

Press release

23.10.2025

Omenaa Foundation strengthens global commitment by supporting the Obama Presidential Center

London, 17th October 2025 – In these times of challenge, the search for hope spans the globe. From right here in **Southwark, London** to the **South Side of Chicago**, from **Warsaw** to **Ghana**, people everywhere want to feel seen and heard. Organizers and communities around the world have been advocating for more equal societies, more representation of diverse lived experiences, more power to shape their own lives, and more inclusion to feel they belong – and to be part of something bigger than themselves.

It is in this spirit that the **Omenaa Foundation** and **OmenaArt Foundation** are proud to announce their continued support for the **Obama Presidential Center**, set to open in **Chicago in 2026**. Designed as a space to inspire hope, creativity, and civic action, the Obama Presidential Center will serve as a **global hub for education, culture, community empowerment**, and democracy.

In partnership with **White Cube**, one of the world's most influential contemporary art galleries, the Omenaa Foundation hosted an intimate **lunch and private viewing** at White Cube Bermondsey in London. The gathering brought together members of the UK arts community and international guests to celebrate selected artists commissioned for the Obama Presidential Center's permanent collection — including the late **Richard Hunt** and **Julie Mehretu** — and to discuss the power of art, philanthropy, and strategic giving in shaping a more inclusive and compassionate world.

“Our mission has always been to use culture and education as tools for empowerment,” said **Omenaa Mensah**, Founder and President of the **Omenaa Foundation**. “Supporting the Obama Presidential Center is a natural extension of our work. We are proud to stand alongside the Obama Foundation and White Cube in celebrating art as a catalyst for hope and social change. We believe that art not only inspires but activates — sparking meaningful dialogue and motivating people to shape the world they want to live in.”

Jay Jopling, Founder and Chairman of **White Cube**, added:

“It is an honor to work alongside the Omenaa Foundation and The Obama Foundation to present these visionary artists, whose work will become part of the Obama Presidential Center's legacy and opportunity. This collaboration embodies the belief that art can drive understanding, inclusion, and progress.”

The **Obama Presidential Center** will be a global center for hope and change that not only reflects on historic progress but also celebrates the people who are carrying the baton of change into the future — those building inclusive and hopeful societies everywhere. Beyond its civic mission, the Obama Presidential Center will also be a **cultural institution and museum** — a place to exhibit powerful objects and works of art that embody and amplify the Obama Foundation’s mission: **to inspire, empower, and connect people to change their world.**

Dr. Louise Bernard, Founding Museum Director at the Obama Presidential Center, said:

“The Obama Presidential Center will be a gathering place for global, national, and local leaders; a hub for democratic innovation; and a beacon of hope for the world. Spanning 19 acres, the campus will feature a range of amenities, including a fruit and vegetable garden; a ‘Home Court’ facility to host sports, community programs, and other events; an auditorium; a playground, and a branch of the Chicago Public Library. An immersive museum experience will highlight the accomplishments and challenges of the Obama Presidency as well as the historical predecessors who made President and Mrs. Obama’s stories possible, and it will inspire visitors to create change within their own communities. As an arts destination, the Center will feature over 25 signature art commissions by diverse artists from all over the world in public spaces throughout the campus. Dynamic programming will seek to activate these permanent commissions over time. The inspiration to make the arts central to the Center’s activities comes from the legacy President and Mrs. Obama built at the White House, making it the ‘People’s House’ by opening its doors to diverse voices and perspectives.”

With White Cube, the Omenaa Foundation and OmenaArt Foundation celebrated some of the artists who are already working with the Obama Foundation and who will be featured at the Obama Presidential Center, alongside many others from around the world.

“At Omenaa Foundation and OmenaArt Foundation, we are deeply committed to connecting culture and education with purpose,” added **Mensah**. “As a supporting partner of the Obama Foundation, it’s an honor to contribute to this global mission — one that unites art, leadership, and empathy to build stronger, more inclusive communities.”

As the Obama Foundation prepares to open the Center in 2026, it continues to lift up artists and leaders who inspire human progress everywhere. Because, as **President Obama** said in 2008, “hope is that thing inside of us that insists something better awaits us if we have the courage to reach for it, to work for it, and to fight for it.”

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Obama Foundation: *at the Obama Foundation, we are guided by a core belief: that ordinary people working together can change history. Our mission is to inspire those people to take action, empower them to change their world for the better, and connect them so they can achieve more together than they can alone. We were founded by community organizers, so when we seek change, we do it by bringing people together. That approach begins at home, on the South Side of Chicago, where we are building the Obama Presidential Center. The Center represents a historic opportunity for Chicago: a chance to build a world-class museum and public gathering space that celebrates our nation's first African American President and First Lady, steps away from where he began his career, where she was raised, and where—together—they made their home. But that approach extends to all our work, whether it's holding leadership training sessions in communities throughout the U.S., bringing local leaders together in countries around the world, working to support the global education of girls, or ensuring young men of color have pathways to opportunity. As President Obama has said, "we cannot solve the challenges of our time unless we solve them together." So join us.*

Dr. Louise Bernard is a Senior Vice President at the Obama Foundation and the founding Director of the Obama Presidential Center Museum. As a Senior Content Developer and Interpretive Planner in the New York office of the museum design firm Ralph Appelbaum Associates, she worked on the design team that developed the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, along with other national and international projects. She previously served as Director of Exhibitions at the New York Public Library. Louise received a Ph.D. in African American Studies and American Studies from Yale, and in 2021, she received the College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Alumni Award from Indiana University.

White Cube's exhibition programme extends across locations in London, Hong Kong, Paris, New York, Seoul and online. Since its inception in 1993, the gallery has exhibited the work of many of the world's most highly acclaimed contemporary artists.

The Omenaa Foundation is a charitable NGO originated by Omenaa Mensah who remains its good spirit. The Foundation's key field of activity is supporting education in its broadest sense. We support street children in Africa who do not have access to education, but we also help the most needy children in Poland, e.g. we provide IT equipment for children from orphanages and foster families, because the lack of such equipment not only limits horizons and makes learning difficult, but often also makes it impossible e.g. in the case of distance learning.

OmenaArt Foundation: The foundation is a pioneer in implementing unconventional artistic projects in Poland and around the world. Its mission is to foster intercultural dialogue, support artists, and promote contemporary art from Eastern Europe and Africa, with a particular focus on art in public spaces. The foundation is also actively involved in the revitalization of historic buildings, as well as conservation and educational projects. The foundation coordinates the TOP CHARITY Auction – one of the most important philanthropic events in Europe. Over the span of four years, the auction has raised more than €34 million. These funds have supported the charitable efforts of the Omenaa Foundation, Rafat Brzoska Foundation, and the Philanthropic Consortium, as well as OmenaArt Foundation's projects that support artists and cultural institutions.