

PEACE, POWER AND PRESTIGE: METAL ARTS IN AFRICA



ORIGINATING MUSEUM:

Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, University of Florida

CURATOR:

Susan Cooksey, Curator of African Art, Harn Museum of Art

ORIGINATING MUSEUM EXHIBITION DATES:

March 17, 2020 - November 30, 2020

AVAILABLE EXHIBITION TOUR DATES:

Spring 2021, Summer 2021, Fall 2021

SPACE REQUIREMENT: 3000 square feet

COST: \$50,000 loan fee

PUBLICATION: *Peace, Power and Prestige: Metal Arts in Africa* by Susan Cooksey

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The exhibition, *Peace, Power and Prestige: Metal Arts in Africa* will explore the roles of metal objects in sustaining and enhancing life in African communities, while demonstrating the aesthetic and expressive power of metal arts. For millennia, African metalsmiths have drawn upon the inherent power and beauty of metal to create dazzling and enduring objects including:

- Body adornment and currency items for proclaiming wealth and social status.
- Staffs, scepters, weaponry and other regalia as emblems of leadership and authority.
- Amulets and sacred objects used in spiritual mediation.

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The exhibition will include a diverse range of iron, brass, bronze, gold, copper, silver and alloyed works created by artists in Sub-Saharan Africa between the 12th and 21st centuries. The selected objects are from the Harn Museum of Art collection and private collections, most notably the Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass collection.



Gan artist, Burkina Faso, *Bracelet with Serpent*, 17th-18th century, copper alloy
Collection of Drs. Nicole and John Dintenfass

Highlights in the exhibition include:

- Iron staffs and figures of the Mande smiths of Mali.
- Bronze and iron chiefly regalia from the Edo people of Nigeria.
- Brass and iron ceremonial swords, brass adorned stools and goldweights, and personal adornment signifying prestige and leadership for the Akan people of Ghana.
- Brass and copper reliquary guardian figure of the Kota of Gabon.
- Cuprous currencies, ceremonial staffs and weaponry from Congo.
- Iron and bronze shrine objects of the Dogon people of Mali.
- Objects adorned with fine wirework from South Africa.
- Ogboni society brass staffs, figures, and iron divination and healing staffs from the Yoruba people of Nigeria.
- Ethiopian Christian Orthodox crosses.
- Somali bridal silver jewelry.
- Copper alloy sacred objects of Tusian, Gan and Lobi peoples of Burkina Faso.

Interpretation will include text panels, extended label copy, photographic panels, and an approximately 300-page publication. The book *Peace, Power and Prestige: Metal Arts in Africa* (Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art / University Press of Florida, March 2020) will be edited by Harn Curator of African Art, Susan Cooksey, and include essays by: Jodi Berman, Elisabeth Rios-Brooks, Bolaji Campbell, Susan Cooksey, Jean-Baptiste Coulibaly, Kate Ezra, Rebecca Fenton, Jacopo Gnisci, Babatunde Lawal, Amanda Maples, Patrick McNaughton, Nicholas Nikis, Adjanie Ofunniyin, Philip Peek, Constantine Petridis, Robin Poyner and Raymond Silverman.

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Select Works



Armlet

Bini/Edo artist, Nigeria

Brass

19th century

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



Reliquary Guardian Figure (Mbulu-ngulu)

Kota artist, Gabon

19th century

Brass, copper, wood

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



Processional Cross

Ethiopian artist, Ethiopia

15th-16th century

Brass, bronze- copper rivets and shaft, solder

Partial gift of Richard Faletti and Museum purchase, funds provided by the Caroline Julier and James G. Richardson Acquisition Fund, Michael A. Singer, and the David A. Cofrin Acquisition Endowment

2003.10.9



Staff

Bamana artist, Mali

18th-19th century

Iron

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



Crown (ade Isheshe)

Yoruba artist, Nigeria

18th century

Brass

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



Knife with sheath

Mahongwe artist, Gabon

19th century

Iron, copper, brass

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



Rectangular Porte Qu'ran (xirsi)

Somali artist, Somalia

19th century

Silver

Gift of Katheryne and John Loughran, President of
Foundation for Cross Cultural Understanding
2005.28.3



Diviner's Staff (opa orere)

Yoruba artist, Nigeria

19th century

Iron

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



Snuff Container

Pende artist, Democratic Republic of Congo

19th century

Wood, brass, leather

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



**Staffs for Ogboni Society
(edan Ogboni)**

Yoruba artist, Nigeria

Copper alloy

18th-19th century

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



Ring Currency

Vere artist, Nigeria

Bronze

19th century

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



Hair and Belt Ornaments

Baule artists, Côte d'Ivoire

Brass

19th-20th century

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



Titled Woman's Anklets

Igbo artist, Nigeria

Brass, iron

19th-20th century

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



Staff

Dogon artist, Mali
19th century

Iron

Collection of Drs. John and Nicole Dintenfass



Disk Pendant

Asante artist, Ghana
20th century

Gold repoussé

Museum purchase, funds provided by the
Caroline Julier and James G. Richardson

Acquisition Fund

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