art through its diverse exhibition and education programmes, cultivating the interest of a wide audience base. The museum nurtures an understanding of contemporary art from Africa through collecting and exhibiting established and emerging artists, highlighting the creative energy and cultural diversity found across the continent.

MACAAL showcases art from Morocco and its neighbouring countries across a range of media. In addition to the permanent collection, its temporary exhibition programme focuses on art which engages in a dialogue with the continent, including African and international artists.

#### About the Collection

Driven by a deep passion for art, Alami Lazraq, founder and CEO of the Groupe Alliances, began his collection of modern and contemporary art forty years ago. Sharing the same passion as his father, Othman Lazraq has expanded the collection since the creation of Fondation Alliances in 2009 and the opening of MACAAL in 2016. As the President of MACAAL and Fondation Alliances, Othman Lazraq works closely with his teams and external advisors to enrich the collection.

Initially, the collection focused on the works of pioneering Moroccan artists before broadening its scope to include other influences, particularly from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Today, it includes works from nearly three hundred artists. It mainly consists of works by prominent Moroccan artists as well as artists from across the African continent. The collection covers a wide range of mediums, including painting, sculpture, and more recently, photography, installation, and digital arts.

The museum's collection illustrates the Fondation Alliances' commitment to providing universally accessible contemporary art, while supporting cultural development in



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Morocco. It comprises more than 2,000 Moroccan and international works, including pieces by some of the most renowned Moroccan artists such as Farid Belkahia, Ahmed Cherkaoui, Jilali Gharbaoui, Mohamed Melehi, and Chaïbia Talal. It also includes major artists from the African continent like Chéri Samba, Romuald Hazoumè, Joël Andrianomearisoa, Abdoulaye Konaté, Serge Attukwei Clottey, and Billie Zangewa, as well as artists from the Maghreb art scene, such as Meriem Bouderbala, Rafik El Kamel, Adel El Siwi, and Djamel Tatah.

#### About Othman Lazraq

Othman Lazraq is a multidisciplinary creative entrepreneur. A Moroccan national and trained interior architect, he studied in Switzerland and later in New York. In 2012, Othman returned to Morocco, his home country, where he founded Lazraq Studio, an architecture and interior design firm based in Casablanca. Since 2013, he has also served as the director of Fondation Alliances, a non-profit organisation that supports socio-cultural development and the democratisation of art in Morocco and across the African continent. Through the creation of various programmes aimed at artists and cultural actors, he champions the idea that culture drives progress and development.

His passion for photography led to the establishment of the Lcc Program, a competition promoting contemporary African photography that supports the exposure and recognition of emerging artists. Other initiatives include the *Programme Passerelles*, which aims to engage young audiences with the arts by organising workshops in theatre, cinema, visual arts, and design. Othman and the Fondation Alliances team also foster public engagement in Morocco through exhibitions and cultural programming hosted at the foundation's cultural space in Casablanca.

In 2016, Othman founded the Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL) in Marrakech, where he has served as president since its inception. MACAAL is a philanthropic initiative by the Lazraq family, showcasing one of the largest collections of modern and contemporary art in Africa. The collection, made up of more than 2,000 works, brings together major and emerging artists from African and beyond. Since opening, MACAAL has hosted over 14 major temporary exhibitions, displaying the museum's collection alongside innovative curatorial projects by renowned guest curators. With his team, Othman implements educational initiatives and youth outreach programmes while fostering knowledge development and research within the museum.

In 2019, MACAAL launched its first open call for the MACAAL Residence, welcoming artists, researchers, and curators. The museum also introduced the MACAAL Lab – spaces for artistic experimentation – and the MACAAL Bootcamp, which offers workshops for emerging cultural professionals of African descent.

Othman Lazraq is a member of various institutional circles and committees, including Sotheby's 1744 Circle, the Fondation Cartier circle, the acquisition committees of the New National Museum of Monaco (NMNM) and Afreximbank, as well as the advisory board of Afikra. He previously served on the Tate Africa Acquisitions Committee (AAC).



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Since 2013, he has supported major cultural events across Africa and internationally, such as the Marrakech and Lubumbashi Biennales, the Bamako Encounters, *Afrique en Capitale* (Rabat), *Africa2020* (France), and the Lyon Biennale.

He has participated in numerous conferences and symposia worldwide, including BIENALSUR (2018), the Director's Forum at Yale University (2019), the Misk Global Forum (2021), RO.ME (2021), and Talking Galleries New York (2022).

Othman Lazraq has initiated several publications and contributed to various books, including a monograph on artist Salah Elmur, published in 2022 by the Misk Art Institute. His work has been featured in over a hundred articles and media outlets, including *CNN*, *BBC*, *Vogue*, and *Forbes*.

#### About Meriem Berrada

Meriem Berrada is an artistic director and a curator. She also works as an independent consultant alongside consulting firms in cultural engineering and strategy. Her curatorial practice critically explores the intersections of art and craft in contemporary narratives.

She is renowned for her ability to develop and lead innovative cultural projects. In 2016, she was instrumental in establishing the Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL) in Marrakech, becoming its artistic director in 2018. Her notable initiatives include a photography competition and a comprehensive training program for young cultural professionals across Africa. Recognized for her contributions, Berrada was featured in Apollo art magazine's "40 Under 40" influential art world figures and in the French ranking *100 Femmes de Culture*. She continues to mentor emerging talents through projects like NOOR Photo and Duvangu residency (Gabon). Berrada serves on prestigious juries, including those for the British Journal of Photography CNAP/ Ateliers Médicis, Goethe Institute South Africa. In 2021, Berrada was the co-curator of the 13th edition of the Rencontres de Bamako (Mali), and the head curator of *What is forgotten and what remains* at Palais de la Porte Dorée in Paris, as part of the Africa2020 cultural season.

An active contributor to international dialogues, Berrada participated in Harvard's "Future of Africa-Based Curatorial Practice" symposium and the "Museums Round Table" in San Francisco. As artistic director of Tasweer Photography Biennale (Qatar), she continues to champion African and Arab voices in global contemporary art.

#### About Zamân Books & Curating

Led by Morad Montazami and Madeleine de Colnet, editorial and curatorial platform Zamân Books & Curating explores the counter-histories of visual modernity, with a focus on Arab, African and Asian worlds. Zamân Books has as its primary mission the dissemination of the latest international thinking about art and the image, through



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monographs, artists' books, and thematic and collective publications. Recent exhibitions organised by ZBC include: Bagdad Mon Amour, Institut des Cultures d'Islam, Paris, 2018; Monaco-Alexandria. The Great Detour. World-Capitals and Cosmopolitan Surrealism, Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, 2021-2022; Casablanca Art School, Tate St-Ives/Sharjah Art Foundation/Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, 2023-2024, as well as the exhibition New Waves: Mohamed Melehi and the Casablanca Art School Archives, which took place at MACAAL in 2019-2020.

#### About Franck Houndégla

Scenographer and designer with a PhD in architecture, Franck Houndégla specialises in exhibition and museum design, entertainment venues, living spaces, and the enhancement of public spaces and heritage sites in France and abroad. He is the author of works of fiction and research articles, embracing a mixed disciplinary culture that links different design registers and spatial scales—space, object, and sign. Franck Houndégla is also curator and scenographer of the exhibition *Singulier Plurielles: Dans les Afriques contemporaines* presented in the context of Biennale Design Saint-Etienne 2022. He teaches at the École Supérieure des Beaux-arts de Bordeaux and is a visiting lecturer at the École du Patrimoine Africain in Porto-Novo (Benin). He holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in design from ENSBA Lyon and in architectural research from Université Paris-Est/Laboratoire IPRAUS - ENSA Paris-Belleville.

#### About Fondation Alliances

Founded in 2009, Fondation Alliances is a not-for-profit association backed by Groupe Alliances, the leading real-estate operator in Morocco, and whose mission is to support the social and cultural development of Morocco through specific actions. The foundation advocates for art accessible to all, through the development of significant cultural mediation to benefit all social backgrounds, thus participating in highlighting contemporary Moroccan and African art through a rigorous approach. In addition to MACAAL, Fondation Alliances has initiated five other projects:

- The Al Maaden Sculpture Park: Inaugurated in September 2013, the Al Maaden Sculpture Park features monumental sculptures by Moroccan and international artists, created exclusively in situ at Al Maaden, in Marrakech.
- Lcc Program: Launched in 2013, this programme—originally known as La Chambre Claire—is an annual event to support contemporary photography through the promotion and exhibition of an emerging artist.
- Programme Passerelles: Created in 2014, Passerelles is a programme designed to raise awareness about visual art, intended for young people from exurban areas, through workshops, tours, and encounters.
- MACAAL Residence: A residential research and production programme inaugurated in 2019.
- MACAAL Bootcamp: An intensive training programme designed for young professionals in the African art world, which includes a series of workshops,



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masterclasses, and teamwork projects supervised by recognised professionals from various sectors.