

Art of Africa

Objects from the Collection of Warren Robbins



Adinkra Cloth, Asante of the Akan People, Ghana, 20th Century



Ceremonial Mask, Dan People, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea, 20th Century



Seated Ancestor Figure, Baule People, Côte d'Ivoire, 20th Century

Art is central to life in traditional African societies. At every stage of the human life cycle, specially hand-crafted visual forms are used to fulfill spiritual and practical needs. These art forms are visual representations of certain deities and ancestral spirits and serve as intermediaries between humans and the spiritual world. The 66 objects in *Art in Africa* broadly represent the creativity and diversity of artistic expression of 30 cultures of sub-Saharan Africa. The exhibition includes sculpture, textiles, beaded clothing and jewelry, and a film titled, *African Masks: Burkina Faso*, produced by Christopher Roy.

Originally collected by European explorers and ethnologists as academic specimens or curios, African sculptures had by the end of the 19th century begun to accumulate in European natural history museums and found their way into the hands of dealers in antiques and the exotic arts. At the beginning of the 20th century, a handful of European artists in France and Germany were intrigued by the unique forms and styles of African art and began to draw creative inspiration from them. The aesthetic significance of African art became highly appreciated and respected in Europe and served as a catalyst for the artistic revolution that ushered in modern art around the world.

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Necklace, Zulu People, South Africa, 20th Century



Married Woman's Apron (*Ijogolo*), Ndebele People, South Africa, 20th Century

Art of Africa is designed to provide museum education departments, schools and colleges an opportunity to create their own interdisciplinary programs to accompany the exhibition through music, dance, literature, craft-making, cultural studies and more. *Art of Africa* was awarded a grant by the National Endowment for the Arts that provides educational programming for the exhibition. Participating venues will receive 500 complimentary copies of *Discover Art of Africa*—a family guide that highlights eight objects in the exhibition and provides activities for children to complete in the gallery and at home. Venues also receive the *Art of Africa Educational Packet* to distribute to local school teachers, that consists of 11 interdisciplinary lesson plans where students learn about the arts, geography, literature, and cultures of the people represented in this exhibition.

The collection of artworks in *Art of Africa* is on loan from the Robbins Center for Cross Cultural Communication in Washington, D.C. Warren Robbins, the center's founder and director, was also founder and director emeritus of the National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution.

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Female Version of Tsi Wara Headdress, Bamana People, Mali, 20th Century



Stool, Yoruba People, Nigeria, 20th century

Number of Works:

66 objects including sculpture, textiles, beaded clothing, jewelry, and film

Organized with:

The Robbins Center for Cross Cultural Communication, Washington, D.C.

Requirements:

Limited security; approximately 2,000 square feet with many wall hung objects

Participation Fee:

\$6,500 for an 8-week booking period

Shipping:

Exhibitors pay outgoing shipping costs within the contiguous U.S.

Bookings:

See Enclosed Exhibition Schedule

Availability:

December 2010 – March 2011 and April 2012 - December 2012

Publication:

Discover Art of Africa family guide

Contact:

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