

## Media Contact

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## **Creativity for Social Change: The Moleskine Foundation launches its U.S. Chapter**

### **The Moleskine Foundation USA launch**

The Moleskine Foundation is extremely proud to announce the opening of its US office in New York City this May. The Moleskine Foundation, a non-profit organization, was launched in late 2017 in Milan, Italy. Its mission is to provide youth from underserved communities a distinctive path to harnessing unconventional educational tools and experiences that unlock creative potential and help foster critical thinking, creative doing and above all, life-long learning. It is the Foundation's firm belief that Creativity and Quality Education are key factors in producing positive change in society and driving our collective future. One of its key educational formats is AtWork, a series of itinerant workshops in Africa and beyond that stimulate critical thinking through the creative process.

Adama Sanneh, CEO of the Moleskine Foundation, "We are excited to bring our mandate and innovative partnership model for social impact to the US. We are looking forward to developing new unique initiatives in this vibrant cultural space that can have global resonance and amplify the role that creativity can play to build our collective future. As this first partnership with The Africa Center shows, our presence in NYC will increase our scope and impact both locally and internationally, providing access to our unconventional educational experiences for young people across the globe."

### **"I had a dream" exhibition at The Africa Center**

The launch of the Foundation in the US will be accompanied by AtWork's first international exhibition, "I had a dream," that will be hosted in partnership with The Africa Center in Harlem and will run from May 31st to July 21st. The partnership with The Africa Center is especially meaningful for the Foundation, because the two organizations share the same values and purpose around fostering creativity among youth around the world, with a particular focus on innovation and inclusivity.

The exhibition will feature 100 hand-decorated notebooks, the majority of which were created by young creative minds who took part in the Foundation's AtWork educational workshops in 2018. The workshops were held in diverse locations such as Rome, N'Djamena, Kampala and Harare. The notebooks are the creative expression of the transformational process that the students have gone through during the workshop while debating their dreams and making concrete projects out of them. The exhibition will also feature notebooks created by celebrated authors and artists who have donated their work to The Moleskine Foundation Collection, a library comprised of more than 1000 notebooks, many of them crafted by internationally renowned creative minds from various backgrounds, such as **Spike Jonze, Pascale Marthine Tayou, Jean-Claude Ellena, Joël Andrianomearisoa, Joana Vasconcelos, Carlo Stanga** and **Paula Scher**. The exhibition is designed by Design Group Italia headed by Gabriel Zangari.

"I'm thrilled to bring this important and innovative project to the space," states Uzodinma Iweala, CEO of The Africa Center. "Fostering creativity among young people is crucial as we build our future, both in Africa and in Harlem, and as this partnership demonstrates, the results can be quite spectacular."

### **AtWork Tour "Where is South?" kick off in NYC**

The 2019 AtWork tour titled "Where is South?" envisions 150 participants from 3 continents in 6 different countries. It will kick off in New York on May 30<sup>th</sup> with a 5-day intensive workshop held at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture for a group of 25 young creative talents from New York City, facilitated

by curator Simon Njami. The notebooks created by the participants during the workshop will join the exhibition at The Africa Center in mid-June.

**More information at:** [www.moleskinefoundation.org](http://www.moleskinefoundation.org)

### **About Moleskine Foundation and Moleskine Company**

Along with its partners the Moleskine Foundation strives to catalyse systematic change through an open, participatory and cross-sectional approach. To achieve this, it works at the intersection of three focus areas: innovative education, research and policy, public awareness. With a special focus on Africa and its diaspora, the Foundation works closely with local organizations to fund, support and co-create a wide range of distinctive initiatives.

While sharing the core brand values around creativity and culture, The Moleskine Foundation operates in complete independence from the Moleskine Company from an organizational and operational standpoint. The brand's financial contribution sustains the Foundation, allowing 100% of the attracted resources to go straight to social impact.

### **About AtWork**

AtWork is an educational format conceived by Moleskine Foundation and the curator Simon Njami: a series of itinerant workshops in Africa and beyond that wants to stimulate critical thinking through the creative process. AtWork invites young people from underprivileged communities to participate in a week of discussion and self-reflection on a chosen topic. At the end, each participant produces a personalized notebook to be included in an exhibition curated by the group. The notebooks are wonderfully varied, but whether sculptural or textual, they all powerfully convey the impact an intense week of thinking can have on a young mind. Since its birth in 2012 AtWork has held 20 workshops in 18 different cities across the world, involving more than 500 students and 15 international cultural organizations.

### **About The Africa Center**

The Africa Center is the first institution of its kind – uniquely focused on a multidisciplinary approach to contemporary Africa and the continent's Diaspora. With a mission encompassing policy, business and culture, The Africa Center is committed to an integrated approach for understanding all aspects of the African continent, including transforming narratives. The Africa Center is located on Fifth Avenue overlooking Central Park. The Center's physical presence at the intersection of Harlem and Museum Mile, is a location that embodies the dynamism and diversity of Africa in the heart of New York City.