BE OPEN Regional Art competition congratulates the Western Africa winners

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LUGANO, Switzerland, Jan. 19, 2026 /PRNewswire/ â?? The regional competition for emerging artists BE OPEN Regional Art, developed by Elena Baturinaâ??s humanitarian think-tank BE OPEN, is proud to announce the winners for the Western Africa region.

October to December became the months of celebration of young artists from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo, Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha.

The Western African competition received kind support from the African Heritage Centre, the Society of Nigerian Artists (SNA), the Association Arts Burkina and the National Gallery of Art (Abuja). BE OPEN expresses deep gratitude to these organisations for their ongoing support of local artists, and their help with reaching out to the young talents in the region.

The title of the Artist of the Region and the â?¬500 grant goes to Ahmed Partey, a self-taught contemporary artist based in Accra, Ghana, whose work is deeply inspired by West African masks, sculptures, patterns, and symbols. Through a practice he calls Afro-Ancestral Spiritualism, Partey reimagines traditional African art forms to reflect contemporary realities, creating a bridge between ancestral heritage and modern identity.

The honorary mentions for Western Africa are Charity Meshach and Aluu Prosper from Nigeria. Charity is a figurative painter whose vibrant works reflect the rhythm and essence of everyday life. Aluu Prosperâ??s stylized figures show the use of the artistic devices of elongation and exaggeration, as well as his unique style of painting the iconic afro hairstyle.

Another winner is a personal choice of BE OPENâ??s Founder of Elena Baturina: the â?¬300 euro grant goes to Erica Adjei, a mixed media artist from Accra, Ghana. Erica studied Visual Arts with a focus on picture making and leatherwork. While working as a bookbinder, Erica started incorporating discarded paper and other waste materials into her art. This practice not only reflects her commitment to sustainability but also embodies her belief in giving new life to materials through creativity and

purpose.

On the finalization of year three of the Regional Art competition, Elena Baturina said: â??We are thrilled to see how many remarkable emerging talents from all over the world have already been or intend to be featured in our gallery. The regional competitions help us highlight those who are capable of portraying the unique beauty of their regional, cultural and ethnic identities, and for whom it may be a harder task to establish themselves in the art scene. BE OPEN Art will help them in getting deserved attention and an opportunity to have their say and affect lives of people who appreciate the diversity of artâ?•.

In 2026, BE OPEN Regional Art will proceed with the competition in Northeastern Africa, Central Europe and East Asia. BE OPEN is a global initiative to foster creativity and innovation supported by Austria-based international philanthropist and businessperson Elena Baturina.

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