

Appau Junior Boakye-Yiadom announced as inaugural Donna Lynas Residency recipient - a call to action for the arts industry and support for an artist in memory of influential curator

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Artist Appau Junior Boakye-Yiadom is today announced as the inaugural recipient of the Donna Lynas Residency - a pioneering opportunity for an artist at a key moment in their career in memory of the Curator who was widely known, in her roles including as Director of Wysing Arts Centre, as a long-term supporter of artist development. The residency celebrates Lynas' legacy but it also comes at a critical moment in terms of conversations around artist pay, and the sustainability of artists' careers, long-term.

The residency is supported by four cultural organisations over three years and is a partnership between Wysing Arts Centre, South London Gallery, Modern Art Oxford and Somerset House Studios. Boakye-Yiadom will receive £16,000 a year for three years (2023-6) and the support of each partner - including mentoring, use of facilities and potential inclusion in public programmes, if the artist should wish.

The artist says, "As someone who is rarely awarded prizes this opportunity comes with incredible surprise and excitement. It is reassuring to have the support in allowing me the time, space and facilities to experiment within my practice and I'm looking forward to exploring the possibilities that are now open to me and the potential of my work entering unexpected places."



Each institution involved had a relationship with Donna Lynas (1967-2021). Lynas was Curator at Modern Art Oxford (1995-1999) and then Curator at South London Gallery (1999-2005), and was an instrumental advisor for Somerset House Studios whilst they were building their studios and artist development programme. Lynas was widely known in the arts industry for supporting artists over long periods of time, and giving them opportunities when they needed it the most. Many artists who were supported by Wysing at critical points in their careers have credited time spent at Wysing on residency, without pressure of an outcome, as pivotal in the development of their practice including Helen Cammock, Tai Shani and Jesse Darling.

Each institution engaged in the Donna Lynas Residency programme is doing so because it is clear that cultural institutions need to contribute actively to finding ways to make being an artist a real career choice for all. Internationally, other examples of this model of funding can also be seen in New York (info [here](#)) and another in Ireland (info [here](#)).

Led by Wysing, 30 people who had relationships with Donna - writers, artists, curators - were asked to nominate two practitioners who they think could particularly benefit from the opportunity. A panel of representatives from each organisation then invited four of the shortlisted artists to a paid interview.

Artist Sonia Boyce who proposed Appau Jnr and says of his appointment, “I have known Junior’s art practice since he was a student at Winchester School of Art in the early 2000s and have always been impressed by the quiet sophistication of his formal language. Always shot through with a wry sense of humour and musicality, he manages, in subtle ways, to bring an

audience into dialogue with a contemporary African diasporic sensibility. Having some insight into Wysing's ethos, I can picture Junior not only benefitting from the support that such an opportunity affords, but also contributing significantly to the communal generosity that underpins the Arts Centre's purpose. He is an artist who is engaged with and supports other artists and is truly at that bursting point. The benefits of such an opportunity will, I feel sure, bear fruits for a long time to come. I feel Junior is just on the cusp of a breakthrough into wider recognition. This residency would help open that gateway”

Rosie Cooper, Director, Wysing Arts Centre, says, *“The Donna Lynas Residency is an important way to acknowledge the legacy of Donna Lynas, Wysing's former Director (1967-2021) in particular her long-term support for artists, and advocacy around artist pay. Wysing continues to find new ways to support artists through innovative commissions and residencies, and I am delighted to be working with partner institutions who also have the shared desire to create new models for artist support. Reports such as 'Structurally F****ed' reveal the need to radically change how we pay and work with artists, and we hope that this project can make a contribution to this wider, urgent conversation. I am delighted that Appau Junior Boakye-Yiadom is receiving this support from us at a crucial moment in his career. His practice is interdisciplinary, thoughtful, generative and complex, and its durational nature is perfectly suited to this opportunity. I have no doubt that we will all learn a lot through this new initiative, and I am very much looking forward to seeing how it unfolds”*

There is no expectation of an outcome: the purpose is to provide stability, and time to reflect outside the pressures of production and the habits of daily life. The cycle of production and delivery that characterises a majority of artist opportunities offered by institutions, and the need to grasp these in order to make a living, does not allow for the essential reflective time necessary to develop, reflect and progress in new directions.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Images and press materials -

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1GQ2rc4cyN5cjzrAvHeeT2k-Zk7rCQk0p?usp=share_link

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Appau Jnr Boakye-Yiadom (b. London) lives and works in London. Working across multidisciplinary practice- including found materials and objects, sculpture, photography, sound, performance, archive and self-produced moving image. Creating installations where the mediums are constantly conversing with each other

and multilayered in references highlights cultural collision where parameter lines are blurred. Incorporating snippets of film footage and fragments of sound into works, as well as collaborating with musicians for live improvisation.

Boakye-Yiadom lives and works in London. Recent shows include, *'Ritornellos'*, Nicolletti Gallery, London (2023); *'Receiver'* Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea (2022); *'Before: Socialized, Circularized, Linearized, Artificialized, Corrupt Time'* Southwark Park Galleries/Dilston Groove (2022); *'Untitled Art and The Conditions of our Time'*, Kettles Yard, Cambridge (2021), *'Solos'*, Goldsmiths CCA (2020), London; *'Jerwood Solo Presentations'*, London (2019); *'Before: Adaptive Rhythm'*, Black Tower Projects, London (2018); *'The Weather Garden: Anne Hardy curates the Arts Council Collection'*, Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne (2019); *'Michael Jackson: On The Wall'*, Touring National Portrait Gallery, London, Grand Palais, Paris, Bundeskunsthalle Bonn, Germany (2018/19); *13th Dak'Art Biennale*, Dakar (2018);

Live Performance & Screening works include *During: Compliments*, Fruitmarket, Scotland (2022), Live Art Commissions, The Roberts Institute of Art, London (2022), *Hanging Out*, Artists' Moving Image Festival, LUX Scotland, UK (2019), *Nocturnal Creatures*, Whitechapel Gallery Festival, London, UK (2019), *Intimate Trespass*, Serpentine Gallery, London, UK (2017)

Additional quotes from partners

Marie McPartlin, Director, Somerset House Studios, said, *"Donna was a radical and inspiring presence in the arts, as much for experimental music as the visual arts, and endlessly generous with her time as a critical friend to Somerset House Studios. Wysing and the Studios worked together many times, formally and informally, with artists moving between our organisations, and as guest curators of Wysing's influential annual music festival, Wysing Polyphonic. We're very happy to be working with all the partners involved to celebrate her legacy, support Appau Jnr, and to continue finding ways to improve conditions for artists in the wider sector long-term"*

Paul Hobson, Director, Modern Art Oxford, said, *"We are delighted to be working with Appau Junior Boakye-Yiadom as part of the inaugural Donna Lynas Residency. Junior works across multi-media installation and performance highlighting moments of cultural collision and we are excited about his participation in our programme. This new initiative involving Somerset House, South London Gallery, Wysing Arts Centre and Modern Art Oxford offers a new model of sustained support to an artist and is a testament to the enduring legacy of Donna's support of so many artists during her distinguished career, which began as an Exhibitions Organiser at Modern Art Oxford in the 1990s."*

Margot, Heller, Director of the South London Gallery, said, *"Donna Lynas was an inspired, thoughtful curator who cared profoundly about artists and social justice. She made a great impact on the South London Gallery during her years here in the late 90s and early 2000s, especially through the SLG's live art programme which she championed with tireless passion."*

She was committed to forging long-term relationships with artists so we are particularly honoured to be working together with Wysing Arts Centre, Modern Art Oxford and Somerset House on the inaugural Donna Lynas Residency to support Appau Jnr Boakye-Yiadom over the next three years.”

About Wysing Arts Centre

Wysing Arts Centre is based in rural Cambridgeshire, UK, ten miles from central Cambridge. Set across 11 acres and comprising studios, accommodation, fields, a woodland, ceramics and recording facilities, Wysing supports artists through an internationally-facing programme of residencies and commissions, engaging publics of all ages through workshops, learning, events, online activity and gatherings. Wysing supports artists at critical moments in their careers, and who often do not receive support and opportunity elsewhere. Wysing's vision is to cultivate the freewheeling imagination; it supports ideas and practices that shape the world. More can be discovered about Wysing's programme and history at wysingartscentre.org/.

About Modern Art Oxford

Located in one of the world's great cities of learning, Modern Art Oxford is a leading contemporary art space with an international reputation for innovative and ambitious programming. We promote creativity in all its visual forms as an agent of social change. Our programmes, both in person and online, are shaped by a belief in dialogue between contemporary art and ideas and celebrate the relevance of contemporary visual culture to society today.

About the South London Gallery

The South London Gallery (SLG) was founded in the 19th century by philanthropist William Rossiter to 'bring art to the people of south London'. Today the gallery comprises its original site at 65 Peckham Road; the Fire Station which opened to the public in 2018; Art Block, a space for local children and families on Sceaux Gardens Estate; and two permanent gardens. The SLG has an international reputation for its contemporary art exhibitions by established, mid-career and younger artists and programme of film and performance events. Its highly regarded, free education programme includes a peer-led young people's forum; family workshops; artist-led projects and commissions on local housing estates; and a programme for looked after children.

About Somerset House Studios

Somerset House Studios is a space for experimentation in the centre of London connecting artists, makers and thinkers with audiences. Located inside the repurposed former Inland Revenue building, the Studios supports artists across disciplines to push bold ideas, engage with urgent issues and experiment with new technologies.

Up to 70 artists are resident at any one time for a period of between one and seven

years, with a number of shorter term national and international residency

