



Friday Forum: Africa Fashion

There is much to learn from the world's most dynamic fashion scene. Join us as we examine the future of the fashion industry through the lens of Africa. We'll be joined by industry leaders including sustainability expert Hadeel Osman, fashion designer Nkwo Onwuka, Nataal Magazine co-founders Marie Gomis-Trezise and Helen Jennings and fashion and textile designer Tolu Coker who will join us to explore the transformative power of digital technologies, the changing landscape of fashion and question the impacts of our take-make-waste economy.

"What we see in the current fashion scene in the African continent is a story of self-representation, self-promotion and an abundance of agency, largely thanks to digital channels," says Africa Fashion Senior Curator Christine Checinska. Join the curators Christine and Elisabeth to unpack this debate then grab a drink with other creative industry professionals before enjoying the late opening at the museum.

Using the V&A's major exhibitions as our starting point, the Friday Forums bring together curators, researchers, designers and makers to break down the latest ideas and innovations in design discourse and use this to shape how we look at the future.

Programme

15:00 Introduction and housekeeping, Friday Forums Senior Producer

15:05 Opening address: Curators Talk

Christine Checinska, Senior Curator, Africa and Diaspora, Textiles & Fashion and
Elisabeth Murray, Project Curator, Africa Fashion

15:20 Hadeel Osman (joining remotely)

Forbes Africa Under 30, Creative Director, Sustainability Consultant

15:30 Nkwo Onwuka

Founder and Creative Director of Nkwo, a sustainable clothing brand in Nigeria

15:40 Tolu Coker

Fashion and Textiles Designer

15:50 Marie Gomis-Trezise & Helen Jennings

Co-founders of Nataal, the leading media brand celebrating contemporary African creativity

16:00 Panel discussion hosted by Christine Checinska and Elisabeth Murray

16:40 Q&A

17:00 Drinks and networking

18:00 Close

Programme subject to change.

Filming and photography will take place at this event.

Join the conversation #vaacademy

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Speaker Bios

Dr Christine Checinska is the V&A's inaugural Senior Curator of African and African Diaspora Fashion and Lead Curator of the Africa Fashion exhibition, July 2022 – April 2023.

Prior to joining the V&A, Christine worked as a womenswear designer, academic, artist and curator. Her creative practice and research explore the relationship between fashion, culture and race. Christine's recent exhibitions include an intervention for Makers Eye: Stories of Craft, July-October 2021, Crafts Council Gallery, and Folded Life February 2021, Johanne Jacobs Museum, Zurich, Switzerland. Her recent publications include 'Re-Fashioning African Diasporic Masculinities' in Fashion and Postcolonial Critique, Elke Gaugele and Monica Tilton (eds.), 2019. In 2016 she delivered the TedxTalk Disobedient Dress: Fashion as Everyday Activism.

In industry for over thirty years, Christine has created womenswear collections for iconic British brands such as Margaret Howell, where she was a Senior Designer, during the late 1990s.

Instagram: [@checinskachristine](https://www.instagram.com/checinskachristine)

Twitter: [@DrCChecinska](https://twitter.com/DrCChecinska)

Elisabeth Murray is the Project Curator of the Africa Fashion exhibition and a contributor to the accompanying publication. She joined the Performance, Furniture, Textiles and Fashion department at the V&A in 2016. Prior to working on Africa Fashion, Elisabeth worked across the 20th-century and contemporary fashion collections and contributed to the Mary Quant exhibition.

Before joining the V&A Elisabeth worked in the Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection at Kensington Palace. Elisabeth has an MA in Museum Studies from UCL, specialising in audience representation in museums.'

Instagram: [@elisabeth_m_murray](https://www.instagram.com/elisabeth_m_murray)

Hadeel Osman is a Sudanese creative director, stylist, sustainability consultant and radio presenter. She is amongst the Forbes Africa 30 Under 30 List (2020) and the 100 Most Influential Young Africans (2020) and is the founder of multidisciplinary creative studio DAVU Studio. With vast professional and personal experiences in the past ten years across Asia, North America and Africa, Hadeel has worked across multimedia, visual communications, creative direction, design and training.

In addition, Hadeel is an advocate for change and development across Africa and is a low-impact living activist, heavily involved in the evolution of the regional contemporary, fashion

scene into a fully functioning, sustainable industry, all while researching the continental secondhand and resale fashion markets for their overall impact.

Website: [DAVU Studio](#)

Instagram: [@mshadeel](#)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/hadeelosman>

Helen Jennings is editorial director of Nataal, an award-winning digital platform, magazine and event series celebrating creativity from Africa and beyond. Formerly editor of Arise magazine, she has contributed to titles such as Vogue, Dazed, WePresent, Apartamento, Sunday Times and Lula. She penned the coffee table book New African Fashion (Prestel, 2011) and has written essays for other books including Africa Modern, Fashion Cities Africa and Fashion & Post-Colonial Critique.

Website: [nataal.com](#)

Instagram: [@nataalmedia](#)

Facebook: [@NataalMedia](#)

Twitter: [@NataalMedia](#)

Marie Gomis-Trezise is creative director of Nataal, an award-winning digital platform, magazine and event series celebrating contemporary creativity from Africa and beyond. Marie is also founder and chief curator of Galerie Number 8, an art gallery representing a globally diverse roster of emerging artists in photography and mixed media, all of whom have an unflinching gaze and a desire to dismantle cultural and sexual barriers and constructs.

Website: [nataal.com](#)

Instagram: [@nataalmedia](#)

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Nkwo Onwuka is a seasoned sustainability expert in the African creative community and the founder of NKWO, an artisanal brand at the forefront of sustainability and social innovation in the Nigerian fashion industry. Through the brand's core values of environmental conservation, textile waste reduction and traditional craft skills preservation, Nkwo is devoted to creating lasting change on the continent by transforming the lives of women in vulnerable communities,

promoting a positive image of Africa through her interpretations of it's rich history and culture and by introducing more mindful ways of modern garment and textile production.

Website: www.nkwo.design

Instagram: [@nkwo_official](https://www.instagram.com/nkwo_official)

Twitter: [@nkwo_official](https://twitter.com/nkwo_official)

Tolu Coker is a young British-Nigerian Fashion and Textiles Designer, Multi-Disciplinary Artist and University Lecturer primarily based in London, building her eponymous brand TOLU COKER. Launching her brand in late 2018, presenting an array of visual arts projects, womenswear and menswear collections, Coker's work has garnered international attention. Coker's designs are informed by her multi-disciplinary practice and explore the politics of identity, culture, social and environmental climates. With collections focused on championing sustainable practice and cultural exchange, her work is a marriage of innovative textile and print solutions, artisan craftsmanship and silhouettes which flatter the body. These projects, which use fashion to shine light on important societal issues, have set precedent for a new trajectory of projects and work, in which Coker continues to use her platform to highlight important issues across the globe. In addition to being selected as one of Teen Vogue's 'Generation Next', Coker was nominated as 'Woman of The Year 2021', named on Drapers 2021 '30 under 30' list and recently the Forbes 2022 30 under 30 list.

Website: <http://www.tolucoker.com/>

Instagram: [@tolucoker](https://www.instagram.com/tolucoker)

Facebook: [@tolucokerdesign](https://www.facebook.com/tolucokerdesign)

Twitter: [@ToluCoker](https://twitter.com/ToluCoker)

Tik Tok: @tolucoker