

M+B

Aesthetica

Malick Sidibé: The Eye of Modern Mali at Somerset House, London

September 29, 2016

André Magnin, curator of Malick Sidibé's (1936-2016) first European exhibition brings the artists' works to Somerset House, London, this autumn for his first major UK show. Malick Sidibé: The Eye of Modern Mali is co-curated by Philippe Boutté and showcases 45 original prints taken in the aftermath of the Malian Independence in 1960. Centred around the newly liberated society, his infamous black and white photographs chronicle the lives and culture of the people in the Malian capital, Bamako.

The late photographer captured the joie de vivre of his post-colonial society – a young and energetic metropolis, mirroring the people framed in his photos. At this time of immense political and social transformation, the influx of western cultural influence created an exuberant backdrop for Sidibé's intimate portraiture and documentary photography.

This immersive exhibition draws audiences into late artist's oeuvre and the environment that fuelled his works: three thematic strands accompany a gallery soundtrack that recreates the spirit of Sidibé's world. DJ and African music expert Rita Ray creates a pulsating mix that complements the trio of themes, Au Fleuve Niger (Beside the Niger River), Tiep a Bamako (Nightlife of Bamako) and Le Studio (The Studio) in the Terrace Rooms at Somerset House.

This unique show launches at 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair and continues as a standalone show throughout Somerset House's winter season.

Malick Sidibé: The Eye of Modern Mali runs from 6 October – 15 January. Find out more about the 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair: www.1-54.com



Malick Sidibé Nuit de Noël (Happy Club), 1963