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# Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel announces representation of Beninese artist Pélagie Gbaguidi.

Maxwell Rabb

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Portrait of Pélagie Gbaguidi. Photo by Isabelle Pateer. Courtesy of Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel.

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Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel has announced the representation of Beninese artist Pélagie Gbaguidi. The artist will be featured in the gallery's presentation at Frieze New York 2024 and will present her first solo exhibition with the gallery in early 2025.

Born in 1965 in Dakar, Senegal, Gbaguidi studied in Liège, Belgium, graduating in 1995. Her work addresses colonial histories and trauma through vivid paintings and drawings. She has been included in several major exhibitions, including the 2020 Berlin Biennale, Manifesta 13 ("Les Parallèles du sud") in 2020, and Documenta 14 in 2017. Her upcoming solo show at the Musée de Rochechouart, planned to open on June 28th, will explore the psychological impacts of historical events.



Pélagie Gbaguidi, installation view of Documenta 14 at Neue Galerie in Kassel, Germany, 2017. Photo by Mathias Voelzk. Courtesy of Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel.

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She is perhaps best known for her drawing series “Code Noir,” named after the French “bible of slavery” that regulated the lives of slaves in all the French colonies until April 1848, drawing attention to the violence of the slave trade and its frequently underestimated repercussions on contemporary society.

Gbaguidi sees herself as a contemporary *griot*—a West African storyteller who preserves community history—using her art to archive and transform traumatic historical legacies into collective memory. In this way, the artist sees her work as the connection between her ancestors and the present.

“During my research, I became interested in the repercussions of history on a psychological level,” said Gbaguidi in a press statement. “I undertook a work of transformation through my practice, transforming individual trauma into an archive and then into a collective excavation. I am an archive, we are archives, and if we share them, we might better understand ourselves and the world we live in.” ■

Maxwell Rabb  
Maxwell Rabb is Artsy’s Staff Writer.