

TEIGER FOUNDATION GIFTS \$750,000 TO SUPPORT *IN MINOR KEYS* – THE BIENNALE ARTE 2026 BY KOYO KOUOH

The initiative honors the legacy of late curator Koyo Kouoh and supports her team in delivering her curatorial vision for the 61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia



Images L-R: Koyo Kouoh. Photo by Mirjam Kluka; Koyo Kouoh's Team. Photo by Andrea Avezzù. Both Courtesy of La Biennale di Venezia.

New York, NY, February 24, 2026 — Teiger Foundation—the only U.S. foundation devoted to supporting contemporary art curators—announces **\$750,000 in two separate gifts to support the realization of the 61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, *In Minor Keys*, by Koyo Kouoh.** Of this total, \$500,000 goes directly to the Biennale to fund exhibition production, while \$250,000—administered by the American Friends of Zeitz MOCAA—directly supports artists with the production of new artworks and travel to Venice. Koyo Kouoh was Executive Director and Chief Curator of Zeitz MOCAA.

The gift continues Teiger Foundation's historic role as lead funder of the International Art Exhibitions of La Biennale di Venezia, honoring the legacy of the Foundation's founder—collector and art patron **David Teiger** (1929–2014)—and the late Koyo Kouoh, the first African woman to curate the Biennale Arte. *In Minor Keys* will be on view from Saturday, 9 May to Sunday, 22 November 2026 (preview May 6–8).

Established in 2008, Teiger Foundation continues David Teiger's mission to champion contemporary art curators and support ambitious, innovative projects. A lesser-known part of Teiger's legacy is the foundation's role as a lead funder of the International Art Exhibitions of La Biennale di Venezia. With a contribution from David Teiger for this purpose, Teiger Foundation

began supporting the Biennale Arte in 2013 with a grant as the main donor to Massimiliano Gioni's *The Encyclopedic Palace*. After his passing, the sale of his art collection enabled the endowment and expansion of the Foundation, which has since gone on to support subsequent editions of the Biennale Arte—*The Milk of Dreams* (2022), curated by Cecilia Alemani, and *Foreigners Everywhere* (2024), curated by Adriano Pedrosa—in both cases also serving as the main donor.

“Koyo Kouoh’s *In Minor Keys* centers artists who make their own worlds, and these worlds are rooted in solidarity, poetry, and place,” said **Larissa Harris, Executive Director of Teiger Foundation**. “Her curatorial practice has long championed global and local networks and kinships, and the 61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia extends that commitment to the international stage. Teiger Foundation is proud to support the team she assembled—advisors **Gabe Beckhurst Feijoo, Marie Hélène Pereira, and Rasha Salti**; critic **Siddhartha Mitter**, the Biennale Arte 2026’s editor-in-chief; and researcher **Rory Tsapayi**—as they pour their own immense creative energies into making Koyo Kouoh’s vision a reality alongside the professionals of La Biennale di Venezia.”

Koyo Kouoh—former Executive Director and Chief Curator of the **Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa** (Zeitz MOCAA) in Cape Town, South Africa, and founder of RAW Material Company in Dakar, Senegal—was celebrated for her artist-centered vision and for championing new, marginalized, and African voices while maintaining a global outlook. Before her untimely passing in May 2025, she had already defined the 61st International Art Exhibition’s theoretical framework and selected a roster of more than one hundred artists. Rooted in the idea of the “minor key,” the exhibition gathers artists whose works attune to the quieter, soulful registers of human experience—emphasizing harmonies of care and poetic transformations over spectacle or speed.

Reflecting on Kouoh’s legacy and impact, her team said: “Koyo often said, ‘People are more important than things,’ reflecting her belief that artists will lead the way and collaboration matters more than quick-earned success. Our work with Teiger Foundation honors this philosophy, which helped make her the internationally respected and successful curator she was.”

“We are thankful for the support of Teiger Foundation, which since 2013 has been pivotal in supporting the expansion of the artistic projects led by the Artistic Directors of the Visual Arts Department. The important support given for the project of Koyo Kouoh is even more significant, fostering her voice and vision for the current and future generations,” said **Pietrangelo Buttafoco, President of La Biennale di Venezia**.

“Zeitz MOCAA is proud to support *In Minor Keys* and Koyo’s mission to bolster artists and their practices in meaningful ways,” said **David Green, Co-Chair of Zeitz MOCAA**. “Teiger Foundation and AFOZM partnership in support of artists’ participation will have an important impact. I look forward, with the Zeitz MOCAA Trustees, Global Council and museum supporters, to being in Venice in May in further support.”

"American Friends of Zeitz MOCAA is proud to partner with Teiger Foundation to champion the

bold, forward-thinking artists Koyo Kouoh selected for In Minor Keys. This collaboration directly aligns with our mission to support artists from Africa and across the diaspora as well as those that are underrepresented in providing the critical funding necessary for them to share their work on this global stage. By enabling these powerful moments of connection and impact, we are honored to help realize Koyo's vision of supporting ambitious contemporary works that push boundaries and define the future of art," said **Naledi Khabo, President of American Friends of Zeitz MOCAA**.

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ABOUT TEIGER FOUNDATION

Teiger Foundation is the only U.S. foundation dedicated to supporting contemporary art curators. Through its grantmaking initiatives, Teiger Foundation advances innovative curatorial practice and aims to catalyze positive change within the field. Established by collector and art patron David Teiger (1929–2014) in 2008, the Foundation honors its founder's legacy as an advocate for contemporary curators pursuing ambitious new projects.