



Tabita Rezaire
Calabash Nebula: Cosmological Tales of Connection

17 September 2025 to 11 January 2026

As part of its new exhibition format WMW Contemporary, the Weltmuseum Wien presents the first solo exhibition in Austria by multidisciplinary artist and activist Tabita Rezaire (*1989), who lives in French Guiana.

In her work, Rezaire celebrates the cyclical nature of life, questions colonial power relations, and opens our eyes to a cosmology in which space is not just a place of research and conquest. Instead, Rezaire defines it as a living and fascinating place with which we are connected.

The exhibition title ***Calabash Nebula: Cosmological Tales of Connection*** refers to a planetary nebula some 5,000 light years away – the remnant of a dying star that is in the process of passing its outer layers into space. Its shape is reminiscent of a calabash (a hollowed-out and dried shell of a bottle gourd). In many African and Indigenous cultures, this vessel is considered a symbol of memory, healing, and cosmic balance. The shape thus becomes a symbol of the complex interplay of different forms of knowledge and worldviews beyond tradition and modernity.

Claudia Banz, Director of Weltmuseum Wien: *„I am delighted that we are able to exhibit Tabita Rezaire's work at the Weltmuseum Wien. Contemporary art allows visitors to experience the museum's collections from a new perspective: In her work, Tabita Rezaire draws on materials, cultural techniques, and spiritual symbols such as calabashes, indigo, and deities, combining them with contemporary issues of healing, technology, ecology, and neo-colonial structures. This creates a space of resonance between historical objects and contemporary art, highlighting the relevance of ethnological collections for our present day.“*



The exhibition spans three rooms and features three of Rezaire's visionary installations that delve deep into her artistic practice, in which Indigenous wisdom, Western science, and spiritual rituals are interwoven with digital technologies: *OMI: Yemoja Temple*, an immersive spatial sculpture created in collaboration with Yussef Agbo-Ola (Olaniyi Studio); *Omo Elu*, a textile homage to the many manifestations of the deity Yemoja and the symbolic power of indigo; and *Des/astres*, a walk-in, poetic video installation that explores the astronomical traditions of the Amazon region and the geopolitically strategic position of French Guiana as a central location for the European space programme.

OMI: Yemoja Temple

The temple is designed in the shape of a drop and is dedicated to the Yoruba deity Yemoja – mother of the waters and all creatures living therein. The installation was created in 2024 in close collaboration with Yussef Agbo-Ola (Olaniyi Studio) and scientists Anja Wegner and Alex Jordan of the Max Planck Institute. It is conceptually based on a joint Research trip to Tanzania that was undertaken in order to study the local aquatic fauna. The combination of architecture, biology, ecology, and spirituality creates an immersive space that offers visitors new perspectives on the relationships between water, humans, and superhuman beings.

Textiles dyed in a deep shade of indigo and furnished with maritime motives are stretched out in a modular wooden structure, paying homage to the symbolic language of patterned fabrics and their cultural significance. A sound composition of ritual song and scientific-artistic reflections opens up a space for a richly layered experience.

The work combines research in biology and ecology with spiritual knowledge and invites visitors into a holistic encounter with water as a source of life and as a place of cosmic communion.

Omo Elu

The seven textile works show the orisha Yemoja in various guises: as mother, creator, healer, ruler, dancer, and as water itself. Orishas are divine entities venerated by the Yoruba in Western Africa as well as by some Afro-diasporic communities.

The various shades of blue reflect its multifaceted nature. The symbolic pigment indigo is used in many cultures for dyeing textiles, as body adornment, and for ritual healing practices. In the Yoruba language, 'omo elu' roughly translates as 'child of the indigo'. Rezaire addresses indigo as part of her profound occupation with the Nigerian culture of dyeing and her broad commitment to natural dyes. She also passes this knowledge on through her own plant dye farm at her place of residence in French Guiana.

Omo Elu is an homage to the depth, power, and spiritual dimension of indigo and to Yemoja as a complex, creative deity.



Des/astres

The title is a play on the French words for 'disaster' and 'celestial bodies', referring to the contradictory reality of a territory that is shaped by colonial exploitation and serves as the European Space Agency's (ESA) most important launch site today.

Des/astres is inspired by the *tukusipan*, the traditional communal houses of the Indigenous Wayana people in French Guiana. This traditional room serves as a place for gatherings, celebrations, and exchanges under the protection of cosmic beings.

Inside the exhibition architecture, a circular video is projected onto the ceiling, creating an immersive, planetarium-like experience. Created in 2024, the 61-minute video installation explores the astronomical traditions of the Amazon region and French Guiana's strategic position as a central location for the European space programme.

Rezaire contrasts images of the Amazon and its sacred sites with images of ecological destruction and colonial legacies. Interviews with guardians of spiritual knowledge and Western scientists open up a space where cosmological and scientific perspectives meet.

Traditionally crafted hammocks invite the public to take a break.

This Weltmuseum Wien exhibition emerged out of a collaboration with the participating artists and follows on from three exhibitions in Madrid, Paris, and Berlin.

The three works *Des/astres* (2024), *OMI: Yemoja Temple* (2024), and *Omo Elu* (2024) were presented by TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary in the Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum, Madrid, from 8 October 2024 to 12 January 2025 in the exhibition *Tabita Rezaire. Calabash Nebula*, curated by Chus Martínez. The work *Des/astres* was presented at the Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, as part of the Open Space programme from 9 April to 31 August, 2025 curated by Claudia Buizza and Ludovic Delalande. The work *OMI: Yemoja Temple* had previously been on show from 25 April to 7 July 2024 in the exhibition *Tabita Rezaire x Yussef Agbo-Ola. Omi Libations*, curated by Christina Landbrecht, at Schering Stiftung in Berlin. *OMI: Yemoja Temple* was co-produced by TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Madrid, and Schering Stiftung, Berlin. *Des/astres* (2024) has been commissioned and co-produced by Fondation Louis Vuitton and TBA21 Thyssen Bornemisza Art Contemporary.

Exhibition Website: <https://www.weltmuseumwien.at/en/exhibitions/tabita-rezaire/>



Biographies

Tabita Rezaire

Tabita Rezaire was born in 1989 in Paris, France. She lives and works in Cayenne, French Guiana, where she is caring for AMAKABA a centre for the arts of earth, body, and sky.

<https://www.amakaba.org/>

Tabita Rezaire has already been featured in numerous international exhibitions, including at the Centre Pompidou, Paris; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; MASP, São Paulo; Serpentine, London; MoMa, NY; New Museum, NY; Gropius Bau, Berlin; MMOMA, Moskau; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; ICA London; V&A London; National Gallery Denmark; The Broad LA; MoCADA, NY; Tate Modern, London; Museum of Modern Art, Paris – as well as at international Biennials in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Lagos, Kochi, Athen, Helsinki, Busan, Berlin and Sydney.

Yussef Agbo-Ola

Yussef Agbo-Ola was born in 1990 in Newport News, Virginia, USA. Today the artist and medicinal architect lives and works between London, Lagos and the Amazon Forest. In his practice he reflects hybrid identities and relationships to different landscapes, ecologies, and cultural rituals.

Yussef Agbo-Ola has led art and architectural commissions for the United Nations, Institute of Contemporary Art (London), Serpentine Gallery London, Van Abbe Museum, TEDx East End, BBC Arts, Museum Folkwang, Venice Architectural Biennials, Palais de Tokyo, Tai Kwun Arts Center, Sharjah Architecture Triennial, and Lexus Automotive Innovation Centre Japan, among others. Agbo-Ola is the founder Olaniyi Studio and is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Architecture at Columbia GSAPP where he directs an experimental design studio called the 'The Art of Poetic Environmental Architecture'.

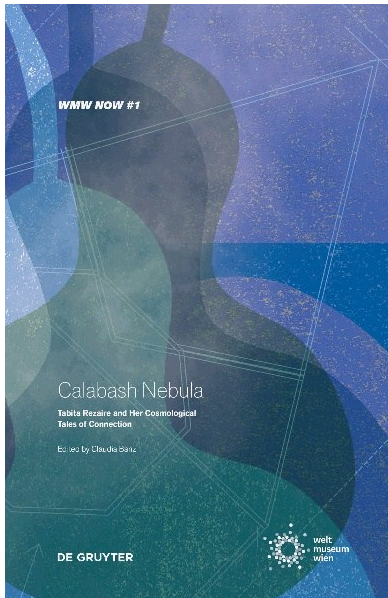


WMW Contemporary

The new exhibition format at the Weltmuseum Wien shows that an ethnological museum is a living space for contemporary artistic engagement and thus much more than just a venue for exhibiting historical artefacts. *WMW Contemporary* brings the museum's historical collections into dialogue with current social and cultural issues. The focus is on international artists – especially from the Global South and the diaspora – who open up new perspectives, make marginalised voices visible and critically question existing narratives.

In their works, the invited actors reflect on global environmental issues, neo-colonialism, identity, and the relationships between Western science, indigenous knowledge, and mythology. WMW Contemporary thus sends a clear signal about the social relevance and topicality of an ethnological museum: as a place of debate, exchange, and multifaceted memory.

Publication



Calabash Nebula: Tabita Rezaire and Her Cosmological Tales of Connection

Volume 1 in the series: *WMW NOW*

Ed. by Claudia Banz

64 pages

Softcover, 15 × 23 cm

English

Published by DeGruyter

Price: € 18

Available at the Museum's shop and online.

WMW NOW is a newly developed publication format that focuses on current exhibition and research projects of the Weltmuseum Wien. The aim is to question and expand existing narratives, promote multi-perspective approaches, and critically examine socially relevant issues.



Calabash Nebula

Leporello for Kids

Young visitors aged 6 to 10 can pick up a free children's folder (in German). Accompanied by Yemoja, the mother of all orishas, they will learn interesting facts about the three artworks on display, through which artist Tabita Rezaire expresses the idea that everything is connected – people, animals, plants, water, and the stars.

Available free at the museum's ticket office.

Press Photographs

Press releases and images for up-to-date coverage of special exhibitions and projects at the Weltmuseum Wien are available for download free of charge from our press area:

<https://www.weltmuseumwien.at/en/press/>

Tabita Rezaire, 2023 © Yussef Agbo-Ola



Tabita Rezaire
Omo Elu, 2024
Exhibition view: *Tabita Rezaire. Calabash Nebula: Cosmological Tales of Connection*
© KHM-Museumsverband, Weltmuseum Wien, 2025
Photo: Daniel Sostaric



Tabita Rezaire
Omo Elu, 2024
Exhibition view: *Tabita Rezaire. Calabash Nebula: Cosmological Tales of Connection*
© KHM-Museumsverband, Weltmuseum Wien, 2025
Photo: Daniel Sostaric



Tabita Rezaire
Omo Elu, 2024
 Exhibition view: *Tabita Rezaire. Calabash Nebula: Cosmological Tales of Connection*
 © KHM-Museumsverband, Weltmuseum Wien, 2025
 Photo: Daniel Sostaric



Tabita Rezaire
Omo Elu, 2024
 Exhibition view: *Tabita Rezaire. Calabash Nebula: Cosmological Tales of Connection*
 © KHM-Museumsverband, Weltmuseum Wien, 2025
 Photo: Daniel Sostaric



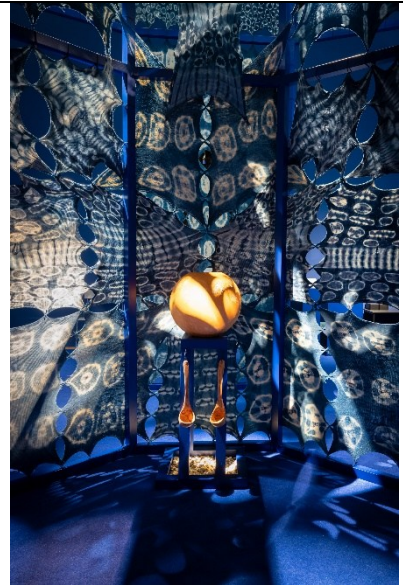
Tabita Rezaire
Des/astres, 2024
 Exhibition view: *Tabita Rezaire. Calabash Nebula: Cosmological Tales of Connection*
 © KHM-Museumsverband, Weltmuseum Wien, 2025
 Photo: Daniel Sostaric



Yussef Agbo-Ola [Olaniyi Studio] und Tabita Rezaire [AMAKABA]
OMI: Yemoja Temple, 2024
 Exhibition view: *Tabita Rezaire. Calabash Nebula: Cosmological Tales of Connection*
 © KHM-Museumsverband, Weltmuseum Wien, 2025
 Photo: Daniel Sostaric



Yussef Agbo-Ola [Olaniyi Studio] und Tabita Rezaire [AMAKABA]
OMI: Yemoja Temple, 2024
Exhibition view: *Tabita Rezaire. Calabash Nebula: Cosmological Tales of Connection*
© KHM-Museumsverband, Weltmuseum Wien, 2025
Photo: Daniel Sostaric



Yussef Agbo-Ola [Olaniyi Studio] und Tabita Rezaire [AMAKABA]
OMI: Yemoja Temple, 2024
Exhibition view: *Tabita Rezaire. Calabash Nebula: Cosmological Tales of Connection*
© KHM-Museumsverband, Weltmuseum Wien, 2025
Photo: Daniel Sostaric



Events

The supporting cultural education programme for children, adults, and schools will be regularly supplemented and expanded during the course of the exhibition. Detailed information on all programme items and general information on the special exhibition can be found here:

<https://www.weltmuseumwien.at/en/exhibitions/tabita-rezaire/#accompanying-programme>

Subject to change!

**Opening times, tickets, entrance fees**

www.weltmuseumwien.at/en/information

Additional information regarding your visit

Guided tours, bookings, and reservations for events

+43 1 534 30 - 5150

kulturvermittlung@weltmuseumwien.at

Information, questions, and suggestions

+43 1 534 30 - 5052

info@weltmuseumwien.at

Exhibition programme and events

All events are listed online in the Weltmuseum Wien [event calendar](#).

Social Media

Follow the Weltmuseum Wien on Facebook and Instagram.

#WeltmuseumWien

Journalist accreditation

Journalists visiting the KHM-Museumsverband for professional purposes are entitled to free admission to its exhibitions and locations. Please register at presse@weltmuseumwien.at at least two working days in advance.

Please identify your medium, specify the date of your visit and attach a scan of your valid press pass. Thank you!

Press Office

Mag. Dr. Wolfgang Lamprecht (head of department)

Mag. Sarah Aistleitner

Tanja Stigler

T +43 1 52524 - 4021, - 4025, - 4019

presse@weltmuseumwien.at