AFRICAN ART

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UW-L HISTORY DEPARTMENT

University Art Gallery
March 5 - 15

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EXHIBITION OF AFRICAN ART

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
Fine Arts Gallery
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The variety of art forms in black Africa is enormous. More than 2,000 ethnic groups occupy the continent, with different artistic traditions, different media of presentation, and different meanings given to what, to the outsider, may appear to be similar art styles. If the Africans have anything in common it is an acceptance that every thing has meaning, that everything embodies and personifies supernatural spirits and has vital forces. Little art is produced for its own sake; something from the African past explains the forms, media, techniques, and presentation. Art may tell a story, keep a record, ward away undesired spirits or draw desired ones to the object or owner, serve as judges and exact punishment for wrongdoing, guide the initiate from one life stage to another, and/or have any number or combination of purposes.

Only with the arrival of Europeans in the fifteenth century did African art acquire mercantile value, value unrelated to the primary purpose of the art to the Africans. Gold weights, ivory carving and bronze castings were sought by early Europeans as products which could be purchased cheaply at their source and sold dearly in Europe where people valued them for their material worth or workmanship. With the advent of the colonial era at the end of the nineteenth century, Europeans began to understand the value which Africans placed on their art, a concept very different from that of Europeans. Art collections multiplied in the countries of the colonial powers, as did the study of the traditional culture of colonized peoples. In some cases, such as in Germany, the fascination with African art led to new artistic expressions and turned European art along new paths.

Meanwhile, in Africa art continued much as it had been before the European conquest. To be sure, some Africans realized that a new market for African art had developed and they began to produce and modify art to satisfy this new demand. Other Africans, however, saw an opportunity to sell old and used pieces, replacing them with shiny new ones which would be more pleasing to the spirits. Other Africans converted to the new European religions and threw away their art which missionaries described as passe or pagan and evil. In most instances, European colonial officials looted art storehouses of African chiefs and carted their articles off to museums. Buyers, sellers, and looters profited from this trade, and much of Africa's art treasures drifted into the hands of European owners.

The pieces contained in this collection reflect a broad range of styles, techniques, and uses in African art. Some of the items are replicas of pieces held in major non-African collections and reflect the Africa of the early or pre-colonial era. Other pieces have been used for their intended purpose and discarded (and later sold) once that purpose was fulfilled. Others are damaged and perhaps were discarded because they were damaged goods and were replaced to please the spirits. Still others are tourist art, pieces produced in the original style but with the intent to sell to a European buyer. And others were clearly carved with a European buyer in mind, something that would be pleasing and understandable to the uneducated European eye.

Several La Crosse residents have loaned pieces for inclusion in this exhibition. These include: Fikru Boghossian; Del Fystrom; Cliff, Joyce and Charles Gilbertson; John Hitchcock; June Kjome; Jonathan and Caroline Majak; Bruce and Nancy Mouser; Joyce Parr; Karin Sandvik; and the Viterbo College Museum Collections.
LARGE OR TRIBAL MASKS: In Africa, masks come in many forms and have a large variety of functions and purposes. Large masks often symbolize an ancestral spirit, one tracing back to the beginning of time. These masks are kept in a spirit house and while they are there, they sleep. Each has a purpose, whether to remind people of the high ideals of the founders or to serve important roles when they are awakened. When someone puts on the mask, that person ceases to be himself, taking on the characteristics and role of the mask instead. The awakened mask may become a teacher, a judge, an executioner, a clown.

1. **GONGOLI**—Sierra Leone, 1979. This mask is worn only on holiday-like occasions, and is considered to be a friendly mask. It often gives candies to the children, and consequently the children look for a Gongoli mask at carnival time. Insects have found a home in this mask. Mouser

2. **UNNAMED**—Liberia, 1979. This is a friendly mask which dances during pleasant times. The wearer of this mask collects coins which are placed in his mouth. This offering can be used for the upkeep of the mask or the wearer or it can be used in the upkeep of the spirit house. Note that this is a damaged piece and probably was discarded for that reason. Mouser

3/4. **EKPE/EKPO SOCIETY DOLLS**—Calabar, Nigeria, 1973. These are tourist dolls of masks in full regalia. These masks, in their full form, have great power, power over life and death. They represent ancestral spirits and awaken only during times of great turmoil or during wars. Mouser

5/6. **BUNDU SOCIETY**—Sierra Leone, 1979. Helmet type and sub-conical form, made of soft wood and blackened. This is worn by women of the Bundu Society, Mende people, in Sierra Leone. Bundu is a society to which all women belong and it educates all girls concerning the ways of the group. Note the accompanying wooden figure which illustrates the type of dress that would be worn with this mask. Mouser

7. **DOG MASK**—Liberia, 1979. Probably from the Dan ethnic group which borders Liberia and Ivory Coast; one of the Poro Societies. The Poro is a political and social organization which requires the membership of all males in the group. Note the detached lower jaw on this mask. Mouser

8. **CHI WARA**—Mali, museum replica. According to Bambara tradition, the Creator sent the antelope to teach man to cultivate their crops. These masks are danced in pairs in the fields to insure fertility and abundance. The mask is worn on top of the head as shown on the right. Mouser

9. **NIMBA MASK**—Guinea/Conakry, Baga, 1979. A shoulder mask, which symbolizes a girl and represents fertility. This is a guardian of the village and gives special protection to pregnant women. In its full form, this mask may stand three to four feet tall and weigh as much as 50 pounds. The figure on display here is a replica in reduced size. Note the long dress that would be worn with the mask. Mouser

10. **YAURE MASK**—Ivory Coast, 1984. The Yaure are a subgroup of the Baule ethnic group. Note the zigzag hair-fringe which is
characteristic of Yaure/Baule art. These figures represent gods who played major roles in mythological origins of the group. Hitchcock

11. YAURE MASK--Ivory Coast, 1977. See above description. Viterbo College Museum Collections

12. BAULE MASK--Ivory Coast, Baule, 1982. This is the most dramatic mask in the collection and is the only mask to have its headcarry still in place. This mask would be carried by a person wearing a body shirt and trousers which cover the entire body. Most masks of all types have headcarries attached to them. Hitchcock

SMALL OR INDIVIDUAL MASKS: Small masks can be worn with full uniform or by themselves. Some have a village role to play but most are related to a function that is played out once and by the person wearing it.

13. INITIATION MASK--Nigeria, Ibibio, 1966. This mask is worn by a boy at the point of entering into manhood and initiation into the Ekpo society. Boys go through this rite-of-passage at about 13 years and enter adulthood as a group, an age set. Note the hinged jaw and the case for the head. Mouser

14. INITIATION MASK--Zaire, Bapende, 1984. Upon entering manhood, boys wear this mask, either wearing a ochre colored costume or coloring their bodies with ochre colored dust or powdered cam wood. The mask is used only once, then discarded. The prominent cheekbones and eyes are characteristic of this group’s art. Mouser

15. DEATH MASK--Nigeria, Ibo, 1966. In tropical areas, the recently dead decompose rapidly and must be buried quickly. Since the extended family often cannot gather quickly for a proper funeral, a substitute corpse is created, one which will go through a proper burial at a later time. This is an example of such a substitute. Note the hinged lower jaw. Only a few tribes have this hinged-jaw characteristic in art. Mouser

16. PASSPORT MASKS--Liberia and Ivory Coast, 1977. These masks (seven) were carried by members of the Poro Society when traveling from one society to another and served as identification of the bearer. The smallest two in this group are carved differently and perhaps distinguish ranks within the society. Viterbo College Museum Collections


18. SENUFU--Ivory Coast, 1979, tourist art. Mouser

19. BARBER MASKS--Sierra Leone, 1979. A common practice in Sierra Leone is for barbers in villages to illustrate new styles in hair cuts for prospective customers. Note that both characters seem to be drawn from Indian movies rather than from the African society. One is of a male who is acting out the role of a female. Mouser
STATUARY FIGURES: Statuary figures have many functions and purposes in Africa. Many relate to funerary art and decay or rot because of close proximity to the ground. Most are in wood but some are in stone. Some have a daily function and some record an event or person.

20. SENUFU COSMETIC OR MEDICINE CASE--Ivory Coast, 1979. This statue is designed to hold medicine or cosmetics in the top compartment. The bird, a symbol and totem of the tribe, is present in much of Senufu art and brings good luck and fortune. It also wards away evil spirits. Mouser

21. FULA GIRL--Guinea/Conakry, 1979. This is an example of realistic art, showing the modern hairstyles of the Fula and a beautiful amber neckline which is found in the region. Mouser

22. MANDINKA DRUMMER BOY--Sierra Leone, 1979. This is tourist art in a realistic form. The statue represents a traditional drummer boy who would have accompanied warriors in battle. In recent times, such costumes and stances are used by national dance troupes. Mouser

23. AKUA’BA--Ghana, Akan, 1980, museum replica. American Museum of Natural History. This small figure is common within Akan (Ashanti) society. It represents fertility and is carried by girls, much like a doll. Its flat head is tucked into the dress in the back and the doll is carried much like a child. The shape of the doll would designate whether the desire was to have a male or female child. It is a part of assuming the role of mother as a child. Mouser

24. AKUA’BA--Ghana, Akan, 1982. This is an authentic piece, made of wood. Hitchcock

25/ AKUA’BA--Ghana, Ashante, 1977. See above description. The highly decorated art work on the head indicates that the owner was hoping for a male child. Viterbo College Museum Collections

26. NIMOLI--Liberia, 1979. These figures, carved in soap stone and volcanic rock, date from prehistoric times to the present and extend from Sierra Leone to Angola. They are fertility symbols which relate to all types of questions regarding birth and abundance. This figure is one used by farmers to guarantee a good crop. Such a figure is planted along with the seed to ward off evil spirits and draw good ones. If after a few bad crops, the stone does not fulfill its function, it will be replaced with one that will. This was probably a bad one and was sold to a tourist in consequence. Mouser

27. STONE FETISH--Liberia, 1977. This statue is made of a heavy clay or stone and symbolizes a spirit. Use unknown. Viterbo College Museum Collections

28. RICE SCOOP--Liberia, Dan, 1977. Known as a "PO", this spoon is the honorific emblem of the chief's mother or wife who controls initiation into the female secret societies. At initiation ceremonies, the owner will dance with the spoon and scoop rice into the hands of the initiates, symbolizing the presence of the ancestor spirits. Viterbo College Museum Collections
30. BAULE--Ivory Coast, museum replica, 17th century. The Baule were among the first to recognize the value of producing for the European market. They adapted their art to more closely represent the symmetrical human form and to appeal to European tastes and consequently produced thousands of these statues. This is one of the best and is found in the Art Institute of Chicago. Mouser

31. MEDICINE STATUES--Liberia, 1977. These are associated with traditional medicine among the Poro Society of Liberia. Viterbo College Museum Collections

32. IBEJI FIGURE--Nigeria, Yoruba, 1966. Traditional Yoruba believe that twins are born with a single soul. At the birth of twins, two figures are produced, providing a resting place for a half/soul should one of the twins live to maturity. When the second twin died, the Ibeji figure is buried with the corpse. Meanwhile, the surviving twin has the responsibility to tend for its twin soul and twin statue. This one either was carved for a European market, or it belonged to a surviving twin. Mouser

33. SMALL BRONZE/BRASS FIGURE--Nigeria, Benin, 1966. This figure dates to the 1960s but follows the style used in the 15th and 16th century. Most originals would be larger than this one. The figure is made in the "lost wax" tradition, i.e., a rough figure cast in clay, surrounded and shaped as it is in wax, and then surrounded by clay, heated and the cavity (created by the melting wax) filled with molten brass or bronze. These figures celebrated persons or events. This one probably marks a particular Oba (chief) who ruled for a period of time. The rings around the neck and the headdress mark his office. The topknot would be a place where a carved ivory tusk might be placed. Mouser

34. LARGE BRONZE FIGURE--Nigeria, Benin, museum replica. This piece, originally produced in bronze, was the cast head of an Oba of Benin of the 17th century. The large hole in the crown served as a support for one of the carved elephant tusks held in the treasure-house of the Oba. A historical record. Mouser

35. TUSK CARVING--Nigeria, of Bini style, 1975. Ivory is an illegal item in this country. This replica, in ceramic, is of the style used in Benin during the 17th and 18th century. Try to read the story of the tusk, reading from bottom to top and noting the appearance of guns, sacred crocodile, horses, and other characteristics of the time. Mouser

36. BRONZE WEIGHTS--Ghana, 1975. Five pieces. During the period of the gold trade on the Gold Coast, weights of this type were used to balance the weight of gold dust with value. Gold weights, as they were called, reflected daily tasks accomplished by local peoples. These have become popular as tourist items because of their small size and weight. Nevertheless, the technique of production and their subjects have remained basically unchanged over the centuries. Mouser

37. GOLD DUST BOX--Ghana, Ashante, replica. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (NY). The original dated from the 17th century and was used in the storing of gold dust. Made of bronze, in the lost wax method. Mouser
JEWELRY:

39. BUSH MONEY--Liberia, 1977. This is also called "bar money" in west Africa and was commonly used among village people. This type of money dates back to the 15th century. These six pieces have been shaped in the form of a cross and may have been used for a religious purpose. Bush or bar money has now been replaced by national currencies. Viterbo College Museum Collections

40. MANILLA--Nigeria, 1966. A type of money used in the 19th and early 20th century by peoples located away from cosmopolitan areas. Mouser

41. BRASS NECKLACE--Cameroons, 1970. The person who sold this, said that this necklace served as a convenient toothpick for the wearer. Gilbertson

42. SNUFFBOX--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. Gourds covered with beads and worn at the waist by both men and women. Kjome

43. OSTRICH SHELL NECKLACE--Namibia, Ovambundu, 1986. The individual rings are hand cut and hand drilled. This would be considered a very expensive item by local peoples and would be revered as a family heirloom. Kjome

44. OSTRICH SHELL NECKLACE--Namibia, Ovambundu, 1986. This necklace is constructed from a long string that was originally worn as a waistband. Rare. Kjome

45. WAIST BAND--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. Worn by young girls among the Zulu. Kjome

46. EARRINGS FOR MEN--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. These earrings were made by girls to give to their boyfriends. The metal rings would be draped over the wooden earplugs which men wore in their ears. Kjome

47. ANKLETS--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. Both of these were worn around the ankles. Kjome

48. HEADBAND--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. Worn only by married and non-Christian women among the Zulu. This headband would normally be worn at the base of the hairdo. Kjome

49. HEADRING--South Africa, Zulu, 1982. This is worn by warriors and used only when dancing or when in preparation for war. Note also the accompanying dancing staff. Hitchcock

50. LOVELETTERS--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. These strings of beads were produced by young Zulu girls to give to their boyfriends. The design and color combinations have special romantic meanings. Used in Zulu courtship. Kjome

51. NECKLACE, TRADITIONAL MEDICINE--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. This necklace, prescribed by traditional doctors, contained traditional medicines or charms designed to cure the wearer. Kjome
56. MAN'S NECKLACE--Botswana, Tswana, 1982. This is an unusual necklace in that it contains a jar in which one would find the essence of the animal which represents the wearer's power. The linkage of animals to persons is described in Samkange's book, On Trial For My Country. Hitchcock

57. BUSHMAN NECKLACE--Botswana, Bushman, 1982. This is made of glass beads and is worn around the neck by women. Hitchcock

58. COWREY SHELL NECKLACE--Sierra Leone, 1979. This necklace, composed of more than 250 shells, would have demonstrated great wealth in the 18th and 19th century, depending upon the distance of the people from the coast. Cowrey shells are not native to Africa. Mouser

59. BEER BOTTLE NECKLACE--Sierra Leone, 1979. Although this necklace has been restrung using American products, the beer bottle beads are common to the west coast and are highly valued. Mouser

60. TRADE BEAD NECKLACE--Sierra Leone, 1979. This style of bead dates from the 17th century and was brought by Europeans to the coast as trade goods. Generally used in Africa as a form of currency but were put into necklaces of this type to demonstrate great wealth. Mouser

61. AMBER NECKLACE--Ethiopia, 1983. Rare. Mouser

62. SMOKING PIPE--South Africa, Xosa, 1950. Pipes such as this are used by both men and women. Note that this pipe is made from a single piece of wood. Kjome

63. SMOKING PIPE--South Africa, Xosa, 1982. Similar to that above, but the stem is fully covered with beads. This pipe also has a private mouth piece which can be detached and carried from pipe to pipe. Hitchcock

UNUSUAL PIECES:

64. OWARRI BOARD--Nigeria, 1966, 1979. Marketed in this country under the name of Ouarri, this board game comes in numerous variations across the African continent. The game can be made of wood or it can be played by dipping holes in the ground. The number of holes may vary from six to twelve, depending on the area. It covers the region from Senegal to Somali. Variations of this game are also known in Southeast Asia, with rules changing depending upon the peoples who play it. Mouser

65. TUARIG BRIDEPRIICE PIECE--Chad, 1986. This piece is made of leather and covered with more than 1500 cowrey shells, a veritable fortune by local standards. Since cowreys are not local, the value of this piece would be huge for the Tuarig, perhaps worth several cows or camels or it could be used as a brideweprice. Collected during the period of the great drought of 1985, when families were sacrificing traditional art for the sake of living. The buyer assured me (Mouser) that he paid a fair price. Mouser

66. BAMUM WALL HANGINGS--borderlands of Cameroon, Chad, and Nigeria, 1983. These wooden carvings, while similar in appearance to masks, were not worn. They represent chiefly powers and are
characterized as large in size and bold in composition. Their intent is to impress the viewer with power and concentration. Gilbertson


70. GRANARY DOOR--Ghana, 1975. Within each family compound there is a conical shed or hut where grain is stored. On the outside wall of each shed is an opening into which a door is pulled from the inside of the shed. This door must have handles or heavy relief figures which could serve as handles. This is an example of a granary shed door with heavy relief. Note that the door has rotted on the bottom and probably was discarded for this reason. Often a story is told on these doors. Mouser

71. GRANARY DOOR--Sierra Leone, 1979. This door was purchased in a city market and was probably produced for a tourist trade. Mouser

72. THORN FIGURES--Nigeria. This is now considered tourist art in Nigeria. These figures, which draw high prices, feature aspects of Nigerian life, such as a river taxi, or work stations customary to Nigerians in the village setting. Mouser and Gilbertson

73. HONORIFIC FAN--Nigeria, Benin, 1966. At the court of the Oba of Benin, a female announcer appears at the door to say that the Oba is in residence and seeing visitors. She carries such a fan during this announcement. Mouser

74. ETHIOPIAN MAP--Ethiopia, 1970. This map is written in English and probably was produced for a European market. Nevertheless, its use of traditional materials and styles follows that used locally. Mouser

75. WALL HANGING--Liberia, 1977. This type of woven cloth is common in west Africa, extending from Liberia to Cameroons. Note the 4 inch strips of cloth that are sewn together to make the wall hanging. The design of the crocodiles (traditions often indicate that people rode on the backs of crocodiles to their village) and bird (a sacred animal) and the dancer are also common to the west coast. Viterbo College Museum Collections

HOUSEHOLD GOODS:

76. RICE BOWL--Guinea/Conakry, Fula, 1979. This type of bowl would be commonly used in the serving of rice. Mouser

77. CALABASH--A variety of calabash are illustrated here. Each has distinctive designs which generally identify the ethnic group (and perhaps sub-village) that produced it.

78. CLAY POT--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. This pot was passed from hand to hand and contained either water or beer, as a part of showing hospitality and friendship within the group. Rare. Note the design. Kjome
79. CLAY POT--South Africa, Zulu, 1982. Similar to above, but larger. Hitchcock

80. CLAY POT--South Africa, Zulu, 1982. Similar to above, but note the loveletter design on the side. Hitchcock

81. CLAY POT--South Africa, Zulu, 1982. Similar to above, but note the design on the sides. Hitchcock

82. CLAY COOKING POT--Liberia, 1977. Note the design on the outside. This pot is placed in a bed of charcoal. Viterbo College Museum Collections

83. BOVRIL JAR--South Africa, Zulu, 1982. This is a typical art form found in many Zulu homes--a lidded jar which is covered with beads and displayed in a prominent place in the house. In this case, the user has taken a Bovril jar (concentrated bouillon-English) and covered it. Hitchcock

84. ASH TRAY--Sierra Leone, 1979. This piece shows the fusion of older models and new forms. Unusual. Mouser

85. BALUBA CUP--Zaire, Baluba, 1980. This is a replica of a traditional form followed by the Baluba since the 16th century. The original would have been carved in a hard wood. Mouser

86. MASAAI GOURDS--Kenya, Masaai, 1985. These gourds have been used in the traditional fashion. Each has a distinctive odor that indicates that it once contained a mixture of blood and milk which is an important ingredient in the Masaai diet. Note the beadwork. Mouser

87. NECK REST--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. This was used by Zulu women as a way to protect their hairdos. This sample is smaller than that normally used by adults; normally one would be 15 to 20 inches wide. Kjome

88. COFFEE BASKET--Ethiopia, Amhara, 1970. Fystrom

89. SPOONS AND HOLDER--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. Each person had his own spoon and kept in such a basket which was often attached to the roof of the family hut. Very typical. Kjome

90. COMB--Zimbabwe, Ndebele, 1950. This item is made of reeds found locally. Looks plastic and modern, but it is not. Kjome

91. TOOTHBRUSH--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. Brushes of this type are typically found throughout sub-Saharan Africa where people use local materials to serve the purpose. One chews the end of this soft and fibrous wood and splinters it. It cleans the teeth and massages the gums at the same time. Very effective and inexpensive. Kjome

92. BEER STRAINER/SKIMMER--South Africa, Zulu, 1950. Strainers or skimmers of this type are common in Africa. Kjome
95 — BASKETS AND MATS. Each of these is identified by area and materials. Note that some use manmade materials which allow them to be washed. South Africa (95-99), West Africa (100-104). Mouser, Kjome, Gilbertson, Hitchcock

105. AX--Cameroons, 1970. This is a chopping tool, commonly used in the borderlands between the savanna and the rainforest region. Gilbertson

106. BOW AND QUIVER--Cameroons, 1970. Used in hunting, tips of the arrows could be dipped in poison and wrapped with cloth before placement in the quiver. Gilbertson

107. BOW AND QUIVER--Botswana, 1981. This belonged to the Bushman ethnic group of Botswana and Namibia in South Africa. The tip removes from the arrow once it strikes its target or along the path of the prey’s escape; this serves as a marker to those pursuing the animal that has been hit. Mouser

108. SPEAR AND COVER--Cameroons, 1970. This tool could be used as a hunting tool, but also as a weapon against other peoples or against wild animals. Gilbertson

109. BIT AND BRIDLE--Cameroons, 1970. This is an example of blacksmithing among the Fulani of upper Cameroons and Northern Nigeria. This would be used by horsemen. Gilbertson

110. TOY TRUCK--Cameroon, 1970. This is common throughout sub-Saharan Africa, made and used by male children. In addition to wood, wire and metal cans are used for the same purpose. Gilbertson

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS: These differ greatly from one part of the continent to another. Those featured here are the most common, although variations of styles are numerous.

111. LARGE KORA--Guinea/Conakry, Mandinka, 1979. This 21 string instrument, called the harp of West Africa, is played with the gourd placed against the stomach, with the strings and horn stretching outward from the body. The tones are adjusted by soaking the bands in water and adjusting them on the horn. The player of this instrument is often a story teller of traditional tales, and twirls as he plays and sings. The music in the gallery is that of the kora. A common instrument from Senegal to Ghana. Mouser

112. SMALL KORA--Sierra Leone, 1979. A tourist replica of the larger model. It works, but it uses fishline instead of leather cords. Mouser

113. VIOLIN--Ethiopia, 1974. Mouser

114. VIOLIN--Ethiopia, 1974. Mouser

115/116. TALKING DRUM--Nigeria, 1966, 1974. Two pieces. This drum is carried in the arch of the upper arm and the tone is adjusted according to the pressure put upon the outer strings by the arms as it is pressed against the chest. It is called a talking drum because tones and patterns can approximate the human voice,
depending on the skill of the player. Messages can be sent with this drum and it can be used as an instrument within an orchestra. Mouser

117. WAR DRUM, with two beaters—South Africa, Zulu, 1982. This drum exemplifies the tendency to use reclaimed products in the manufacture of everyday goods. Note the use of the zinc chloride can which is covered with cowhide. This drum is carried during traditional wars or in dancing and is played from both sides. Hitchcock

118. WOODDRUM—Namibia, 1986. This wooden drum, covered with antelope skin, is commonly used in village music groups among the Kavango peoples. Kjome

119. FLUTE—Nigeria, 1966. All African people construct flutes or whistles from reeds and other objects readily available to them. This is perhaps the most common type of musical instrument found among traditional peoples around the world. Mouser

120. RATTLE—Nigeria, 1966. Rattles are common as percussion instruments throughout west and central Africa. The instrument is played by holding the gourd in one hand and the rattle (bead net) in the other, bringing contact between the two in the rhythm of the orchestra. Mouser

121. RATTLE—Cameroons, 1970. This is similar to the one above, with the difference being the use of nuts as rattles in the string net. Gilbertson

122. DANCING RATTLE—South Africa, Zulu, 1982. This string rattle is more than 10 feet long and is worn around the neck and body. Hitchcock


124. OBOE—Cameroons, 1970. This instrument, made of wood, metal and leather, is common to the Hausa and Fulani people of the upper Cameroons and Northern Nigeria. The player uses his cheeks as a bellows when blowing through this instrument. Gilbertson

125. FIVE-KEY FINGER PIANO—Nigeria, 1966. Finger pianos have spread throughout sub-Saharan Africa and vary according to the number of keys (flattened nails) and nature of the resonator. Sardine cans seem to be most commonly used for small pianos but resonators can be of elaborately carved wood as well. Perhaps the most elaborate form of metal resonators, in orchestral form, is found in the West Indies. Mouser

126. 15 KEY FINGER PIANO—Cameroon, 1970. Note that this piano uses reed keys and is made of a single piece of wood. Only one tuner remains on the piano. In its prime, this piano would have had one tuner for each key. Gilbertson

127. 11 KEY FINGER PIANO—Nbuti Pygmies of the Zaire rainforest, date unknown. This is the smallest but uses the techniques in other pianos in sub-Saharan Africa. Gilbertson
128. 8 KEY FINGER PIANO—South Africa, Zulu, 1982. This is an unusual piece in that it has an even number of keys. Also note the use of the gourd as the resonator. Hitchcock

MODERN ART FORMS: While modern art in Africa approximate the purpose of modern European or American art, its subjects differ and deal largely with African themes which relate to traditions and national objectives. These figures might find themselves in an African home because they depict present themes and do not relate to an African and pre-industrial past.

129. ASHANTI PROCESSION—Ghana, 1973. This is a modern polished piece that shows how a traditional procession for the Ashantihene might have appeared (and still does on special occasions). At the center is the Ashantihene (ruler or chief) who carries the royal whisk in his left hand and a symbol in his right, with his dress draped over his left arm. Note the headband which further designates his rank. Directly behind him is a high-ranking person who carries his umbrella, a mandatory element in the procession. Behind him is either his wife or a favored concubine who will generally carry his royal stool. Before the Ashantihene is the bearer of the symbol of royal authority and before him is a drummer to announce the appearance of the Ashantihene. A woman has prepared the ground upon which the Ashantihene will walk by laying a cloth in his path. This procession is repeated frequently in Ashante society. Mouser

130. FOUR HEADED JANIS FIGURE—Sierra Leone, 1979. The carver of this piece was careful to note that the figure represented four stages in the development of a single person, and perhaps four personalities as well. I (Mouser) had the impression that he was making it all up as we went through the story. Nevertheless, the important point is that the piece needed to mean something and the artist needed to explain it. Nothing is done solely for art's sake. Mouser

131. COPTIC TRIPTYCH—Ethiopia, Amhara, 1960. This is a Coptic Christian box with doors; note the scene of the Virgin and Child. Modern. Viterbo College Museum Collections


133. BATIK, CAVE PAINTING—South Africa, 1982. This batik still contains the wax used in the dying process and is stiff. The designs used in depicting hunters is characteristic of those found in prehistoric caves in South Africa.

134. FISHING, artist proof, E. Emmanuel Odita—Nigeria, 1965. This is the artist's interpretation of an Ibo saying, "onye ndidi neri azu ukpo" (only the patient man can eat a fish caught by the hook). The fishermen are so involved with their work that they appear so deeply committed to the point of indifference. The impression is a kind of serenity charged with motion. Mouser

136. THE KING AND HIS LADIES--Ethiopia. Read the story from left to right. At the beginning of the first millennium, B.C., the Queen of Sheba ruled Ethiopia. The Queen, who was thoroughly trained in wisdom, developed a strong desire to visit King Solomon for she had heard of his virtue and understanding. She went to Jerusalem with great splendour and show of wealth including gold, precious stones and spices. The Queen was accompanied by many maids. After six months stay, the Queen wanted to return to her kingdom. The King tricked her into sleeping with him. He had, however, slept with one of the maids earlier the same night. On their return the Queen and the maid gave birth to boys on the same day. The maid's son was named Zague. The Queen named her son Menelik I. When he grew up Menelik went to Jerusalem to visit his father. The Menelik dynasty continued to rule Ethiopia until A.D. 1975. The Zague dynasty was never able to gain recognition. Boghossian

137. COPTIC SCROLL--Ethiopia, 1977. The scroll describes a woman who has the power of casting the evil eye on people and cattle and how Jesus destroyed her power. The text enumerates several names of God as protection against the evil eye. Viterbo College Museum Collections.


139. SENUFU MASK--Ivory Coast, Senufu, 1979. Tourist art. Mouser

140. LARGE MAT--Northern Nigeria/Cameroons, 1970. Gilbertson

141. KAMPALA OAU MEETING--Uganda, 1975. This is an example of cloth printing that celebrates a political, social or technological event. It is purchased as yard goods and generally would be made into clothing. Viterbo College Museum Collections

142. OK CLOTH--Nigeria, Yoruba, 1966. Wax is applied to one side of this cloth through the use of wood or metal blocks. The wax does not penetrate the cloth and the reverse side is totally blue. Mouser

143. TIE DYE--Nigeria, Yoruba, 1966. Mouser

144. CAMEROON POLITICAL--Cameroon, 1970. Political cloth which shows the picture of the President of the Cameroon. Gilbertson

145. TIE DYE--Nigeria, Yoruba, 1966. Mouser

146. TIE DYE--Nigeria, Yoruba. Parr

147. SMALL LOOM CLOTH--Cameroon, 1970. This large wall hanging is produced from strips of loom cloth, sewn together to create the design. Typical of Nigeria and Cameroons and common throughout west Africa. Gilbertson.

148. BUTTER HOLDERS--Ethiopia, 1975. Fystrom

149. RUG--Ethiopia, 1975. 5 by 7 feet, with the Coptic cross located in the center. Fystrom

Sketches from The Art of Africa by Elsy Leuzinger, 1960.