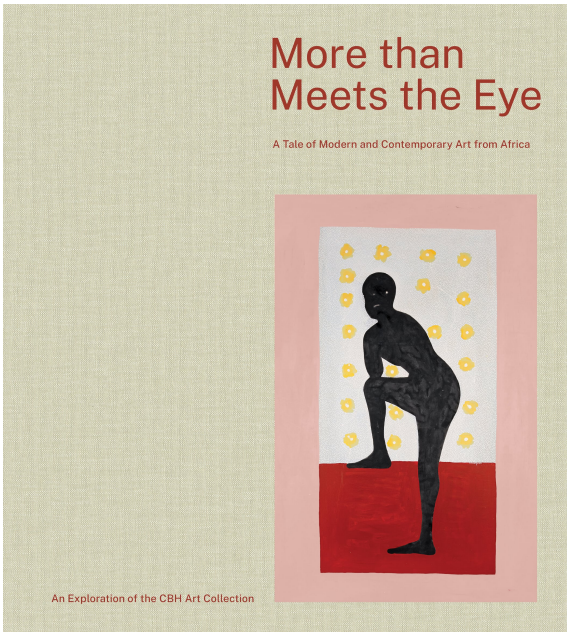
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More than Meets the Eye

A tale of modern and contemporary art of Africa

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Célestin Koffi Yao

ISBN	9788874394869
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- This catalogue provides a broad overview and valuable historical perspective of modern and contemporary African art spanning almost a century (1929-2025)
- The book highlights the pivotal role of art schools in the 1960s in promoting cultural re-appropriation and new forms of artistic expression that blend tradition and modernity
- It features a variety of artistic expressions, including painting, sculpture and photography, offering a rich and multifaceted view of African creativity
- The catalogue accompanies an exhibition at the prestigious Musée Rath in Switzerland (October 16 to November 23, 2025), giving added significance and a tangible link to a curated selection of artworks

The Swiss family-owned banking group CBH Compagnie Bancaire Helvétique SA has been putting together its own art collection for over fifteen years. Modern and contemporary African art is one of its major themes.

The works in this catalogue (paintings, sculptures, photographs) span about a century (1929-2025). All were created by artists who were born, or spent part of their lives, in sub-Saharan Africa. The growing success of the African artists of today undoubtedly stems from the artistic legacy of their ancestors, whose dazzling colors reflect a profoundly original worldview that addresses social and environmental themes. Missionaries and a few colonial administrators with an eye for art identified a number of interesting artists in the 1920s.

Although African art – in the Congo, Kenya, and South Africa in particular – developed throughout the 20th century, recognition only came in the 1960s. The creation of art schools in the continent's major cities promoted cultural re-appropriation through new types of expression based on an encounter between traditional African forms and modern aesthetic sensibilities emerging in the new conurbations. Artistic movements burgeoning at the turn of the millennium confirmed and reinforced the vitality of this art. It was a period that saw dynamic figures come to the fore on the global art scene. Contemporary artists turned their attention to the "Black Atlantic" and the African-American communities it explored. Africa is now able to send its own message to the world. As a result, nearly 80 artists are represented in the *"Au-delà des Apparences" (More than Meets the Eye)* exhibition at the Musée Rath.

Currently adviser to the Director General of the Museum of Black Civilizations, in Dakar, Senegal,**Ousseynou Wade** has extensive experience in cultural policy and arts management. After several years as a technical advisor at the Senegal Ministry of Culture, he became Secretary General of the Dakar Biennale of Contemporary African Art. Organizing six editions of the Dakar Biennale gave him the opportunity to follow and support numerous artists from the continent and the African diaspora. He launched the art magazine*AFRIK'ARTS* with a view to fostering reflection on contemporary art in Africa. Born in Caen, where he also attended university,**Jean-Yves Marin** was initially an archaeologist. In 1986, he became curator and then director of the Musée de Normandie in Caen. From 2009 to 2019, he was director of the Musées d'art et d'histoire de la ville de Genève (Switzerland). Since then, he has been a consultant in the field of museum management and cultural heritage, as well as an artistic advisor to CBH Compagnie Bancaire Helvétique SA. He is an associate professor at Senghor University for African Development, in Alexandria, Egypt. **Célestin Koffi Yao** was born in Daloa in 1971 and is a leading Ivorian artist and intellectual, holding a PhD in the Arts (Sorbonne) and diplomas from art schools in Abidjan and Paris. He has developed a technique that combines visual art, writing and research. As a visual artist, essayist, teacher and researcher, he explores memory, black identities and colonial legacies. Founder of the Sankozan cultural centre in Abobo, a suburb of Abidjan, Célestin Koffi Yao works to promote access to art and raise the profile of African skills. His eclectic and committed work draws on African symbols and history to explore social divisions and cultural resilience.







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