

A new beginning

4-5 October 2025

93 Mortimer Street
London, W1W 7SS



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PROGRAMME

SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER | 4PM–8PM

The Majlis | Ground Floor
Programme from 4.45pm

- Performances by Lynn Adib alongside the London Maronite Choir of Our Lady of Lebanon
- Welcome from Kamel Lazaar, Founder, Kamel Lazaar Foundation and Lina Lazaar, Founder, Ibraaz and Vice President, Kamel Lazaar Foundation
- Introduction to Ibraaz programme from Hammad Nasar, Director of Programmes and Content
- Introduction to *Parliament of Ghosts* by artist Ibrahim Mahama
- Words and performance from Naseer Shamma
- Introduction to Ibraaz Publishing from Anthony Downey
- Reading from Writing Gaza
- Talk by Patrick Chamoiseau, Cosmopoetics of Mondialité - Cosmopoétique de la Mondialité

The Minassa | Lower Ground Floor
Programme from 7.30pm

- Poetry reading from Warsan Shire
- Performance by Oum El Ghaït Benessahraoui

SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER | 5PM–8PM

- Welcome from Ibraaz
- Ibrahim Mahama and Shumon Basar in conversation

The inauguration of Ibraaz's new home at 93 Mortimer Street opens with *Parliament of Ghosts* by Ibrahim Mahama — a landmark installation that reimagines the museum as a living archive, reactivating histories of empire, migration, and collective assembly. Part of Mahama's long-term research, the work transforms reclaimed materials into sites of memory and reckoning. For this special event, Ibrahim Mahama joins writer and cultural critic Shumon Basar in conversation to discuss his practice, which spans large-scale installations, sculptures, and architectural interventions that interrogate global trade, commodification, labour, inequality, migration, and the legacies of colonialism in Africa.

- The Otolith Group and Hammad Nasar in conversation

The inaugural Library-in-Residence at Ibraaz is activated by The Otolith Group, founded in London in 2002 by Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun. Their interdisciplinary practice spans film, installation, writing, and publishing, with two decades of research-led works exploring archives, sound, and image to illuminate the cultural worlds and diasporas of the Global South. In conversation with Hammad Nasar, Director of Programmes and Content at Ibraaz, they will discuss *A Flock of Keen-eyed and Far Seeing Magpies* — the Library conceived as a live artwork. Drawing together four decades of Pan-African and Pan-Asian archives, books, maps, films, and recipes, the Library becomes a transmission point broadcasting alternative frequencies of knowledge, resistance, and possibility.

Ibrahim Mahama

Parliament of Ghosts

15 October 2025–15 February 2026

The inauguration of Ibraaz's permanent home at 93 Mortimer Street is marked by Ibrahim Mahama's *Parliament of Ghosts*, an installation that reconsiders the function of the museum itself, offering a living archive in which histories of empire, migration, and collective assembly are reactivated for the present.

Mahama's practice is grounded in the material and social histories of Ghana. For this work, he has transported timber reclaimed from the colonial railway, once central to the operations of British Empire. Laid as the floor of the Majlis (where historically a synagogue and German Atheneum once stood), this wood provides a literal and symbolic ground for new forms of gathering.

Ceremonially arranged around this floor are seventy-five chairs, each drawn from households across Ghana. Once signifiers of authority within patriarchal structures, they are here reassembled into a parliament that privileges presence and dialogue over power. Cushions — made from fabrics and leathers sourced at the local market where Mahama's studio is based — soften and animate the dark woods, while jute sacks fill the shelves around the Majlis, invoking the toil of trade, which underpins economic power through the ages.

By relocating Ghanaian material to London, Mahama enacts a form of “reverse restitution.” Rather than returning objects to former colonies, he inserts their material histories into the former imperial centre.

The gesture unsettles conventional narratives of restitution, asking instead how institutions might cultivate shared spaces of reckoning. Mahama's *Parliament* is a new lining inside the white, ornate neoclassical architecture. This schism is history in its multiple complexities.

The Majlis — traditionally a place of hospitality and deliberation in Arab and Muslim cultures — here becomes a platform for invention and exchange. A weekly public programme of lectures, performances, book launches, and song complete *Parliament of Ghosts* as a site of togetherness, remembering and speculation. A haunted host placed in service of future solidarities.



Ibrahim Mahama, *Parliament of Ghosts* (2025); courtesy of Ibraaz; ©Hugo Glendinning



The Otolith Library-in-Residence at Ibraaz (2025); ©Ollie Hammick

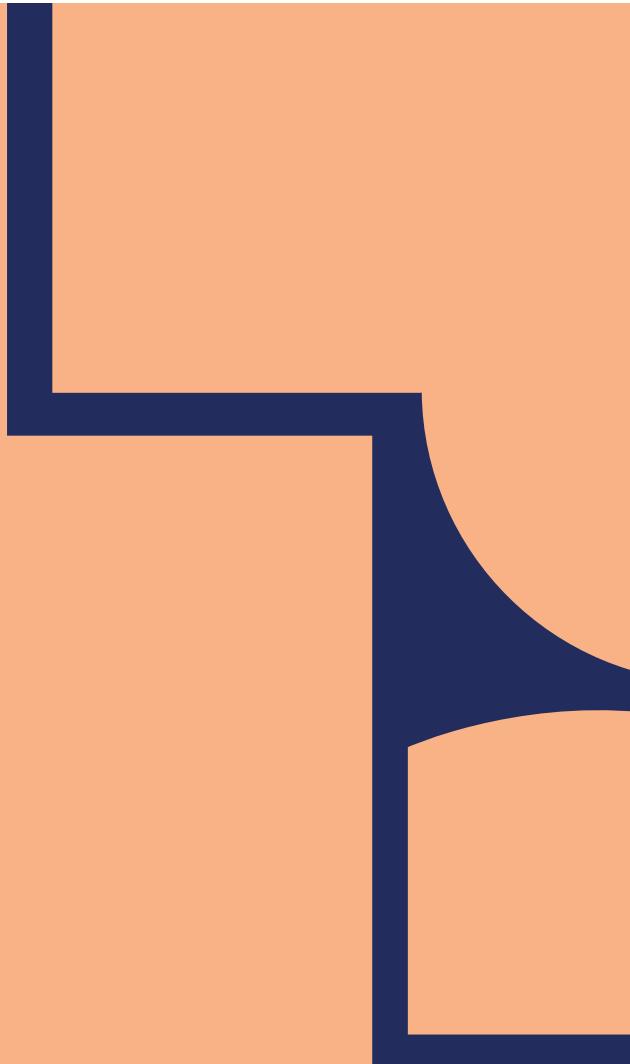
The Otolith Group

A Flock of Keen-Eyed & Far Seeing Magpies Library-in-Residence

15 October 2025–6 September 2026

The Otolith Library-in-Residence transforms research into public encounter. For over twenty years, artists Kodwo Eshun and Anjalika Sagar have gathered books, journals, records, and films – the intellectual materials that fuel their art-making. Now these collections migrate from their home-studio to public space as an invitation for collective study. Reading groups, screenings, and listening sessions in the Library, Majlis and Minassa at Ibraaz, become points of gathering and convening. Researchers, activists, and artists gather to develop new strategies for confronting our environmental and social crises. *A Flock Of Keen-eyed and Far Seeing Magpies* becomes a transmission point – broadcasting alternative frequencies of knowledge, resistance, and possibility into the present moment.

PARTICIPANTS



LYNN ADIB

Lynn Adib is a Syrian singer, composer, and improviser whose work weaves together jazz, Arabic traditions, and sacred musical forms. Trained in Damascus and later in Paris, she is acclaimed for her ability to move fluidly between maqâm, Byzantine chant, and jazz improvisation. Her debut album *Youmma* (2018) and projects such as Bedouin Burger and Nearness embody a generation of Middle Eastern musicians creating beyond cultural and stylistic boundaries.

SHUMON BASAR

Shumon Basar is a writer, thinker, and curator with over two decades of experience in the Gulf. He is co-author of *The Extreme Self* and *The Age of Earthquakes* with Douglas Coupland and Hans Ulrich Obrist, and has published books on the region including *With/Without* and *Cities from Zero*. His roles include long-term Commissioner of Art Dubai's Global Art Forum, founding member of Fondazione Prada's Thought Council, and advisor to the Royal Commission of AlUla. He has also worked with Zien, the Architectural Association, and magazines including *TANK*, *Bidoun*, and *032c*.

PATRICK CHAMOISEAU

Patrick Chamoiseau is one of Martinique's foremost writers and among the most influential thinkers of our time. A poet, novelist, and essayist, he co-founded the Créolité movement and is seen as both custodian and continuer of Édouard Glissant's legacy. His work – translated worldwide and awarded the Prix Carbet de la Caraïbe, the Prix Goncourt for *Texaco* (1992), and the Marguerite Yourcenar Prize (2023) – explores creolisation and the relational poetics of the contemporary world. For Chamoiseau, identity is not fixed but, in Glissant's sense, a relation: fluid, entangled, and ever-expanding. His vision has reshaped how the Caribbean is read globally and how the world imagines itself through the Caribbean.

ANTHONY DOWNEY

Anthony Downey is an academic, author, and editor whose interdisciplinary research explores cultural practices from the Middle East and Global South, focusing on knowledge production, digital methodologies, and AI in neo-colonial image practices. Professor of Visual Culture at Birmingham City University, he has edited the *Research/Practice* series (Sternberg/MIT Press) and previously served as Editor-in-Chief of *Ibraaz*.

WRITING GAZA

Initiated by Omar Berrada and Shivangi Mariam Raj in collaboration with Ibraaz Publishing, Writing Gaza is an editorial initiative that supports writers and artists enduring genocide. In its first phase, five Palestinian writers from Gaza are commissioned to produce short reflections and essays, each paired with a visual artist whose work they respond to. More than a publication, the project is a gesture of solidarity: providing financial support and editorial care to voices relegated to silence under famine and rubble. Across October–December 2025, their words and images will be published monthly, offering glimpses of everyday life and resilience amidst devastation – sustaining a fragile thread of dignity, trust and persistence.

IBRAHIM MAHAMA

Ibrahim Mahama is a Ghanaian artist of monumental installations. He lives and works in Accra, Kumasi and Tamale, Ghana. He is the founder of Red Clay Studio, Savannah Centre for Contemporary Arts and Nkrumah Volini.

HAMMAD NASAR

Hammad Nasar is a curator, strategist and Director of Programmes & Content at Ibraaz. Earlier, he was: Senior Research Fellow at Yale University's Paul Mellon Centre; Principal Research Fellow at UAL's Decolonising Arts Institute; Executive Director of the Stuart Hall Foundation; Head of Research & Programmes at Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong; and co-founded Green Cardamom, London. Known for collaborative, exhibition-led inquiry, his recent exhibitions, include: *Beyond the Page* (2023-4); *British Art Show 9* (2021-2); Turner Prize (2021); and Rock, Paper, Scissors – the UAE's national pavilion at the 57th Venice Biennale (2017). He is a Board Member of the Henry Moore Foundation, and a member of the Acquisition Committee for the Arts Council Collection.

THE LONDON MARONITE CHOIR OF OUR LADY OF LEBANON
The Maronite Church in the UK, served by the Lebanese Maronite Order, carries forward the rich spiritual and musical heritage of the Maronite tradition. Its choir, made up of singers from different generations, embodies a living link between past and present, as the elders pass on the sacred hymns to the younger voices. Singing in Arabic, Syriac and English, the choir presents a repertoire that reaches back to the 4th century, preserving ancient chants while embracing a vibrant, multicultural future.

THE OTOLITH GROUP

The Otolith Group, founded in London in 2002 by Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun, are artists, curators and theorists whose interdisciplinary practice spans film, installation, photography, performance, writing, publishing and collective platforms. For over two decades, they have developed research-led works that draw on archives, sound, text and image to explore the cultural worlds and diasporas of the Global South. Their projects often emerge through collaborations and affinities with artists, poets, philosophers and composers. Their works have been widely exhibited internationally, positioning them as key figures in contemporary moving image and critical thought.

OUM EL GHAÏT BENESSAHRAOUI

Oum El Ghait Benessahraoui, known as Oum, is a Moroccan singer-songwriter born in Casablanca in 1978. Her music blends her Sahrawi roots and Moroccan traditions with influences of jazz, soul, gospel and electronic music, sung primarily in Moroccan Arabic (Darija). A cultural ambassador from Morocco, Oum uses her powerful voice and humanist themes to explore identity and culture through her critically acclaimed albums, including *Soul of Morocco* and *Zarabi*.

NASEER SHAMMA

Naseer Shamma is widely regarded as one of the most important oud players of our time. A virtuoso performer, composer and innovator, he studied in Baghdad before founding the Arab Oud House in Cairo in 1999, which has since trained a generation of leading oud artists across the Arab world. Celebrated for both his technical mastery and his lyrical compositions, Shamma has expanded the oud's expressive range, creating new repertoires and techniques that bridge tradition and modernity.

WARSAN SHIRE

Warsan Shire is a Somali poet and writer, born in Kenya, raised in London, and now based in Los Angeles. Her debut collection, *Bless The Daughter Raised By A Voice In Her Head* (2022), followed the acclaimed pamphlets *Teaching My Mother How to Give Birth* (2011) and *Her Blue Body* (2015). She won the inaugural Brunel University African Poetry Prize (2013) and was London's first Young Poet Laureate (2014). Shire collaborated with Beyoncé on *Lemonade* (2016) and *Black Is King* (2020) and her work has been widely translated and published internationally.

Ibraaz

A brave space for art, culture and ideas from the Global Majority.

Ibraaz is a London-based, UK-registered charity dedicated to art, culture and ideas from the Global Majority. Our programme spans film, music, debates, exhibitions, food, prayers, podcasts, playlists and publications – each a way of holding life in its fullness.

Founded by the Kamel Lazaar Foundation in 2011 as an online platform for visual culture from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), active until 2017, Ibraaz has since evolved to amplify the voices of artists, thinkers and creatives. To welcome, to share, to sit together: these are not metaphors for Ibraaz, but foundations. Beyond its walls, Ibraaz's message will carry further through its editorial activities, on screen and page.

Rooted in the cultural pluralism of its North African origins – and taking its name from the Arabic word meaning ‘to shine a light on’ – Ibraaz is a brave space for debate over dogma, inquiry over assumption, where culture becomes a way of reclaiming our shared humanity.



Kamel Lazaar Foundation

KEY INITIATIVES

Several initiatives fall under the Foundation's remit across different topics, media and geographies.



Tilal Utique
A centre focused on convening, exchange and artistic



B7L9
An independent art station located in the semi-rural suburbs of Tunis, offering a full annual programme of artistic and cultural events accessible-to-all free of.



Ibraaz
A leading forum for exchange and critical reflection on the visual arts in the MENA



Art Collection
An inventory of over 1200 contemporary pieces featuring MENA artists.



Future Lab Tunisia
A music education project at the Ibn Khaldun de la Manouba College, unlocking individual potential through music and enabling young people to discover entirely new perspectives.



Publications
Works highlighting cultural vitality in the MENA region, such as: "Artists of Tunisia" (2019) | "Dissonant Archives" (2015) | "Uncommon Grounds" (2014) | *The Future of a Promise* (2011).



Jaou Biennial
A biennial event promoting inter-cultural dialogue and contemporary creative practices.



Venice Biennale Participation
Tunisian pavilion curated by KLF.



Collaborations & Partnerships
Partnerships with international cultural faces to promote Tunisia as a hub for contemporary

The Kamel Lazaar Foundation (KLF) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion and support of art and culture in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Established in 2004 by Kamel Lazaar, a Tunisian-Swiss financier and art collector, the foundation is head-quartered in Geneva, Switzerland, with active operations in Tunisia and other parts of the MENA region. KLF's mission is to foster cultural exchange and understanding by supporting a wide array of arts initiatives spanning several key areas including visual arts, music, literature and the performing arts.

KLF actively supports arts education and capacity-building initiatives. By partnering with universities and cultural institutions, KLF facilitates workshops, seminars and training programmes designed to nurture the next generation of artists and cultural leaders. These programmes seek to equip young artists with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in a competitive global arts environment. KLF is also committed to expanding the reach of MENA artists by enabling their participation in international exhibitions and cultural events.

The foundation provides grants and financial support to artists, allowing them to share their work with a broader audience and engage with the global arts community. The preservation of cultural heritage is another cornerstone of KLF's mission. The foundation undertakes projects aimed at documenting and conserving the region's rich artistic and cultural legacy. This includes supporting the restoration of historical sites and buildings, as well as archiving significant cultural artefacts.

Through these initiatives, KLF is making a profound impact on the cultural fabric of the MENA region. By fostering creativity, facilitating dialogue and preserving heritage, KLF is not only supporting the growth of the arts but also contributing to a more inclusive and culturally rich society. Its highly successful art station, B7L9, located in an underprivileged neighbourhood in Tunis, is an exemplary model of using art and culture as a vehicle for social inclusion.

Over the past two years, KLF has been expanding its collaborations with like-minded foundations and institutions. It is preparing to launch Arts for Humanity out of Tilal Utique—an artist-in-residence programme along with a convening infrastructure that places arts at its core. Utique, located in Tunisia, is one of the oldest Phoenician settlements in North Africa, reportedly founded in the 11th century BCE. This expansion underscores KLF's commitment to preserving the cultural heritage and promoting the vibrant arts community within the region.

Ibraaz

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