FOREWORD

FR. MICHAEL MORAN, SMA, PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR, AMERICAN PROVINCE
PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SMA AFRICAN ART MUSEUM

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the African Art Museum's first publication in cyberspace. Guide to the African Collections of the American Province of SMA will be published on www.smafathers.org in six volumes. The first in the series - I. The West Guinea Coast: Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Guinea and Guinea Bissau, - is now on the web site and will be available in hard copy in July, 2012. II. Burkina Faso, will also be published in both modes in 2012, as will III. The Gold Coast: Ghana, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, in 2013; IV. Central Africa: Gabon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, in 2014; V. The Sahel: Mali, Niger, Chad, Sudan, in 2015; and finally, VI. East and South Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, in 2016.

Carol Messer, Executive Director, and Gregory Lucente, Arts Outreach Coordinator, Bergen County Department of Parks, Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs, have been patient and supportive throughout the delays and frustrations inevitable in a project like this one. I express warm appreciation to our donors who have contributed so many fine works of art to our West African collections. To our museum staff and volunteers we extend blessings for all the great work they have done since the museum had its beginnings in 1965. For their labors on this publication I single out Robert J. Koenig, Director of the SMA African Art Museum, Peter H. Cade, Assistant to the Director, Prof. Charles Bordogna of Bergen Community College, Bill Siegmann, former Curator of Collections, SMA African Art Museum, and Martha Paladino, General Manager. We especially salute Audrey Koenig for the crucial supportive role she has played as a volunteer in the management of the African Art Museum collections for over fifteen years.

For their labors on this publication I single out Robert J. Koenig, Director of the SMA African Art Museum, Peter H. Cade, Assistant to the Director, Prof. Charles Bordogna of Bergen Community College, Bill Siegmann, former Curator of Collections, SMA African Art Museum and Martha Paladino, General Manager, SMA. We especially salute Audrey Koenig for the crucial supportive role she has played in the management of the SMA African Art Museum collections for over fifteen years. The SMA and the African Art Museum have enjoyed a cordial business relationship with Galvanic Printing and Plate Co., Inc., for years, but the Guide to Collections has been our happiest collaboration to date. Bob gave John Moss, Jr., President of Galvanic, a design philosophy to work with, but the page by page layout as well as the pervasive clarity, balance and refinement of this book are due to the hard work, skill and vision of three Galvanic staff members: Paul Ragas, Graphic Development Manager, Peter Ruiz, Media Specialist and Jeff Herzog, Color Specialist.

Funding for this publication has been made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, through grant funds administered by the Bergen County Department of Parks, Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs.
In Memoriam: Bill Siegmann

We at SMA mourn the loss of Bill Siegmann, who served as Curator of the African Art Museum of the SMA Fathers in 1978-1979. In that capacity, he added many fine works of art from Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea to our collections and published a selection of them in one of the museum’s first catalogues, African Sculpture from the Collection of the Society of African Missions, 1980. His deep commitment to Africa began with service in the Peace Corps in the late 1960s. He pursued research in Liberia from 1974 to 1976. In 1984, he became Director of the National Museum of Liberia in Monrovia. From 1987 to 2007, Bill served with great distinction as Curator of the Arts of Africa and the Pacific Islands, at the Brooklyn Museum. In 2009, he gave us an eloquent account of the great collection he had shaped, published and exhibited for two decades: African Art: A Century at The Brooklyn Museum, Prestel, 2009. Bill taught at universities in Africa and the United States and was always generous with his expertise and impeccable connoisseurship.
It is no accident that The African Art Museum of the SMA Fathers is located at front and center of the large complex which is the headquarters of the American Province of the Society of African Missions. Led by Fr. Patrick J. O’Donoghue, the fathers were following the example of their founder Bishop Melchior de Marion Bressilac, who exhorted his priests to respect the cultures of the peoples to whom they ministered. Visitors to 23 Bliss Avenue are greeted by a panoply of African art when entering the building – twenty four showcases of masks, figures, textiles, costumes and decorative arts which highlight the beauty and variety, the richness and profundity, the agony and the ecstasy of the arts of Africa.

When the complex at 23 Bliss Avenue opened its doors in 1965, the museum’s collections were small and spotty. What was there had been brought back to Tenafly by missionary priests returning from their tenures in Africa. Some of the works acquired early in our history are superb – the Olumeye from Fr. Ignatius Lissner, the We “Terror Mask” from Fr. John Feeney, for instance, but some were only ethnographic documents, not works of art at all. It was from 1968 to 1978, when he was Provincial Superior, that Fr. Kevin Scanlan practiced a systematic method of acquisition, working with his good friend Fr. Kevin Carroll, who was then stationed in Nigeria. Fr. Carroll, at the behest of Fr. Patrick Kelly, Provincial Superior of the Irish Province of SMA, established a ‘centre to study, among other things, the adaptation of African crafts to Christian uses, and to experiment in this field’. Fr. Carroll was a pioneer in the study of African art, and among the first to recognize the individuality of the African artist. Working together, Frs. Carroll and Scanlan acquired major works by Joseph Bandele, Joseph Imale and other Yoruba artists for the fledgling collection at Tenafly. In 1978, Fr. Thomas “Ted” Hayden, became Provincial Superior of the American province of SMA. Recognizing the growing importance of the African Art Museum as a communications tool, Fr Hayden appointed Fr. Edward Biggane, a brilliant young SMA missionary priest, to be the first Director of the African Art Museum of the SMA Fathers. Fr. Biggane hired William C. Siegmann, right out of graduate school, to be the first curator of collections. Bill Siegmann has enjoyed an illustrious career as an Africanist, retiring in 2009 from a position as Curator of the Arts of African and Oceania, Brooklyn Museum. In addition to building the collections, especially through acquisitions of Liberian works of art, Mr. Siegmann published the first catalogue of the SMA Tenafly collections, American Sculpture from the Collection of the Society of African Missions, 1980.

The next thirty years saw SMA reaching out to the schools in northern New Jersey and the New York metropolitan area. A succession of able and dedicated education curators – Joan Waite, Sara Tális, Margaret Masticardo, and Richard Barrows – brought Africa to life for adults as well as children of all ages, not only in the museum but also in the classroom. Through their efforts, the museum served as a ‘bridge between cultures’. To augment their work, a talented and energetic young man, Charles Bordogna, volunteered as curator of collections. Charlie was an intern at the well-respected L. Kahan African Arts Gallery in New York City. Mr. Kahan, possessed of a large and enthusiastic following of collectors, encouraged his clients to donate works of art to The SMA African Art Museum. His and Charlie’s efforts have been the single most important factor in building and shaping the Tenafly collections.
Today, in 2011, the collections have reached the point where they justify – even require – publication. They comprise over two thousand objects which represent the range of visual arts production in sub-Saharan Africa. The text of this Guide to Collections will not add any information to the corpus of wisdom built up in the last hundred years by many scholars who have spent their lives researching, publishing, and exhibiting the arts of sub-Saharan Africa. Basically it is a list of the collections which will enable you to further investigate objects for research or exhibition purposes, or just for your own interest. It is meant as a reference work for your library but also as a guide to be held in the hand while viewing an exhibition. The photographs, sometimes presenting multiple views and details of a work of art, are meant to surprise you into seeing the object in a different way or experiencing it more intensely. A connoisseur of African art will take a work of art in his hands, and examine it from all sides – including, and especially, the inside of a mask, touch the surface, heft the object to judge the weight and density of the wood, sniff it – a freshly carved mask smells woody – and in his mind’s eye, compare it to all the objects of its type that have come within his purview. Many years ago I studied with Josef Albers at the Graduate School of Art and Architecture, Yale University. Albers taught his students to see a work of art dispassionately – “Ach boy, don’t tell me what you meant to do, look at the painting and tell me what you did do!” – Just so, when we look at an African mask or figure, we want to understand, perhaps enjoy, its line, pattern, form in space, color and texture. But then we want to know more: where does it come from, how old is it, who made it, why and how was it used? Robert L. Scranton, in Aesthetic Aspects of Ancient Art, University of Chicago, 1964, tells us that ‘a work of art may be conceived to exist in at least three states: one in the mind of the artist, another which the artist constructs in the physical world, and a third in the mind of the observer. Aesthetics is the immediate perception of the work of art through the senses. Technic (technikos) is the materials and methods used in the making of the art object. Rationale is the knowledge, thought or reasoning the observer brings to the work in order to grasp its concept or meaning. Rationale may be put into words over time; aesthetics may be intuitive, wordless and instantaneous, but can intensify over time.

The works of art described in this little publication have given me much pleasure, some of them on a daily basis for a decade and a half, as I studied and worked with them at the African Art Museum of The SMA Fathers. I invite you to look at them with me so we can share that pleasure.

Robert J. Koenig, Director
SMA African Art Museum
March 2011
LIBERIA

Liberia today – in 2011 – is a country that is healing from many years of corrupt government. In 2006 Ellen Johnson Sirleaf became the first democratically elected female president. After decades of civil war, dysfunctional infrastructure, inadequate educational systems and famine, it is advancing toward a rational political system, economic recovery and improvement in peoples. Of its population of 3.49 million (2008), 20% are Kpelle, 16% Bassa, 8% Gio, 7% Kru and 49% spread over 12 other ethnic groups. Religiously, it is 20% Christian, 40% Moslim and 40% animist. Although English is the official language, there are sixteen indigenous languages. The life expectancy is 42.5 years, literacy is 20%. Employment in the formal sector is 15%; 70% agriculture, 15% industry, 2% services. Liberia was traditionally noted for its academic institutions, and for iron mining and rubber. Political upheavals in the 1980s and a 14-year civil war (1989-2003) largely destroyed Liberia’s economy and brought a steep decline in living standards.

Portuguese explorers established contacts with Liberia in 1461 and named the area ‘grain coast’ because of the abundance of ‘grains of paradise’ (Malaqueta pepper seeds). In 1663 the British installed trading posts on the Grain Coast, but the Dutch destroyed them three years later. As a political entity, Liberia – ‘land of the free’ was founded by free African-Americans and freed slaves from the United States in 1820. It declared its independence as the Republic of Liberia in 1847.

From US Department of State: Bureau of African Affairs
Diplomacy in Action Background Note: Liberia 2009

THE LIBERIAN COLLECTIONS

The Liberian collections of the SMA African art museum are among its strongest holdings. There are good reasons for this. The American Province of the Society of African Missions has been a strong presence in Liberia for over a hundred years, and a number of key works were contributed by SMA missionary priests working there. Most important among these is Fr. Edward Biggane, whose collection of over two hundred pieces was contributed by his close friend Mrs. Diane Flynn in 2009. Fr. Biggane himself contributed over fifty important works in 2010. The first Curator of Collections of the African Art Museum of The SMA Fathers was William Siegmann, who served under Fr. Edward Biggane, its first director. Mr. Siegmann’s keen interest was Liberia and the Guinea Coast and he acquired a number of fine Liberian works for SMA which were an important influence on Fr. Biggane in the shaping of his collection. He later served as director of an African art museum in Liberia and was for many years the Curator of the Arts of Africa and Pacific Asia at the Brooklyn Museum. Exhibitions of Liberian art were mounted by Prof. Charles Bordogna, volunteer curator during the period 1980-1985. These attracted many donations of Liberian art to the SMA African Art Museum.
According to Fischer and Himelheber…there are two mask types which are prevalent among the Dan and their Liberian neighbors: male masks with wide open eyes and female masks with semi-closed, downcast eyes. It is tempting to think of the classic mask with oval face, narrow slit eyes and feminine features as Dan, but the We/N’Gere have both types of masks….one may think of motifs rather than styles, however there are some motifs which are found only among the northern and eastern Dan: masks with vertical horns, masks with bearded beaklike noses or masks with round, not elevated, eyeholes…The forehead scar is a typical feature of southern Dan masks; among northern Dan types it is usually replaced by tattooing around the edges of the face. .. As far as stylistic tendencies go, western Dan sculptors tend to make their masks flatter and less detailed than their colleagues to the north and east. The southern Dan, the Mano and the Kran carved masks with powerfully modeled but short foreheads which rise at an angle of about 120 degrees to the cheeks, while face masks of the other Dan groups are modeled within a single plane. ..One can assert that the Dan style is the product of two schools – an original Dan school with narrow eyes and feminine features and an invasive/innovative Kran/N’Gere style with tubular eyes.’ (Fischer etc.)

Dan masks may have either human or animal features. They are always worn on the face, never horizontally or over the head as a helmet (the famous sowe mask of the bundu spirit belongs to the Mende, most of them are from Sierra Leone). Liberian masks are almost always made of wood in dimensions which approximate the size of the human face. Their forms may be realistic or they may be so abstract that it is difficult to find a referent in real life. Masks without a beard, with narrow eyes and an oval face are described by the Dan as gle mu, female-featured masks. Masks with angular, pentagonal silhouettes, a beard and tubular eyes are gle gon, male masks. In the gle gon category, eyes may be deep set triangles beneath a bulbous forehead or may be protruding tubular forms. Noses may be very large, ranging from realistic in treatment to heavy abstract pyramidal forms. Foreheads may be framed with duiker (antelope) horns; …chins may have framing rows of bells. Some masks may be supplied with animal features such as the maw of the crocodile, horns or elephant tusks. Dreaming is a crucial element in the creative process of the Dan carver. The face comes to him as his personal variant on the classical deangle form. The deangle is not female – masks have no gender, but it has feminine traits; one might say it has a feminine personality. It is the face of alternative to the male, with all the beauty, mystery and danger that entails.’ (Johnson, Barbara C. Four Dan Sculptors: Continuity and Change. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986.)
1. **BUGLE ‘WARRIOR’S MASK, KRAN/N’GERE**

Gift of Carl and Wilma Zabel

Wood

The protruding upper lip of this mask once had a fine mustache of Colobus monkey fur. The carver has left the marks of the adze on the large upper lip, which would have been hidden by the facial hair. The forehead has an extraordinary profile, with an angular curve and protruding lips divided into quadrants by fine medial lines. It is published in Four Dan Sculptors: Continuity and Change, Barbara C. Johnson, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986, ill 17, p 74.

2. **BUGLE ‘WARRIOR’S MASK, DAN/KRAN**

Gift of Dr. Marshall W. and Caroline Mount, 1997

Wood, pigment, clay mixed with red camwood powder, one large and three small nails, animal hair, raffia, leather thongs, multi-colored wool ‘beard’. This extraordinary mask has a long nose expending from the forehead to the upper lip. The nose is triangular in cross-section with a sharp medial ridge. The eyes are tubular and round, accented with white rims. The open mouth is set with nine small nails; there is a very large bent nail set in the forehead. The insides of the round eyes are picked out in dark blue pigment, the jaws may once have been movable.

3. **DEANGLE MASK, BY THE DAN CARVER ZON, BEFORE 1954.**

Gift of Diane Flynn, 2009 (former collection Fr. Edward Biggane, SMA)

Wood, aluminum teeth

This fine deangle mask, formerly in the collection of Fr. Edward Biggane, SMA, was collected by Torkel Holsoe between 1954 and 1960. Mr. Holsoe was then then serving as forestry advisor to the Liberian government under the auspices of a U.S government technical assistance program. The number 90 in white paint in the verso of the mask is a Torkel Holsoe number (W. Siegman to RJK, January, 2010). The mask has an extraordinary profile, with angular cheekbones and protruding lips divided into quadrants by fine medial lines. It is published in Four Dan Sculptors: Continuity and Change, Barbara C. Johnson, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986, ill 17, p 74.
4. **Figure 2**  
**GUNYEGE MASK, DAN**  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Francis II, 2002  
Wood, nail in forehead  
Round-eyed masks occur only among the northern Dan. They are oval and have the features associated with deangle, except they have round rather than slit eyes. The round eyes may take the form of holes or projecting tubular forms. Gunyege is a trophy mask. It races with the fastest young men in the village. It is believed that the ge – the spirit, will ensure that the wearer of the mask will win the race. If he loses, the mask is the prize of the winner of the race. The round eyes of our gunyege are slightly protruding. They are defined by a flat 1/8” rim. Two incised leaves or feathers descend at an angle across each cheek. The surface is mottled. The beautifully carved lips are parted as if making a sound. The inside of the upper lip is drilled for the insertion of two teeth, now lost. The face, and particularly the profile, is more realistic than the face on the Zon deangle.

5. **DEANGLE MASK, DAN**  
Gift of Diane Flynn, 2009 (former collection Fr. Edward Biggane, SMA)  
Cast brass, flat disc beads, cloth, string  
The Dan (and other peoples of Liberia) had a thriving brass casting industry which made jewelry, and figures as well as masks. The jewelry included thumb rings, bracelets, leg rings and anklets. Wealthy women wore anklets weighing up to 6.5 kilograms each, which rendered the woman virtually immobile. All she was expected to do was sit and give orders. Brass masks are rare, and though heavy, were worn. Our example retains strong woven straps reinforced with cord, which permitted the mask to be tied over the face. The mask also retains a fragment of a costume of strip woven cotton ‘country cloth’ darkened with age.
6. **Figure 3**

**DEANGLE MASK, MANO**
Gift of Lee Lorenz, 2011

This magnificent mask has more amplitude than its Dan/Kran counterparts. The width of the face is much greater in proportion to the length, the slit eyes are set within large projecting ‘coffee bean’ forms, the broad nose projects an inch beyond the surface of the mask – and the lips are enormous. The lower part of the mask is rimmed with old ‘country cloth’ to which are fastened two strands of old glass trade beads and a string of seven brass bells. The high domed forehead is notched for the attachment of a headdress. The mask has a black glossy patina and is in mint condition.

7. **Figure 4.**

**‘TERROR’ MASK, SAPO/WE 61.01.02**
Gift of Fr. John Feeney, SMA , 1961

The entire surface of this wooden mask is encrusted with sacrificial material. Set into this substance are rings of white glazed ceramic and metal, probably brass. Long tufts of black animal hair form a beard and mustache which hang over the movable jaw. The mouth has five large white china teeth (originally it had eleven, there are six empty holes). In addition, two different kinds of animal horns (nine of them) are set into the forehead, some with pointed end, some with open end out. The mask is further hung with braided rope; one thick piece was used to tie the mask round the head. A large piece of flat black metal has been worked into the ‘country cloth’ diadem. This mask has enormous presence and, even at this point of removal from Africa and distance in time, evokes awe in the viewer. Fr. John Feeney, SMA, born in Galway, Ireland in 1922, served for many years in Liberia. The people in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County, called him the ‘white man who wears a long white gown and speaks Kru’. (Fr. Feeney was 6’4” tall). In his early mission days he walked long distances to minister to the people in remote Liberian villages.

8. **‘TERROR’ MASK, KRA N/N’GERE, LIBERIA**
Purchase from William Siegmann, 1987 1987.01.02

Wood, red and white commercial enamels, with attachments of fiber, metal tacks, bone, leopard skin, feathers, animal claws and horns. This mask was a protective presence in the village, deciding on important matters of justice with regard to social and political disputes, life and death, war and peace. It has an articulated jaw, bone-pierced nose and huge bulbous eyes pierced by horizontal slits. In a letter dated June 4, 1987, Fr. Thomas Conlon, then Provincial Superior of the American Province says to Bill Siegmann, then Curator of the U.S. Educational and Cultural Foundation, Monrovia, that ‘we have set aside $4,000.00 for the purchase of Liberian art...I would be grateful if you could pursue (Curator Joan Waite’s) request and arrange for the purchase of the seven items mentioned (JW letter to BS 4/28/87).
9. SOWEI MASK OF THE BUNDU SOCIETY, SIERRA LEONE/LIBERIA
The sowei mask of the Bundu spirit is one of the best-known masks in Africa. It is one of the few, if not the only mask type worn by women. The Bundu is remarkable for the variety of forms depicted within an icon which has been in use for hundreds of years. Characteristic are a neck with rolls of fat, an elaborate coiffure surmounted by an ornament or symbol, a wide generously-curved forehead, narrowed eyes, small nose and closed mouth. The mask was worn with a full length costume of black raffia by older women of rank and accomplishment who served as mentors and teachers in the initiation of pubescent girls into the bundu society. That initiation was a ‘finishing school’ which prepared the girls for marriage and adult womanhood. SMA has a strong group of bundu masks, the gifts of several donors over a period of years.

10. Fig. 5a to h
SOWEI MASK OF THE BUNDU SOCIETY
Gift of Dr. Pascal James and Eleanor M. Imperato, 2009. Janus-faced, coiffure surmounted by six small horns. This mask is not only beautiful but rare because it is Janus-faced. The two faces are almost but not quite the same. On the face looking to the right (the recto) in our photograph, the features are asymmetrical: the left eye is higher than the right and the left ear is much higher than the right ear. On the face looking to the left (the verso) the eyes and ears are vertically symmetrical. The smile on one face is wider than on the other. On one face the scarification marks are three vertical lines; on the verso they are crosses. The form of the mask is dominated by curves, unusual are the swags descending from each ear to the small pointed chin. The features of the face are compressed between the swag – a smiling full-lipped mouth, small nose, long slit eyes curving upward under arcing eyebrows formed by seven hairs carved in shallow relief. The coiffure is surmounted by two small horns surrounded by four larger horns – a male symbol in the context of female iconography. The tab ears are very small. The lower rim of the mask is pierced with holes for the attachment of the full-length black raffia costume. The inside of the mask displays long parallel groves. Both profiles are exquisite.
In contrast to the volumetric treatment of a woman’s face by the Mende, the facial features on this Bassa helmet mask are sunk within an oval concavity. Above the face is a magnificent coiffure with three high lobes at the crown. Three high relief bands, semicircular in cross-section, wrap around the head at the level of the temples. The basic form of the helmet is cylindrical. The inside shows signs of age and wear; the surface is a beautiful matte black. Condition is excellent except for two long cracks, one on either side of the helmet. As usual, the lower rim is pierced for the attachment of a black raffia costume.
12. SOWEI MASK OF THE BUNDU SOCIETY
Gift of Mrs. Diane Flynn, 2009

13. SOWEI MASK OF THE BUNDU SOCIETY
Gift of Dr. Kenneth Rosenbaum, 1984 (1984.5.9)
Carving has clean, sharp edges. The lower part of the coiffure has a band of duiker horns. The cranium is surmounted by a turtle, symbol of the watery nature of the spirit.

14. SOWEI MASK OF THE BUNDU SOCIETY
Gift of Dr. Kenneth Rosenbaum, 1984
Three high lobes surmount the coiffure of this mask, which displays a voluptuous fullness of form expressive of its function as avatar of womanhood. It retains a significant portion of its black raffia costume.

15. SOWEI MASK OF THE BUNDU SOCIETY
Gift of Dr. Kenneth Rosenbaum, 1984 1984.05.10
Blackened wood. The six-lobed coiffure is surmounted by an amulet in the shape of a stepped pyramid. The forehead and the back of the head show a rectangle in relief. Dr. Rosenbaum donated several soweis to the SMA African Art Museum in 1984.

16. SOWEI MASK OF THE BUNDU SOCIETY
Gift of Particia Broder, 1982.04.01
Blackened wood, bifurcated coiffure carefully parted in the center. A bun on either side and a double topknot. Beautiful wide, high forehead. Condition good.

17. SOWEI MASK OF THE BUNDU SOCIETY
Gift of Stewart J. Warkow

18. SOWEI MASK OF THE BUNDU SOCIETY
Gift of Gary L. Schulze

19. SOWEI MASK OF THE BUNDU SOCIETY
SMA Purchase from William Siegmann, 1987 1987.01.01
At the time the African Art Museum purchased this mask from him, Bill Siegmann was Director of the Africana Museum, Cuttington University College, Monrovia, Liberia. He was in an excellent position to obtain objects for the collections of the African Art Museum of the SMA Fathers. This fine mask wears a powder horn on her coiffure and retains a portion of its costume. The powder horn is carved from a separate piece of wood and attached to the highest lobe of the coiffeur with a strip of white metal. The tapering end of the horn is sheathed in tin; attached to its end is a small sealed metal cylinder. The larger end of the horn is also wrapped in tin; the aperture is carefully sealed. The outline of the coiffure is picked out in white pigment; the forehead is unusually high and dramatic. This mask was featured in an exhibition at Caldwell College, Caldwell, NJ in 1999. The inside of the mask shows a great deal of wear.

20. SOWEI MASK OF THE BUNDU SOCIETY, MENDE (2009.01.01)
Gift of Dr. Pascal James and Eleanor M. Imperato,
Blackened wood. H 13 ½” Features squeezed into a space 2 ½” high with ‘crow’s feet’ at the corners of the eyes. Carefully executed coiffure with three lobes. The condition is good; there is some chipping of the black surface.

21. NAH WEDE ‘COUNTRY DEVIL’ MASK, BASSA, LIBERIA
The nah wede mask of the Bassa people of Liberia is marked by the opposition of the masses of the upper and lower part of the face set against each other at an obtuse angle. Older examples, however, such as the example in the Flynn gift, 2009, do not have this morphology. The nah wede, known as the ‘country devil’ was worn on top of the head, not over the face. For that reason it shows no wear on the inside.
22. Fig. 7 a, b  
NAH WEDE MASK (1998.10.01)  
Gift of Dr. Richard Robertiello, 1998  
Blackened and polished wood, H 8 ½ x W 5 ½” This mask has a superb form, but the surface was cleaned and waxed by a former owner. Light brown wood shows through the polished surface. The upper and lower parts of the head are opposed to each other at a ninety degree angle, creating a dynamic form. The features are more fully realized than usual on Bassa nah wede masks. The lips are parted as if uttering a sound; the chin is cleft by a medial groove.
23. **Fig 8 a, b**

**NAH WEDE MASK** (2009.)
Gift of Diane Flynn, 2009,
formerly collection of Fr. Ed Biggane
Wood, most of blackened surface worn away, H9” W 5 ½ across ears. This is a strong, not a great mask, with well-defined forms. The coiffure is asymmetrical and not as carefully executed as it might be. The mouth displays one tooth; A second tooth is missing.

24. **NAH WEDE MASK**
Gift of Carl and Wilma Zabel, 2009
Blackened wood, surface intact.

25. **MASK, GUERZE, GUINEA**
Anonymous Gift, 1960s
Wood, Colubus Monkey fur, cloth, cowry shells, leather, fur, copper
This mask was published in the 1980 catalogue by Bill Siegmann. It retains part of its costume, a strip-woven ‘country cloth’ shirt as well as the elaborate headdress worn by this type of mask. This mask type was used by a number of peoples in Liberia, Guinea and Ivory Coast. It is a social control and initiation mask, empowered to announce the symbolic death and rebirth of initiates or to carry off criminals convicted of capital crimes and sentenced to death. Siegmann, 1980.
26. Fig.9
NYANGBAI MASK, LOMA/TOMA, LIBERIA
Gift of Lee Lorenz, 1999
Wood 24 x 16”. This is an unusually large and heavy but very fine example of a nyangbai mask. The Loma people of Liberia (known as Toma in Guinea) number over 200,000 and live in the high altitude forest lying across the Guinea/Liberia border. Like many peoples of the West Guinea Coast, they organize their political and social life around the powerful men’s secret society – poro. Among other important aspects of Loma/Toma life, poro was responsible for the initiation of young boys, a procedure which took place in the deep forest. When called forth by a mask called landai, the initiates would leave their homes for a month-long retreat in the bush. The landai, a huge horizontal mask worn by several men under a mammoth raffia costume, has massive articulated jaws that drip with the red juice of kola nuts. This image reinforces the belief that the spirit eats the young boys alive and spits them out as mature adults through the process of circumcision. Initiation is brought to a close by a ritual devouring followed by a symbolic rebirth. The nyangbai mask is the feminine counterpart of the male landa. Typically, the mask is surmounted by a headdress of feathers and several horns. Both masks represent bush spirits and are symbolic of the opposing forces of nature. Nyangbai morphology is marked by an overhanging brow, narrow slit eyes, large flat face with no mouth, two cylinders on each side of the face and horn and ear-like projections at the top.

27. MINIATURE NYANGBAI MASK
Gift of Prof Dan Horsky, 2002
Wood, H 8 1/4 x W4”. For placement on an altar or for use as a personal mask. This miniature has the typical nyangbai overhanging brow with a central horn and two ears. The brow carries a band carved in relief with three four-lobed shapes within rectangles. The eyes are two small holes in a perfectly flat face. The top of the mask retains traces of a hairy attachment, a power pack of sacrificial material.
28. Fig.10
FEMALE FIGURE, LOMA
Purchase from William Siegmann, 1988. Cast brass, H 12” The Dan, Kran and Bassa made metal figures from the end of the nineteenth century to World War II. This figure is probably Loma, but possibly Dan. It is a hollow cast brass or bronze alloy representing a standing woman with arms at her sides, palms up, and with broad feet forming a self base. She wears stacked narrow bracelets on her proper left arms, bells on her right wrist and both ankles and a necklace with three pendants on a braided cord. She is tall and slender, over six heads high. The left front foot is broken, otherwise the figure is intact.

29.
CHIEF CARRIED IN A HAMMOCK, WE (1961.1.11)
Gift of Fr. John Feeney, 1961. H 7 ½ x W across feet 5 ¼. The man who cast this charming piece came from Charlie Gwen Town, Cedeh County. The brass was recycled from melted cartridge shells. It represents four men carrying a chief in a hammock. They have bandoliers crossed over back and chest. The chief wears a European style cap and is shielded from the sun by a stack of textiles. Such figures and genre groups were produced as prestige objects for purely decorative purposes. Rarely, they served a ritual function. Published: Siegmann, 1980.
30. Fig. 11
FEMALE FIGURE, DAN (1987.01.03)
William Siegmann Purchase, 1987  1987.1.3  (87.01.10.?)  
Wood, H 25"
This type of figure was carved for decorative purposes; it has no ritual significance. According to Charles Bordogna, Curator of Collections in 1987, the figure is ‘rare, with a unique coiffure. The white around the eyes is a mark of spiritual insight.’ This is an erect nude female with five rings on her neck and a large ‘bow-shaped’ coiffure. Her sexual attributes are clearly indicated. The parts of her body are well-formed. She stands erect on both feet, legs slightly spread. Her disproportionately short arms hang down at her sides. She wears a tiny amulet in the form of a mask around her neck, and has two scarification marks on her body: a shape resembling a feather at her waist and an hourglass shape on each thigh. Condition is pristine.

31.  
DOLL, DAN  (1979.02.05)
Split bamboo, fiber, seed beads. This simple but evocative doll, made from a section of bamboo, has an elaborate braided coiffure. Her face and loins are marked by geometric pyro-engraving. Black beaded loop earrings are inserted in small holes at the level of the face.
GAME BOARDS

The Museum’s collections include game boards from Liberia, Ethiopia and Kenya. The boards are used in a game known by different names among many peoples in sub-Saharan Africa as well as southeast Asia; it is called Ma by the Dan of Liberia. The game dates back to Pharaonic times in Egypt. Two players face each other with the board between them. The four pebbles in each of twelve cups are moved about the board in turn by the players. If a pebble lands in a cup already occupied, the contents are confiscated by the player. The one who captures the most pebbles wins the game. Most games have twelve cups; some have fourteen. The larger cup at the end of the board is for the captured pebbles.

32. Fig. 12a, b
BOARD FOR THE GAME OF MA, DAN.
(1987.01.06)
Gift of William Siegmann, 1987
Wood, pigment, pebbles, nuts, L 30 ¼” x W 5 7/8.
Like most Dan Ma boards this one has a human head carved at one end. The head is shaped like a deangle mask and has two tiny white metal teeth between parted lips. The board shows extensive wear on the inside of the thirteen cups. It exhibits patina on the head and neck, especially on those surfaces which would have been in contact with the owner’s hands when the board was carried. It sits on four wedge-shaped legs. The rich brown wooden sides are painted in black. One side bears a design of Xs and dots; the other a pattern of vertical and horizontal lines. There are thirty one pebbles and nuts in the cups.
33.  
**MA GAME BOARD DAN**,  
Donor unknown  
Wood. L. 32" This is an unusually large and heavy ma game board with a human head at either end. The heads are well carved and have braided coiffures. It stands on four animal legs with well-defined feet, all pointing in the same direction. The sides are incised with a geometric pattern.

34.  
**MA GAME BOARD, DAN**  
Donor unknown  
Wood, L 28" Condition good. This board is crudely carved compared to the two other examples in the collection, but judging from the surface, it is older. It has a head at one end and a large cup at the other. Ma boards usually have twelve cups, this one has ten. The coiffure is unusual.
35. Fig. 13
BELLOWS, DAN, LIBERIA (1999.11.01)
Gift of Dr. Terril Gagnier, 1999
This bellows lacks its leather bag, but the form is striking. H 30 x W 13 ½"
36. **BOWL, DAN, LIBERIA**  
Purchase from William Siegmann, 1987/88

37. **HEDDLE PULLEY, SENUFO**  
Blackened wood, based, with a bird’s head

38. **HEDDLE PULLEY, BAULE**  

39. **HEDDLE PULLEY, BAULE**  
Gift of Kadier-En-Keer 1972.01.02  

40. **HEDDLE PULLEY, BAULE**  

41. **SLING SHOT, BAULE**  
Gift of Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuelly, (1998.02.13)  
Wood, based Two pairs of opposed masks on the handle. The axis of the slingshot is a graceful curve.

42. **SLING SHOT, BAULE**  
Gift of Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuelly, 1998 (1998.02.15)  
Wood. The figurative superstructure is a gun.

43. **SLING SHOT, BAULE**  
Gift of Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuelly, 1997  

44. **SLING SHOT, BAULE**  
Gift of Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuelly, 1998 (1998.02.12)  
Wood. Janus-faced bonun amuen with a pleated skirt.
METALWORK

45. Fig. 14
CURRENCY SATAEIA, CAST BRASS OR BRONZE ALLOY
Gift of Fr. Frank Gilfether, 1974
Sand-cast brass, ranging in size from 1 7/8” to just under 7” in diameter. The largest weighs about ten pounds, the smallest a few ounces. The characteristic form is a solid ring with a bell-shaped form at each of the four cardinal points. One is open ended, like a bracelet. Most Liberian metal objects were cast by the lost-wax process; these sataeia may have been sand-cast (legend has it that they were miraculously shaped in the depths of the sea). The dark greenish metal shows through a caked layer of yellowish-brown dust, indicating that the sataeia may have been buried for a considerable period of time.
Fig. 15a,b
CROTAL, BRASS/BRONZE ALLOY, KRU
Gift of Arnold and Joanne Syrop, 2007
A magnificent example of cire perdu (lost wax) casting, this crotal is shaped like a bracelet or anklet. It was a prestige object, functioning as a measure of value – currency or property. It is solid metal and weighs 10 pounds.
47. Fig 16a-c
POWDER HORN, MENDE, SIERRA LEONE
Ivory, coin silver or brass alloy, contains fragmentary document written in Arabic.
The repoussé sheet silver is soldered and nailed to the horn. Lid embellished with King George V coin
48.  
SIDE BLOWN TRUMPET, MENDE, LIBERIA
Gift of Gary L. Schulze
COSTUMES

49. TUNIC AND HAT 20TH CENTURY
Gift of Fr. George Landry, SMA 2000
Bronze weft-faced stripes with machine embroidery. This costume was presented to Fr. Landry by his students at Bishop Juwle High School in Grand Gideh, Liberia.

50. TUNIC, TROUSERS AND HAT, KRAN COUNTRY, LIBERIA 1996.03.01A, B, C.
Gift of Fr. John Feeney, 1996
Strip-woven silver and magenta lurex, black cotton stripes. Machine-stitched. The pocket is inserted so that its stripes are at right angles to the predominating warp stripes. The dashiki is lavishly embroidered around the neck, the front and back of the yoke, on the pocket, hat and trousers, in pale gold polished cotton. The matte finish of the cotton is a surprising contrast to the glittery lurex. Lurex is a synthetic fiber which glitters and shines. Once West African weavers obtained it, they put it to lavish use. This ceremonial costume was given to Fr. Feeney upon the completion of his long and loving labors among the Kran people of Liberia. He was ‘gowned’, that is the splendid garments were put on him at a ceremony attended by the whole village. Shirt L 41 ¼” W 61” across shoulders and sleeves Trousers L 44” x Waist 44” Hat H 1¼”. Each strip 5 ¼” wide 12 Strips (some piecing).
Fr. Feeney was ordained on February 10, 1949 and arrived in Liberia in 1950, initially teaching history at St. Patrick’s High School in Monrovia. His good works for the African people include the completion of a rectory and school in Zwedru and a house, church and school in Zleyh Town, Grand Gedeh County, where he established a second Catholic Mission. He was elected Regional Superior of Liberia, Tanzania and Sierra Leone before his assignment to the Diocese of Gbarnga, Bong County, in 1990. Fr. Feeney said of his experience in Liberia: ‘SMA Fathers have worked in Liberia for over 80 years... the benefits they brought to that country are incalculable. And the numerous blessings they have reaped for themselves are known only to God...’ Fr. Feeney retired to Ireland to live with his sister Maureen in County Galway. He died in 2010.

51. SHIRT DASHIKI, ‘LIBERIAN COUNTRY CLOTH’, LIBERIA
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. George Keenan, 1998. Strip woven hand spun, hand woven cotton
Traditional indigo and white striped Liberian ‘country cloth’. Hand woven in strips 3½” wide, warp faced stripes in several shades and tints of indigo. Constructed in three pieces: one long piece for the front and back, one piece for each sleeve. The sides of the shirt are closed by the insertion of a piece of the strip 3½ x 7” wide. Hand sewn throughout. The bottom edge and the edges of the sleeves have a thick fringe of selvage, approximately 1” deep.
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. George Keenan, 1998

52. MAN’S SHIRT DASHIKI WITH MATCHING HAT
Donor unknown, before 1996. Cotton, commercially woven on a wide loom, black, white, brown and red stripes. Lavishly embroidered around the neck, on the pocket and on the hat with bronze polished cotton in a design of circles, spirals and tear drops. Machine sewn and embroidered. The shirt constructed of two pieces of cloth, front and back, open at the sides. No sleeves. H 56 x W across top 43¼”.

53. MAN’S SHIRT DASHIKI WITH MATCHING HAT
Donor unknown. Cotton, commercially woven on a wide loom, black white, brown and blue stripes (the same fabric as #52 but with a blue instead of a red stripe. Embroidered around the neck with silver polished cotton. Machine-sewn and embroidered. The shirt is constructed of two pieces of cloth, open at the sides but fastened together at a point 8 ½” above the hem. The similarity of the embroidered motifs in the two dashikis(numbers 52 and 53) may indicate that they are by the same hand, or by different embroiderers working from a pattern.

54. MAN’S SHIRT DASHIKI, LIBERIA OR GHANA
Strip-woven multi-colored man’s shirt with a gored skirt attached to the waist. The shirt has sleeves as well as two embroidered slits in the front for the skirt for the hands. The waist band is extraordinarily large, measuring 88”. Lined with white cotton sacking printed with the words “SELECTED HARD SPRING WHEAT FLOUR MILLED BY G.M.G. TEMEA PRIDE OF THE WEST MADE IN GHANA” (lettering appears twice on the lining). This type of garment is worn by men of the sahel region of Ghana and other countries of the Guinea coast. Wheat flour made in Ghana is exported to Liberia.
55. Fig 17a,b
Gift of Helen Hunt, 1966
Cotton, Printed in Europe or Africa. This beautiful costume - skirt, jacket and head wrap, would have been a standout among many colorfully dressed celebrants at the Silver Jubilee of Fr. Boniface Nyema Dalieh, later Bishop Dalieh. A portrait of Fr. Dalieh is on the costume; he was then 32 years old. In 1966, Helen Hunt was a lay missionary serving in Liberia. This is one of a number of high quality works of art donated by Ms. Hunt to the African Art Museum of The SMA Fathers.
56. Fig 18

57. Fig 19
WOMAN’S SHIRT AND TROUSERS ‘S.E. Félix HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY’ 1er President de la République de Côte d’Ivoire 1960-1993. Gift of Helen Hunt, 1966. No imprint visible. Large medallion with border of bush cow heads surrounding a bust length portrait of Boigny, smiling and in a light blue suit. The dates 1905 to the left and 1993 to the right. Above his head a banner with the words PAIX*AMOUR*UNION. Allover black and white pattern with fruit trees, seeds and pods.
58. **Fig 20**

59. **Fig 21**
*MGR BRESSILAC FONDATEUR DE LA SMA* in the border of a white oval with a portrait of MGR de Bressilac interspersed with an oval bearing the motto 1856-2006 150 eme Anniversaire SMA and the new SMA logo adopted in 2006. Given by an anonymous member of the American Province of SMA in 2006. Imprinted ‘Guaranteed Veritable Wax 5B 4776 SOBETEX’ Made in Benin.

‘ETRE MISSIONAIRE AU FOND DE MON COEUR’ in a border surrounding the SMA logo adopted in 2006. These round medallions are repeated against a multi-colored background suggesting a woven cloth. Given by an anonymous member of the American province of SMA in 2006. Imprinted ‘Cosetex RC: 99 B970 NINEA 0345 795.’
QUILTS

The freed slaves who founded Liberia brought the tradition of quilting with them. Whether it is pieced or appliquéd, a quilt is the product of many hours of labor. But the time and effort are reduced if a group of women work together; such a communal activity is called a quilting bee. The patterns are traditional, reminding the user of family, home and especially garden. The pictorial designs make the quilt immediately attractive to the viewer; the user will appreciate the quilting, the stitching, sometimes intricate, which fastens the layers of cloth together, the thickness providing comfort and warmth to the sleeper.

60. Fig 22
WOMEN OF LIBERIA FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION
Gift of Sr. Mary Ann Drone, 2009
Red, white and blue cotton, 84 x 84”
This beautifully crafted quilt features the Liberian flag in the center. The resemblance to the American flag is not accidental. Liberia was founded by freed American slaves in 1847. The immigrants brought the American traditions of quilting to Liberia with them. The quilt was hand-stitched by Liberian women who are members of the organization Women of Liberia for Peace and Reconciliation. It was given to Sr. Raphael Anne Drone, who belongs to the congregation Sisters of Adorers of the Blood of Christ. The Women of Liberia gave the quilt to Sr. Drone in memory of five Catholic nuns who were murdered on October 20 and 23, 1992 during the first Liberian civil war. Sr. Drone was one of three sisters who survived the massacre. The quilt is in mint condition.
61. Fig 23a, b
WHITE SATIN WITH APPLIQUED FLORAL DESIGNS IN PALE TURQUOISE, GREEN, YELLOW AND WHITE.
Gift of Mrs. Mary Hayden
Two lines of hexagonal flowers divide the quilt into quadrants. In each quadrant, a design comprised of a tulip with a long stem alternates with a shorter flower petal. A deep, pieced border of three stripes is quilted in a diamond pattern. In the large center square, the quilting corresponds to the outlines of the design, otherwise it is in curved lines approximately one inch apart. This quilt is beautifully crafted and in superb condition. Size: 58 x 54“
Mrs. Mary Hayden is the mother of Fr. Thomas (Ted) Hayden, Provincial Superior of the American Province of SMA, 1978-1983.
SET OF THREE QUILTED COTTON TEXTILES,

varying greatly in size, all with the same color scheme of green, yellow, red and white (though the reds differ slightly in the small square piece). Gift of Fr. Kevin Scanlan, S.M.A., 1990.03.01. The quilter is not identified, though the very fine quilting technique and the bold designs suggest that all three pieces were made by the same hand. 1990.03.01, 24 x 24”, double heart motif. 1990.03.02 45 x 45 ½”, cabbage rose with breadfruit leaf. 1990.03.03 58 x 54” tulip motif. Condition excellent.
Various Donors: Gary Schulze, Dr. Marshall W. and Caroline Mount, 1997, Drs. Noble and Jean Endicott, 1997 etc. Miniature masks, too small to be worn, replicate the larger forms of the masks worn in performance. For the Dan, Mano and Wenion peoples these are powerful charms, which are hidden about the compound or carried on the person when traveling (hence the appellation ‘passport mask’). They offer personal protection or enhancement of fortune. A member of a secret society or a lineage elder is entitled to commission a passport mask. He may keep it on a private altar and make sacrifices to it either to advance his prospects in an undertaking or to counter witchcraft. Frequent sacrifices over the ma with bits of food, sauces, blood and oil often produce an encrusted surface. At Dan secret society initiations, small masks are placed on the path leading to the meeting place; aspiring members must pay to have them removed. Such masks and talismans are sometimes displayed on trays as representations of benevolent spirits. The circumciser may wipe his blade on a ma to cleanse it of evil spirits.
2. FETISH OBJECT, LOMA / TOMA
Wood, various materials
Gift of Peter Murphy, 1986
This object, which may appear formless to one who encounters it from a western, ethnocentric point of view, has deep significance for the people who made and used it. Each element of the assemblage has psychological and spiritual significance for those initiated into its secrets. All empower the object to make magic, for good or evil.
IVORY COAST

Internal strife plagues many African nations. Some of this may be traced to the disruption of the traditions of political and social organization which had developed along clan and tribal divisions over a period of centuries. An important factor in the exacerbation of ethnic differences is religion – the chasm between ancient animistic belief systems and Islam (in the north). In 1893, France created the colony of Cote d’Ivoire with Captain Louis Binger as governor. After border disputes with Liberia on the west and British Gold Coast (present day Ghana) and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso on the east), Ivory Coast assumed its current boundaries in 1898. The country became independent of France in 1960. Felix Houphouet-Boigny, its first president, led the nation through three decades of economic growth and ethnic and religious harmony. The peace was ended by a coup led by Robert Guei, who overthrew Boigny’s successor, Henri Bedie, in 1999. Guei was deposed in 2000 and replaced by Laurent Gbagbo. In September 2002, widespread violence broke out, and thousands were killed. Unrest and high tension persist to this day.

Ivory Coast is a sub-Saharan West African nation bordered by Liberia, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali. Roughly square in shape, it has 232 miles of Atlantic coastline. It may be described as a large plateau rising from sea level in the south to an average 5000 meters in the north. Its highest point is Mount Nimba, elevation 5,748 feet. The climate is generally warm and humid, ranging from equatorial in the south to tropical in the middle and semiarid in the far north. Eight percent of the land is tillable; the most important crops are cocoa, coffee, bananas, and oil palms. Natural resources include petroleum, natural gas, diamonds, manganese, iron, cobalt, bauxite, copper and hydropower.

67% of the population is foreign-born. Cote d’Ivoire has more than sixty ethnic groups which comprise five major divisions: Akan (east and center), including lagoon peoples of the southeast; Krou (southwest); Southern Mande (west); Northern Mande (northwest); and Senoufo/Lobi (north center and northeast). The Baoule, Betes, Senoufos and Malinkes are the most important sub-groups. The official language is French; there are sixty indigenous languages including the Gur, Senoufo and Krou languages and the Kwa languages. Of the latter, the Baoule and Anyin are most prevalent.

The art of the Baoule was among the earliest to be discovered by Europeans. Morphologically, Ivoirian sculpture has a wide range, from the most elegant face masks and figure sculptures, such as the Senufo kpelie and tefalipitya to the most awesome and aggressive, such as the Baule gbekre. Decorative arts – textiles, pottery and metalwork – are marked by suave good taste and superb craftsmanship. Senufo korhogo cloths are distinguished by the successful artistic assimilation of western influence.
THE IVORY COAST COLLECTIONS

A bonu amun mask of the Baule people has been in the Ivorian collections for many years. Two traditional spirit lovers were given to the museum by Stewart J. Warkow in 1995. A number of spirit lovers were given to the museum by Dr. Eugene and Mrs. Harriet Becker in 2005. In their scope and variety they well illustrate the grafting of modern western idioms on a centuries old Baule tradition. They are particularly interesting as a context for the spectacular monumental figure of the famous soccer Malian soccer player Salif Keita, cover, figures 25 a - c. While the subject is Malian and the sculpture was acquired there, several scholars have agreed that the carver was Baule, working out of the tradition of blolo bian (spirit lovers). An important addition was the mendicant monkey god gbekre, the gift of Suzanne Emmerich in 2003, figure 30 a, b. Opinions on African art always vary. When Harmer Johnson, Advisor on Collections to the SMA African Art Museum, saw the figure, he thought it was not as strong as it might be but then said ‘wait a minute, the legs are very good. It’s right as rain.’ A very prominent collector, seeing that same gbekre figure for the first time exclaimed ‘My god, that’s one of the best things you have, absolutely top drawer’. Harmer and Judy Johnson donated a magnificent Baule wrapper in 2007. A treasured possession, it hung on their dining room wall for many years. The collections are very strong in Senufo korhogo cloths in various sizes and shapes. The group has been enriched in 2011 by two delicately painted examples given by Mrs. Esther Sternberg in memory of Seth M.M., Tenafly High School…….. Senufo figure carving is represented by several excellent sculptures. We have two tefalipitya, one from Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuely in 1999 and another, ten years later, from Richard Reitzes. A small standing figure, missing its lower legs but exquisitely carved, is from a diviner’s kit, the gift of Drs. Noble and Jean Endicott in 1993. Two very fine old doors, one Baule and one Senufo, grace the collections. Richly carved with zoomorphic images in high relief, they show extremely well with doors and locks from the Dogon, Bamana and Mossi. We have three kponyungo, one very well carved and painted, dating from the nineteen sixties, but probably never used. Complementing them are a poro society shirt with the faint image of a quadruped painted in mud and a full costume for a poro masquerader, of indigenous cotton painted mud cloth fashioned into a sort of jump suit, the gifts of Margaret and Joseph Knofelmacher in 1997. It is humbling to view our group of heddle pulleys and sling shots, utilitarian objects beautifully carved with images that bring success to the weaver as well as the hunter (usually a little boy pursuing bats).
**Masks**

101. Fig 24

**Mask Bonun Amun, Baule**

Wood, pigment

SMA Purchase, 1964 1964.01.63

Large masks bonun amun or amun yasa: ‘all the large helmet masks are the special prerogative of men. Their cult is communal and constitutes the clearest expression in Baule culture of male solidarity: Women are forbidden to see bonun amun on pain of death. It is also the village’s strongest force for social control. As such it is the direct parallel of political power, and a direct counterweight to the collective supernatural power of women.’ (Vogel, New Haven, 1997).

This example has the classic bonun amun form – clenched teeth in a jaw square in cross-section, a beautifully carved domed cranium surmounted by two curved horns joined at the tips. There is a delicate serrated curving band just below the base of the horns. The chiseling is remarkable, the marks of the tool varying from invisible on the face, to small and shallow on the cranium, and large and well-marked on the neck. The eyes and eyebrows are graceful low-relief forms, the nose is a long straight schematic shape. Bonun amuin is worn over the head, the wearer looking through the square opening that forms the mouth. The mask is 20” long from joined tips of horns to end of snout, 11 ½” wide across the ears. The teeth are painted a rust colored earth pigment. The inside shows wear over an extended period of time.

102.

**Mask, Baule**

Brass

Gift of the Honorable and Mrs. Robert T. Francis, 2005

This is a cast brass mask surmounted by seven cast-in-place rods. The rods are 3 ½” long; four are broken off.

A mysterious and beautiful object, its function in Baule culture is not known to this writer. The face is a perfect egg shape, wide at the top and tapering at the chin. The features are deployed within a heart-shaped face. The large eyelids over closed eyes, straight nose and delicate lips seem to pulsate with life. We can surmise that a thin layer of molten brass was poured over (or into) a clay or wax mold. The ears are very small semi-circular tabs. The inside of the mask, though corroded, retains the look of brass. The surface of the mask has a thin coating of sacrificial material which has turned black with age. Irregular pieces of the metal fabric of the mask have been lost, one about 2 x 2 x 2” over the proper right eye and another, much smaller, under the proper right eyelid. The metal is about 1/32 of an inch thick.

103.

**Kpoyungo, The Firespitter Masks of the Senufo**

Frank Willett (1971), describes the ‘firespitter’ mask as follows: ‘Senufo mask called kpoyungo (sic) representing a mythical being who protects the community from sorcerers and soul stealers. He is represented with the jaws of a hyena, the tusks of a warthog, the horns of an antelope and of some other creature. Appropriately, the mask is intended to recall the chaos before the world was set in order. Between the horns are a chameleon and a hornbill, two of the primordial animals. The chameleon’s slow and careful walk is due to the fact that he was the first creature to walk on the newly formed surface of the earth. These masks appear in groups after dark and appear to spit fire, from tinder, which is held in a cleft stick in front of the mouth.’ Willett, Frank. African Art: an introduction. Thames and Hudson, 1971. Willett is discussing a mask from the Art Institute of Chicago, illustrated on page 150, figure 139 of the above publication.
104. **FIRESPITTER KPONYUNGO, SENUFO**

SMA Purchase 1960s (probably from the Dutch Province, SMA)

According to Anita Glaze, in “Art and Death in a Senufo Village” (Indiana University Press, 1982), the three highest ranking masquerades among the Senufo employ helmet mask types. They are the Gbon of the Fodonon, the Kponyungo of the Kufolo and the Kunugbaha of the Fono… Kponyungo is a generic term meaning ‘helmet mask’. In the Kufolo region, it refers specifically to the most senior of the Poro Society masquerades used by the Kufolo farmer group. It is a zoomorphic helmet mask incorporating antelope and warthog motifs, with a chameleon, a bird (various species) and a hollow cup on the crest. This carving dates to the fifties; it shows no sign of wear on the inside and was probably never used. It is well-carved, in mint condition, with all its paint. (p. 140). The polychrome style is typical of the Kufolo region. Its effect is theatrical rather than awesome. A chameleon, carved in the round, grasps a crest on the cranium. The open mouth is filled with twelve large white teeth. Two large tusks (probably warthog) project from either side of the mouth. The mask is 33” long, from the tips of the swept back horns to the ‘lips’ of the formidable jaws. Condition is excellent.

105. **FIRESPITTER’, SENUFO**

Gift of Dan Horsky, 2002

Glaze, ibid, p137. ‘At its best, a Senufo zoomorphic helmet assemblage is a condensed visual statement acknowledging the reality of evil and at the same time providing a means to deal with it. The masquerades incorporate natural substances and iconographic elements that are both signs and magical appropriations of the aggressive, combative powers of dangerous creatures of the bush world. By the processes of form reduction, the combination of natural forms in unnatural ways and the addition of accumulative materials to the assembled masquerade unit, Senufo artists and performers have evolved images of tremendously expressive power. The dominant elements are the antelope horns, the warthog tusks and the chameleon.’

P.137, ibid; pl. 64, p. 121

106. **‘FIRESPITTER’, Guro (?)**

Anonymous Donor

A horizontal mask of very heavy wood, bearing excellent marks of use on the inside. The light brown wood has been darkened with black pigment, the nostrils and the inside of the mouth are colored with white clay. The body of the mask is decorated with white lines about half an inch thick. The swept back horns are painstakingly striated. The lower part of the mask proper has a ‘collar’ ranging from 2 ½ to 3” high. There are five holes ½” in diameter drilled through the mask at the upper edge of this collar; these were doubtless for the attachment of the costume. The eyes are hemispheres about an inch in diameter, behind each eye is an eight inch long amphibian, in relief but unpainted. This is a helmet mask; the dancer saw through the mouth. 34” long from tip of backswept horn to tip of jaw; about 9 ½” wide. The pattern of white lines and shapes is most coherent, indeed very strong, when the mask is viewed from the top.

107. **MASK GU, GURO**

Gift of Dr. Michael Berger, 1992

The Guro live west of the Baule in Ivory Coast. Aande people, they speak a dialect resembling the Dan and Yaoure. They migrated to Ivory Coast from the north, and resisted colonization until 1912. ‘The daily life of the Guro is dominated by secret societies and by a belief in protective spirits called zuzu… According to legend, one day a hunter captured the Yaoure collection of ritual masks and medications, which then allowed his group to communicate with the spirits of the bush. The gu mask is the feminine ideal; gye and dye are the antelope and porcupine; zamble is both the antelope and panther.’ Francoise Stouillig-Marin, African Art, New York, 1993. This is a graceful mask; restrained and introspective but with a three dimensional dynamism that articulates the space it occupies. Unfortunately, its surface has been cleaned. The face is beautifully composed with narrowed eyes, delicate nose and sensual mouth with parted lips revealing carefully filed teeth. The coiffure is well described. The cranium is surmounted by a pecking bird, probably the hornbill. A pair of horns sweeps backwards from the cranium; each of these is incised with six small squares and a triangle. Another longer pair curves forward to frame the face. The inside shows marks of use. Oval perimeter verso: L 14” x W 5 ¾”
108. **Fig 25a-c** (Front Cover).

**SOCcer PLayer, BAULE**

Promised Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Eugene Becker, 2013

Wood, pigment, metal

This monumental monoxyllic figure is 10’10” high and weighs about 300 pounds. It represents the great Malian soccer player Salif Keita, who was prominent in the sport in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The sculpture was brought from Mali to NYC, where it was collected by William Wright. It is almost certainly by a Baule carver (The SMA African Art Museum has two small Baule soccer players in its collections). Salif Keita is remarkable for several reasons. He stands perfectly balanced with his right leg back, carrying his weight, and his left leg forward and relaxed - in other words he has contraposto, the pose achieved by ancient Greek sculptors after centuries of struggle. His right arm hangs down at his side; his left arm is raised in a gesture similar to that of modern Baule spirit lovers. The carver has lavished attention on Salif’s shoes, jersey with number 9 on the chest and his fingernails. The head is magnificent – our athlete looks like a pharaoh. There are several repairs and braces in the base, which has been badly damaged by insects. This suggests that the piece may have been set in the ground.
109.
DEBLE ‘RYTHM POUNDER’, SENUFO
Donor Unknown
Large wooden figures, male and female, were used during funerals of members of the poro society. Among the Senufo of the central regions of Ivory Coast they are merely displayed; in the south they play a dynamic part in processions or ritual dances. Called pombibele ‘children of the poro’, they are popularly known as deble, a contraction of madabele or spirit. When used in fertility rites they are raised up, promenaded, rocked and struck on the ground to the beat of drums and the blare of horns. For this reason, deble are known to western collectors as ‘rhythm pounders.’ Pombibele should be stark and severe in form. The relationships between the masses and the voids between arms and legs and the body are of critical importance. Our example, a male, is softer in feeling than some well-documented classical examples, and may reflect western influence.

110, Fig 26
TEFALIPITYA ‘STAFF FOR A CHAMPION CULTIVATOR’, SENUFO
Gift of Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuely, 1999
Blackened wood, 36 x 4”
According to Anita Glaze, op. cit., a trophy staff called tefalipitya by the Senufo is placed beside the door to the funerary shelter of a man who was not just a good farmer but a champion cultivator. Such emblems are held in trust by generations of cultivators. The woman who graces the head of a tefalipiditya is always seated, ‘presented in the traditional gesture of serene repose, designed as a dramatic contrast to the cultivator’s striving in the fields. Her taut young breasts and belly, a promise of increase for the katiolo, a residential ward and cooperative work unit with a predominant tie to one matrilineage segment, and her perfectly controlled posture and features honor the champion in death as in life.’ The carving is a visual alternative to a praise song.

111,
TEFALIPITYA ‘STAFF FOR A CHAMPION CULTIVATOR’, SENUFO
Gift of Richard Reitzes, 2009
Wood, deep brown natural color, in good condition except for a very noticeable crack in the left side of the figure. This piece is almost identical with the Samuelly tefalipitya, a little larger and not quite as good.

112.
STAFF WITH AN ANIMAL HEAD, BAULE, IVORY COAST
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Francis, 1999
This beautifully-carved staff is a symbol of rank and prestige for the Baule. The animal’s head is similar to the bonu amuen mask #101, Fig. 24
113, Fig 27

FIGURE FROM A DIVINER’S KIT (FRAGMENT), SENUFO
(1993.04.01)

Blackened wood, 5 ¼ x 2 ½”
Gift of Drs. Noble and Jean Endicott, 1993

‘Beauty has no relation to size, rarity, price or age.’ John Cotton Dana. Though small, this figure from a Senufo diviner’s kit has all the majesty and splendor of a monumental figure sculpture. The figure is madabele, one of the many bush spirits that inhabit the savanna, forests and streams of water around the village. They are often used in pairs representing the primordial couple, the ancestors of the Senufo people. They demand offerings to enlist their aid in the prevention of illness or misfortune. They also officiate at the funerals of honored members of Poro. Like other ritual Senufo wood carvings, they are made by professional sculptors whose training takes eight to ten years. This small, fragment, exquisite in its formal articulation, finish and expression, well represents the canon of the Senufo carver. A bush spirit, she has the classical Senufo heart-shaped face. Her shoulders are wide; hands on her hips. The openings between the arms and the torso engage form and space in an eloquent dialogue. Legs and part of neck and shoulders are missing. The patina is evidence of frequent handling over a long period of time.
Traditional Spirit Lovers

Philip Ravenhill, 1980, is one of the best sources for information on Baule carving and particularly Baule ‘spirit lovers’. Although Baule statues have often been referred to as ‘ancestor figures’, Susan Vogel (1973, 1977) has pointed out that these ‘wooden people’ (waka san) are in reality carved as representatives of either ‘nature spirits’ (asie usu) or of ‘other world men and women’ (blolo bian and blolo bla) respectively. Statues representing nature spirits often become encrusted with blood, for they are fetishes (amuen) and it is with blood that fetishes become powerful. Contrasted with these are the statues carved to represent a man’s ‘other world woman’ or a woman’s ‘other world man.’ The spirit lover usually becomes manifest because of a marital crisis and that crisis is usually of a sexual nature... In consultation with the diviner, the young man or woman may discover that the problem is the result of an unhappy blolo bian or bla who feels neglected. The remedy is to represent this other-worldy person by a wooden statue to which offerings of food, money or other gifts can be made on a regular basis. Further, the living spouse should spend one night a week alone with the statue rather than the living partner. The dreams of the sleeper on the night alone will further enunciate the nature of the difficulty. Bill Siegmann makes some interesting observations about spirit lovers. In the entry for a male figure, illustrated on page 97 of African Art at the Brooklyn Museum, he writes: ‘The Baule refer to figurative carvings like this one as waka san (literally ‘wood person’). These figures are meant to reflect and celebrate Baule ideas of physical beauty in human beings. The hair is always depicted as being beautifully coiffed; this is not only visually pleasing but also reflects an individual’s integration into the community, since the braiding of hair reflects a social interaction with a friend or relative in what is usually a time consuming process’.

114.
SPIRIT LOVER, FEMALE, BLOLO BIAN
Gift of Stewart Warkow, 1995
Blackened wood with traces of white pigment on eyes and mouth. H 19”. Late nineteenth century style with angular forms and an elaborate two-part coiffure. Cicatrization on face, forehead and neck. This blolo bian is an interesting comparison with Spirit Lover #115. There we see a rotation of the torso within the rigid stance of the figure; here we have the proper right shoulder lowered, opposed to the lowered proper left hip, but on the same plane. It is the slightest suggestion of contraposto, and, again, it brings the persona of the spirit lover to life. The carving here is not as refined as in 115, but it has a stark grandeur. The coiffure is elaborate and very well described; the cicatrization is well-rendered. In both 114 and 115, the shoulder blades are carefully delineated. In #115 the backbone is carved in relief as a straight line, ½” thick. In #114 the backbone is a barely discernible groove. H 18 ½” with self base.

115.
SPIRIT LOVER, MALE, WITH COTTON LOIN CLOTH, BLOLO BIAN
Gift of Stewart Warkow, 1995
This is a traditional spirit lover, a type used before modern clothing and accessories came into fashion. Blackened wood, with cotton loin cloth. H 18 ½”. The symmetrical figure stands with hands on his abdomen and flexed knees. There is a slight twist in the torso, which animates the carving. The hands and feet are prominent, with a strong suggestion of knuckles and digits. The carving is smooth and expressive, with characteristic Baule heart-shaped face. The carefully rendered cicatrization marks are prominent on the back of the neck. The coiffure is beautiful. Large crack on right proper side of head. H 18” with self base.
Modern Spirit Lovers
All are gifts of Dr. Eugene and Mrs. Harriet Becker

Modern spirit lovers are enhanced by western clothes, including shoes, hats and watches. “This does not mean that the spirit lover is European; rather, that the Baule other worldly lover exhibits those signs of success that dominate a white-oriented or dominated world. Modern western clothes on blolo bian or blolo bla distress some collectors in the same way that the use of western clothes distresses some Baule elders… It is my contention that the development of Baule statuary art throughout this century shows an increasing preoccupation with modern fashions that is part of a wider social movement towards the exploitation of new cultural and technical forms introduced by the crisis of colonization – in brief, that Baule art exhibits the same emulative process as the wider society”*  

116. Fig 28
STANDING FEMALE WITH BOTH ARMS RAISED
Wood, pigment. h 23” This is a large and impressive ‘modern’ spirit lover wearing shorts, a sleeveless T-shirt and sandals. Both arms are raised; the left hand is closed, the forefinger of the other points straight ahead. Finger and toenails are painted pink. (Note: the donor identified this figure as Ewe but it is, in fact, Baule).
117. **STANDING MALE FIGURE WITH PITH HELMET AND LONG COAT**
Wood, white pigment. The figure stands erect with feet apart. He wears a pith helmet, long white coat and has four neck rings.

118. **STANDING MALE FIGURE WITH PITH HELMET**
Wood, red and white pigment. 13 ½". The man leans forward, arms at his sides. He wears a pith helmet, shorts and a tunic. The tunic is belted in the back and has two outsized meticulously carved buttons on the front. Sandals with raised heels are on his large feet.

119. **SOCCER PLAYER (?)**
H 9 ½" Wearing a tight-fitting long-sleeved yellow jersey, black shorts with a green belt and black socks with green shoes. This male figure has his hands in his pockets, and may represent a soccer player. He has very large ears.

120. **FRENCH SOLDIER (?)**
Wood, green, yellow, red and black pigment. H 12 ½" Wearing a short-sleeved jersey, belted shorts, and sandals.

121. **SOCCER PLAYER (?)**
Wood, green, yellow, red and black pigment, H 10 ½". Standing male with his hands in his pockets. Wearing a short-sleeved green jersey and shorts with a belt and one rear pocket. Sandals. The donor identified this figure as a soccer player.

122. **Fig 29 STANDING FIGURE WITH ARTICULATED ARMS**
Wood, traces of pigment H 13 ¼" This male figure wears a green suit with a Nehru collar. He wears his hair European style; it is carefully parted on the left side and meticulously combed in back. He wears a small package of power around his neck. A piece of thin sheet metal is wrapped around all four sides of the self-base. Condition good; the underside of the base shows severe insect damage.
SHRINE FIGURES

123, Fig 30a,b
MENDICANT MONKEY FIGURE GBEKRE, BAULE, IVORY COAST
Wood, sacrificial material on nose and head, H 31 x W 9 7/16 x D 11 1/8"
Gift of Suzanne Emmerich, 2003. 2003.0.0
‘I would say this figure was carved around 1920. It is wood with a veneer, some of which has been abraded off. It is absolutely right, and a very good - not great, example of a Baule monkey god.
Leonard Kahan to RJK 7/15/04. That gbekre is a masterpiece! One of the best things in your collection’ John Dintenfass to RJK 4/20/10. The monkey figure symbolizes the son of the god of heaven (Ladislas Segy African Sculpture Speaks, New York, 4th Ed., 1975). Sacrifices were placed in the bowl held in the monkey’s hands. The stance is eloquent, the head very expressive and the legs magnificent. The nose has a large encrustation of sacrificial material, a mixture of magical materials repeatedly poured over the head. The roughness of Gbekre expresses his nature as a spirit of the bush as opposed to the smooth serenity of village spirits such as spirit lovers or their highly finished ancestor figures (waka sana).
The Sandogo Society is the Senufo women’s divination society. It constitutes the core female leadership in the village. Sandogo elders work closely with male elders of the Poro Society. Sculpture representing couples dominates Senufo figure sculpture; invariably the female dominates the male in size. This fine piece represents the abiding female spirit, seated in prestige and ancestral dignity. Senufo terracottas are extremely rare. The exact use of this work is not known to us but it may have been part of a display used by a Sando (diviner). The heart-shaped face is ubiquitous in all media in the Senufo sculptural canon. The indigo on this piece is an important part of its impact.
125. Fig 32
*SHRINE FIGURE: A LEOPARD WITH AN ANIMAL IN ITS MOUTH*
Wood, sacrificial material
SMA Purchase, 1963

Throughout Africa, the leopard’s attributes of speed, strength and cunning are associated with kingship; both man and beast have the ability and authority to take human life. This image is a surrogate for a living animal sacrificed to the spirits to empower the people to ward off evil. Unlike leopards depicted as elements of masks, staffs, stools and plaques, this simple but animated carving was carved as a free-standing sculpture. With its solidly placed thick legs, and body and slightly open mouth with bared teeth, this leopard communicates serene majesty rather than menace. This pleasing piece of sculpture does not appear to have been part of a larger ensemble; rather it was made as ‘an archetypal prestige object to be looked at and to attract the comments of others’ Vogel 1997: 273; Hawkes, Nicole. African Art from Four Regions. The Hurst Gallery, Cambridge, Mass., 2002.
126. Fig 33a,b

**DOOR, BAULE**

SMA Purchase from the SMA Museum at Cadier en Klier, Netherlands

Door, no lock, 21 inches wide x 47” high x 1 ½” thick. The door is monoxyllic, with two holes ⅝” in diameter drilled through the wood near upper and lower proper left edge. Another hole, same diameter, is drilled 20” from the top edge and 5” from the right. The latter was presumably for the attachment of the lock. The door is carved with a single image in high relief, a crocodile with a fish in its mouth. The crocodile is well-carved, seen from above. Deeply cut triangles describe the scales of the animal. Its head resembles a bonun amun mask. According to Susan Vogel, the theme of one species preying upon another is a common motif, and refers to the pecking order in society. ‘Many of the most famous forms of Baule art, such as masks and figures, were not highly visible in their original context. Figures were often placed in shrines in private homes. Masks were brought out of their hiding places only briefly on relatively rare occasions...Some carved doors were for public display on the outside of houses. Others were for interior rooms, and were seldom seen by anyone outside the family.’ Vogel, Susan M. Baule: African Art Western Eye. New Heaven, 1997. While this is not a great carving, it is pleasing and the various levels of relief carving are beautifully related to the background. If the door were on the exterior of a building, the sunlight would have dramatized the sharp edges on the scales of the crocodile and fish. The edges of the door are worn from use. Part of the left side of the crocodile’s body has been abraded. Two long, fine cracks are visible on the verso of the door, which has no carving or decoration.
DOOR AND LOCK, SENUFO
Gift of Patricia Capone, 1992
24" wide by 49" high (not including fragment of post) x 1 to 1 ¼" thick. Lock: vertical member 13" high x 4 ½" wide x 1 3/8" thick. Horizontal member 14 3/8" wide x 3" high x 1" thick. Unlike the Bamana, who construct their doors of plain planks of wood and sculpt their locks into figurative images, the Baule and Senufo of Ivory Coast carve anthropomorphic and zoomorphic images on the surfaces of their doors. They frequently leave the locks plain or decorate them with geometric shapes. The surface of this Senufo door is completely covered with images of men and animals deployed in a wide central register and a narrow register above and below. Within the central cartouche a toothed bird and a snake are having an aggressive encounter. In the upper and lower registers men are tending beasts of burden. In contrast to the high relief of the door, the lock is simple and unadorned. It is securely fastened to the door with a rusted iron strip, visible on the verso. There is a strip of metal on the anterior surface of the horizontal member of the lock. Both horizontal and vertical members are delicately incised with lines in a pattern of triangles and diamonds. The top of the lock suggests a human head with a transverse crested coiffure. This is an old door, probably dating from the first half of the twentieth century. The upper and lower edges are worn from use; the projecting upper and lower posts have been worn away and broken off.
HEDDLE PULLEYS

‘A heddle is any of a series of wires or cords in the harness of a loom, equipped with eyes and used for separating and guiding the warp threads. The earliest kind of West African weaving is single-heddle, in which shedding is entirely done by hand. The double heddle is an appliance permitting the raising and lowering of the warp threads, mechanically creating the shed. The heddle rods are connected to a string which runs over a the heddle pulley. All ends are connected to one heddle rod or the other. These in turn are connected to strings on the weaver’s feet. The alternating tread on the pedals leads to a constant shed and countershed, allowing the weaver to pick as fast as his feet can move. When the shuttle carrying the weft threads is passed through the shed, the interlocked warp and weft threads produce the weave. Among the Baule and other related Akan peoples, the heddle is made of wood, and may be carved with a variety of images. Heddle pulleys are highly collectible.’ Schaedler, Karl-Ferdinand. Weaving in Africa. Munich, 1987., p. 50

128.
BAULE, JANUS FACED
Donor unknown
Hedle and pulley of dark wood with a beautiful old surface. This heddle pulley is very well carved – it is probably the best in the SMA collection. It is Janus-faced. A human face resembling a Baule portrait mask is on one side; a bonun amulet on the other. The legs are unusually thick, almost 1”. A native repair of three heavy wire staples stabilizes a 3 ½” crack in the side of the head; there are four tiny holes on either side of the crack. The two masks share a transverse crest, with a bonun muen mask facing one way and a humanoid mask on the other. H 7 5/8”

129.
BAULE
Gift of Lee Lorenz, 1998
Wood, no pulley
This beautiful heddle pulley is a portrait head with an elaborate five-lobed coiffure and a ‘bun’ hanging down the back of the long neck. A long beard rests on the chest. A tiny form at the painted arch of the coiffure suggests the head and neck of a bird. The body is covered with a pattern of incised lines forming small geometric shapes. The piece has an old matte surface with a high luster on the smooth surface of the outside of the right proper leg. old matte surface, showing signs of age and use. Soft luster at points of contact. H 9”

130.
SENUFO
Gift of Carl and Wilma Zabel, 1998
Wood, no pulley
The bird head on this pulley is well-carved and has strong character, especially when viewed from the front. The coiffure is a longitudinal crest; the tab ears are unusually large. The incised decoration on the body and legs is crude. There is a small rectangle incised with three tiny squares behind side of the beak. Note the same device on #131. The surface is old, with a high luster on points of handling. H 7”

131.
SENUFO
Gift of Drs. Noble and Jean Endicott, 1997
Blackened wood, no pulley
Carved in the form of a bird with a large vertical crest, long curved beak and projecting ears. A rectangle with tiny squares inside is incised on either side of the base of the crest. The ‘chest’ is incised with straight lines. The heddle retains its pulley. H 7”
132.
SENUFO
Gift of Drs. Noble and Jean Endicott, 2005
Blackened wood, with pulley
A bird with a crest on its forehead, ears and carefully rendered eyes with sockets and brows. The serrated beak curves downward. The front and back are inscribed with a large X. A string is threaded through a hole in the neck. A wooden pin holds the pulley in place. The pulley may be a section of a branch with its bark on (the bark has been polished). H 7"

133.
SENUFO
Gift of Drs. Noble and Jean Endicott, 2005
Blackened wood, no pulley
No separation between the upper and lower parts of the beak. There are no eyes or ears, a round cap-like form is pulled halfway down over the head. H 6"

134.
SENUFO
Gift of Drs. Noble and Jean Endicott, 2005
Blackened wood, with pulley
With very long legs, rectangular in section, straight ‘shoulders’ and a long cylindrical neck. The curve of the head and beak is very regular, ‘pure’ with a very sharp edge. The pin is a metal nail. H 6"

135.
SENUFO
Gift of Drs. Noble and Jean Endicott, 2005
Blackened wood, no pulley
Bird form with a vertical crest, ears and small incised oval eyes. No pyro-engraving. H 6 ¼"
The SMA African Art Museum has a fine group of nine sling shots. Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuelly donated two in 1997 and six in 1998. Mr. and Mrs. Robert T Francis II gave another in 2010. Sling shots were commonly used to hunt small game.

136. Sling Shot, Baule
Gift of Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuelly, 1998
Wood
Carved in the form of a figure wearing a skirt. The figure has articulated legs and wears a striped skirt from waist to knees. It is Janus-faced, a bonun amuen mask looks in either direction. The arms of the sling shot may be seen as belonging to the figure or the masks, a witty comment on the fused identities of the dancer and the spirit. H 7 ½”

137. Sling Shot, Senufo
Gift of Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuelly, 1998
Wood
Fashioned from a curved stick, this sling shot has four bonun amuen masks on the handle. This is a double Janus-faced motif: the horns of the mask are straight on one side; curved and meeting at the tips on the other. This is a carefully carved sling shot; the artists has shown sensitivity to the raw material from which it is carved, as well as its function. The incised details are picked out in white clay pigment. H 8 ¼”

138. Sling Shot, Baule
Gift of Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuelly, 1997
Wood.
This simple little sling shot is embellished with a single bonun amuen mask with straight horns meeting at the tip. The carving is beautifully highlighted with white pigment. H 7 ¾”

139. Sling Shot, Baule
Gift of Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuelly, 1998.02.15
Light-colored wood with patina. The handle is in the form of a pistol. Viewed from the front, the pistol suggests a mask; viewed from the side, it suggests the head of an elephant. A wonderful old piece.

140. Sling Shot, Baule
Gift of The Honorable and Mrs. Robert T. Francis II, 2010
This piece has an unusual configuration: two quadrilateral forms are stacked above the ‘arms’ suggest a human torso. A simple but nicely carved face is surmounted by a modern male coiffure, well-shaped and fitting closely to the head. A bonun amuen mask is carved on the stomach. H 7 ½”
141. Fig. 35:a, b, c, d, e

WRAPPER, BAULE
Gift of Harmer and Judy Johnson
Strip-woven cotton with inlays of weft thread
Most African textiles are woven in narrow strips and sold in big rolls in the marketplace. The buyer sews the strips together, by hand or by machine, to make a wrapper, a shirt or a wall hanging. The degree of time and talent expended on the construction of the cloth varies from superb to good to awful. The design and construction of this cloth are superb.
142. Fig 36.
KORHOGO CLOTH, SENUFO
Donor unknown
This kind of cloth, made in the town of Korhogo, is a cultural hybrid. A European trader, who knew the mud-painted figurative images on shirts worn by men and boys in the Poro Society, showed the Senufo how to adapt those designs to the decoration of wall hangings for the tourist trade. While the so-called Korhogo Cloths lack the primeval mystery of the authentic Poro images, they are very successful as decorative wall hangings - souvenirs of Ivory Coast to take home and hang on the wall of your study. The field is a textile of coarse local cotton in a tabby weave resembling burlap. On this unprimed fabric the artist draws and paints masked human figures, animals, birds, fish and plants parading in horizontal registers among abstract symbols resembling stars or flowers. The medium is black, brown or rust-colored mud. On the best examples, such as this one, the drawing is economical and incisive, using lines of varying thickness combined with organic as well as geometric shapes. The placing of these in relation to other parts and the whole, is masterly. The SMA African Art Museum has several examples, exhibiting a variety of images, though always in the same style. This is the best.
143.  
**KORHOGO CLOTH, SENOUFO**  
Donor unknown  
This cloth has an unusual format: it is 44½" high by 89" long, woven in tight tabby weave in strips of indigenous cotton measuring approximately 4 ½" wide. The background is painted in yellowish rust dye, the pictorial motifs are delineated in thick black lines on white silhouettes against the background. Ten animated masqueraders and half a dozen mammals, fish and birds are arranged in two registers. Two of the masqueraders wear knonyungo masks. The frieze is very well-designed; the movement from side to side and top to bottom is lively and sophisticated with a very good feeling for the interaction of form and void. The whole is surrounded by a striped border. The cloth is woven of indigenous cotton in strips 4 ½" wide.

144.  
**KORHOGO CLOTH, SENOUFO**  
Donor unknown  
A long narrow cloth comprised of five hand woven strips 4½" wide. It measures 24" high X 72" long. The weave is loose tabby, approximately eighteen threads to the inch. It is painted in rust colored mud; there is no black or brown. In the center is a lion attacking an antelope (or goat). A bird with long legs and a crest watches the encounter from the right. A second antelope grazes peacefully on the left. The setting is luxurious foliage with spotted leaves. In Senufo symbology, the tree signifies the shadow of society.

145.  
**KORHOGO CLOTH, SENOUFO**  
Donor unknown  
This is a rectangular cloth measuring 67" wide and 44" high. It is comprised of ten handspun, handwoven strips of indigenous cotton; each strip is approximately 4 ½" wide. The strips are sewn together by hand in X shaped stitches with white commercial thread. Korhogo cloth may be painted with mud made from black, brown or rust-colored soil; this one is in rust and brown. The images of animals, birds and men have meanings for the Senufo people. For example, the lion signifies royalty, the goat is a symbol of male prowess, the chicken stands for grace and fertility. Several species are displayed in three registers on this textile. The top row shows leopards alternating with goats (or antelope); the middle row shows seven chickens all moving to the left; the lower register again shows leopards alternating with goats. The animals are delineated in black outlines filled in with lively patterns of stripes and spots. As in Korhogo cloth #143, the animal is drawn on a white shape reserved against a rust background. The exact repetition of each animal suggests that the cloth was painted with stencils. Three registers are surrounded by a black border with white diamonds in the center.

146.  
**KORHOGO CLOTH, SENOUFO**  
Drawn in mud dye on indigenous cotton woven in strips 4 ½ to 4 ¾" wide. Stretched like a painting on canvas and framed in black: image size 31 x 45", frame size 33 x 47". This and the following korhogo cloth were purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Sternberg in a gallery in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1970. They have been in the possession of Mrs. Sternberg until she donated them to the SMA African Art Museum in 2011. In the center of the cloth, a serpent with menacing fangs stands on his tail beside a delicately-drawn tree. He dominates a charming group of two birds and four animals. For the Senufo people, the serpent signifies the abundance of the earth.

147.  
**KORHOGO CLOTH, SENOUFO**  
Mud dye on indigenous cotton woven in strips 4 ¾ to 4 7/8" wide. Drawn in mud dye on indigenous cotton woven in strips 4 ¾ - 4 7/8" wide. Stretched like a painting on canvas and framed in black: image size 31 x 45", frame size 33 x 47". A serpent with menacing fangs stands on his tail to the right of a delicately drawn tree. On either side of the central group are two costumed figures wearing helmet masks. Korhogo cloths #138 and 139 are probably by the same artist. They exhibit the same accomplished drawing, sophisticated disposition of form in space and skilled use of pattern within the drawn shapes.
148.
PORO SOCIETY COSTUME, SENUFO, IVORY COAST, VICINITY OF TOWN OF KORHOGO
Gift of Margaret and Joseph Knofelmacher, 1997
A costume like this would have been worn with the mask kponyungo ‘funeral head’. It is a one piece jump suit with a draw string neck and straight cut sleeves and trousers that leave hands and feet exposed. It is woven in 5” wide strips of course indigenous cotton, left its natural color. On this foundation are painted black circles about one inch in diameter and large bold triangles bordered in rust circles. Unusual, if not unique, is a small stick figure drawn on the crotch. The image is three inches high with outstretched arms and legs. We have no documentation regarding the meaning of this figure but the kponyungo mask was danced in poro society initiation ceremonies and an essential rite in initiation was circumcision, performed on the young boys without anaesthetic by the poro men. Compare the stick figure on this costume with the rudimentary humanoid image on the Poro Society shirt, #149. Length from center of yoke to end of trouser leg 58”, width across sleeves 68”

149.
PORO SOCIETY SHIRT, SENUFO, IVORY COAST, VICINITY OF KORHOGO
Gift of Margaret and Joseph Knopfelmacher, 1997
This old Poro shirt is worn through under the right sleeve and around the neck hole. The weave is tabby, in strips four inches wide, sewn together by hand to make the shirt. The coarse cotton fiber, left in its natural color, is unevenly spun, giving the surface of the textile a dimensional, textured effect. The cloth is painted with yellowish mud dye in an all over pattern of circles approximately one inch in diameter. A similar all over pattern of circles is on the poro society costume, #148. In the center of the shirt, front and back, is an image with arms and legs - or four legs. It is difficult to determine whether this mysterious shape, barely emerging from its background, is a human being or an animal. While the shirt is entirely manufactured by hand from indigenous materials, the neckline has been reinforced by machine-sewn commercially woven cotton. The sleeves are attached to the body of the shirt with machine stitching. A separate strip is carefully shaped to form the underarm, also sewn in place by machine. The hem line of the garment is fringed with a selvage of warp threads.
150. VESSEL, BAULE
Gift of Jerry Vogel, 2001
Jerry Vogel, the donor of this and the next vessel (#151), has seen a great deal of Baule art during his periods of residence and frequent trips to Ivory Coast. In 2001 he donated two fine storage jars: Atie, and Baule. The Baule vessel is globular in form. The waist of the pot is encircled by six narrow relief bands, the shoulder by ten shallow arcs, each comprising six narrow curved bands. Three relief bands mark the transition from shoulder to neck. The fabrication is delicate - the clay body is only 1/8” thick - a well made graceful object. The incised bands that throw the encircling bands into relief are the color of the biscuit ware; they form a pleasant contrast with the burnished medium brown surface. There are two round black kiln marks at the foot. H 12 ¼”, Diameter, 8 3/8” at lip.

151. VESSEL, ATIE
Gift of Jerry Vogel 2001
This is a rare form, an Atie globular vessel with flaring neck and an inset to the form at the shoulder. The inset is decorated with incised triangles. Between this band of triangles and the base of the neck are three barely discernable ½” bands made by holding a flat tool against the wet clay while the pot was rotated by hand. The edge marking the inset is embellished by three small serrated flanges and three twisted ¼” thick relief lines ascending at a 45 degree angle from the shoulder line. Every square inch of the brownish grey clay body is enriched with variations in color and texture, the result of burns in the kiln or discoloration from age or use. The clay body is about 1/8” thick. The inside is remarkably smooth. This and #150 attest to the taste of the Akan peoples for elegant highly finished forms. HY 15”, Diameter 10” at lip.
CHAIRS

Roy Sieber, Margaret Trowell and most recently Marc and Denyse Ginsberg have increased our sensitivity to the artistic value of African objects which are generally lumped together as ‘utilitarian’. We are accustomed to the distinction between the ‘decorative’ and the ‘fine’ arts.

In African Forms (Milan, 2000), Marc Ginsberg says ‘In those paintings’ (Raphaels and Botticellis) ‘and in traditional African art, there is great artistic merit. Their beauty derives from the expression of spiritual values. When we look at utilitarian objects, that is, objects which were not created mainly to express the spirit but for some other purpose, we lose an esthetic element but we also gain something…now we can see the repetition and contrasting of forms, the patina evoking the venerability of long use, the richness of the underlying material, the functional design, the fine execution.’ Sir Herbert Read, in ‘To Hell with Culture, points out the primacy of the aesthetic response in the apprehension of a work of art, i.e. the perception and immediate pleasurable sensory experience of the line, shape, form, space and color of the object. We might say that we can see a piece of African furniture, a massive brass anklet or a door lock as a piece of sculpture as well as an object having a useful function.

152. Fig 37a, b, c
CHAIR WITH BACK, SENUFO
Gift of a donor who wishes to be anonymous, 1997
This piece of furniture may remind us of a western chair, but it is much lower to the ground. The traditional everyday apparatus for sitting in Africa is the ground, or a mat. In most African cultures, a stool or chair is an object of prestige and dignity which is intimately associated with its owner and is used by him/her alone. Among the Asanti of Ghana, it may be buried with its owner upon his or her death. Apart from its graceful form, the astonishing aspect of this piece of furniture is its construction. The seat, 12 inches on each side and only 3/8 of an inch thick, is inserted into the legs with mortise and tenon joints. The legs look as if they were turned, but in fact were chiseled into tapering spools twenty one inches in length. The long marks of the chisel may be observed on the surface of the wood. The tops of these legs are inserted into the gracefully curving rail. The piece is distinguished by an extraordinary native repair, a huge bent nail holding the rail to the leg. Painted in large black letters under the seat are the words ‘tibe bi cone’.

153,
CHAIR WITH BACK, GURO
Gift of Drs. Israel and Michaela Samuelly, 2005
The Guro are neighbors of the Senufo in Ivory Coast. This chair is similar to #152 in construction but its seat measures 11” deep and 14” inches wide, which changes its proportions. The back rail is deeply curved which makes this a more dynamic linear composition than its Senufo relative, #152.