



John Akomfrah is a widely respected artist and filmmaker, whose works are characterised by their investigations into memory, post-colonialism, temporality and aesthetics, and often explore the experiences of migrant diasporas globally. Akomfrah was a founding member of the influential Black Audio Film Collective, which started in London in 1982 alongside artist Lina Gopaul, later joined by David Lawson who he still collaborates with today alongside Ashitey Akomfrah as Smoking Dogs Films. Their debut film, *Handsworth Songs* (1986), examined the 1985 Birmingham and London riots through a layered mix of archive, stills and new footage, earning international acclaim and defining Akomfrah's distinctive visual style. Subsequent works include *The Unfinished Conversation* (2012), a three-screen portrait of Stuart Hall; *Peripeteia* (2012), inspired by 16th-century Dürer portraits; and *Mnemosyne* (2010), which explores migrant experience in the UK. Major later projects include the three-screen *Vertigo Sea* (2015), linking maritime history, migration and exploitation; *Purple* and *Precarity* (both 2017), addressing climate change and the life of jazz musician Buddy Bolden respectively; and *Mimesis: African Soldier* (2018), commemorating African participants in World War I. Highlights since include *Four Nocturnes* (2019) at the Venice Biennale, the five-channel films *Arcadia* and *Becoming Wind* (both 2023), and *Listening All Night to the Rain* (2024), presented in the British Pavilion at the 60th Venice Biennale.

Akomfrah (born 1957) lives and works in London. Recent solo exhibitions have taken place at Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, US (2025); Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza Madrid, Spain (2025); National Museum Cardiff, Wales (2025); Glasgow Museum of Art, Scotland (2024); British Pavilion, 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, Italy (2024); The Box, Plymouth, UK (2023); Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, Germany (2023); Smithsonian National Museum of African Art (2023) and Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C., USA (2022); Remai Modern, Saskatoon, Canada (2022); Towner Eastbourne, UK (2021); Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona, Spain (2021); Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Sevilla, Spain (2020); Seattle Art Museum, WA, USA (2020); Secession, Vienna, Austria (2020); BALTIC, Gateshead, UK (2019); ICA Boston, MA, USA (2019); Museu Coleção Berardo, Lisbon, Portugal (2018); New Museum, New York, NY, USA (2018); Bildmuseet, Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden (2015, 2018); SFMOMA, San Francisco, CA, USA (2018); Barbican, London, UK (2017).

Recent international group exhibitions include 'Entangled pasts, 1768-now', Royal Academy, London, UK (2024); 'Sharjah Biennial 15: Thinking Historically in the Present', Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (2023); 'Global Ghana', The Africa Institute, Sharjah, UAE and Accra, Ghana (2022); 'Fault Lines', North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, USA (2022); 'Posteriority', Museum of Contemporary Art Busan, South Korea (2021); 'Family – Visions of a shared humanity', Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia (2021); 'Am I Human To You?', Art Museum KUBE, Alesund, Norway (2021); 'Affect Machine: Self-healing in the Post-Capitalist Era', Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan (2021); 'Terminal', City Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand (2020); Ghana Pavilion, 58th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy (2019); 'Strange Days: Memories of the Future', New Museum x The Store, London, UK (2018); 'Histórias Afro-Atlânticas', Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil (2018); 'From where I stand, my eye will send a light to you in the North', Te Tuhi Museum, Auckland, New Zealand (2018); Prospect 4, New Orleans, LA, USA (2017); 'Restless Earth', La Triennale di Milano, Milan, Italy (2017); 'Unfinished Conversations', Museum of Modern Art, New York City, NY, USA (2017); 'British Art Show 8' (2015-17); 'All the World's Futures', 56th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy (2015); 'Africa Now: Political Patterns', SeMA, Seoul, South Korea (2014); Sharjah Biennial 11, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (2013); Liverpool Biennial, UK (2012) and Taipei Biennial, Taiwan (2012).

Akomfrah was awarded the Artes Mundi Prize in 2017 and a Knighthood for services to the Arts in the 2023 New Year Honours.