

Auction catalog

Title	African Art Auction Ending 3/28
Description	Items located in Pleasant Valley, NY. Items include Faro, the water genie puppet from Mali; West African double gongs; Ode-lay society head crest mask from Sierra Leone; African sculptures, figurines, masks, textiles, ceremonial robes, copper rod currency, and more. AFRICAN ART COLLECTION OF MARY SUE AND PAUL PETER ROSEN Mary Sue and Paul Peter Rosen have collected African art for over thirty years, making nine trips to Africa to study the art in its cultural setting. The Rosens have published three African art books, curated more than ten exhibitions from their collection, and have given public lectures about African art and culture. They have donated art from their collection to various institutions including the Newark Museum, Temple University in Philadelphia, the SMA Fathers African Art Museum in Tenafly, New Jersey, and the African American Research Library in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Payment is due by Monday, April 1 at 1PM. Pickup in Pleasant Valley, NY must be completed by Monday, April 1 at 3PM. All lots sold as is, where is. There is a 15% Buyers Premium for all lots purchased. Payment methods include cash, MC, Visa, Discover or good check. You can make credit card payment online by going to your Member Area and selecting your invoice. Shipping available on all items. ?EMBLEMS OF POWER. ASAFO FLAGS FROM GHANA? BY M.S. AND P.P. ROSEN IS ONLY AVAILABLE FROM THE AUTHORS AT ppr2001@med.cornell.edu PRICE POSTPAID IN US IS \$25.00; OUTSIDE US POSTPAID \$35.00.
Date	Tue, Mar 5, 2019
Starts at	4:00 PM
Address	Online Auction Only, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569 USA
Categories	

Lot #	1
Qty	1
Title	FARO, THE WATER GENIE PUPPET. Bozo people, Mali. Faro is a Sogo Bo puppet who appears in the form of a mermaid with long flowing hair and a forked fish tail. Her short arms resemble the lateral fins of a fish. She is outfitted in an elaborate, painted robe. The knob visible at the bottom of the puppet is a remainder of a rod that was used to support and activate this non-articulated figure. Collected in Gometago village near Segou, Mali in 2008. Segou was the center of the Sogo Bo puppet tradition and the site of many Sogo Bo puppet festivals until it was overrun by Islamist militants who have destroyed many of the original puppets such as this example. On custom base. Exhibited at the SMA Fathers Museum of African Art Tenafly NJ 2009 and the Free Library Gallery Philadelphia 2010. Wood, paint. H 40in. Published in "The Colorful Sogo Bo Puppets of Mali" p. 155, Fig 183. This book includes a history of puppetry, detailed photographs taken by the authors of the atelier of the famed Sogo Bo puppet maker YaYa Coulibaly, a large number of color photographs of Sogo Bo puppet performances, and photographs of the authors' collection of Sogo Bo puppets.
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Lot # 2
Qty 1
Title TCHITCHILI FIGURE. Moba people, northern Togo. These sacred anthropomorphic figures were used to communicate with ancestors in rituals associated with farming as well as initiation ceremonies. The figures were offered food, bathed with libations which are evident on the surface of this example. This large version would have been placed outside a home or in a field. Small Tchitchili figures were placed in personal altars in the home. This sculpture was collected in Togo in 2007. On custom Wood. H 32in. Published in "The Colorful Sog Bo Puppets of Mali" p. 13, Fig 1.

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Lot # 3
Qty 1
Title TWO ELU FACE MASKS. Ogoni people, Nigeria. These masks are worn by members of various men's societies who perform at religious and social functions. Many of the masks mimic members of the community. The masker is able to open the articulated jaw and snap it shut with an audible click by movements of his mouth. Some, but not all, Elu masks have teeth. Both early 20th century. Each on custom base. (A) Dark brown face with hair combed and parted to one side. Teeth present. Wood, pigment. H 9in. Ex Bonham's Auction #19412 Nov 9 2011 Lot #401. (B) White face darkened with age. Hair combed and parted to one side. Scarification on forehead and temples. Wood, pigment. H 8.5in. Ex Rago Tribal Art auction March 1, 2008 Lot #172.

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Lot # 4
Qty 1
Title BUNDU (SOWEI) HELMET MASK. Mende people, Sierra Leone. The single female figure seated on the top of this mask with her arms raised behind her head is the guardian spirit of the wearer of the mask. She is surrounded by four flame-shaped amulets. The mask is worn by a woman entrusted with supervising the initiation of girls into the women's Bundu Society. The leader of the Bundu initiation is the Digba (see LOT #6). The mask has copper earrings. It is very light and shows clear signs of use. On custom base. Wood, pigment. H 17.5 in. Published in "Masks from West and Central Africa" p.37 FIG 36.

Des. BUNDU (SOWEI) HELMET MASK. Mende people, Sierra Leone. The single female figure seated on the top of this mask with her arms raised behind her head is the guardian spirit of the wearer of the mask. She is surrounded by four flame-shaped amulets. The mask is worn by a woman entrusted with supervising the initiation of girls into the women's Bundu Society. The leader of the Bundu initiation is the Digba (see LOT #6). The mask has copper earrings. It is very light and shows clear signs of use. On custom base. Wood, pigment. H 17.5 in. Published in "Masks from West and Central Africa" p.37 FIG 36.



Lot #
Qty
Title

5
1
ASAFO MILITIA FLAG. Fante people, Ghana. The Asafo Company that owned this flag identified itself with the European-style three-masted steam ship. Steam-driven ships with sails first appeared in the 1850s. The flag warns that the Company can confront and defeat any enemy, even one as powerful as a whale, in the water or on land. This is expressed by the proverb, "Our ship is ready to sail". This flag is exceptionally long, measuring 2-3 feet longer than the average Asafo flag. The canton is part of a printed Union flag. The figures are hand sewn with embroidered details. Cotton textile. 84in x 44.5in. Exhibited at the Free Library Gallery Philadelphia 2012; SMA Father Museum of African Art Tenafly NJ 2013; University of Memphis TN Museum 2015. Published in "Emblems of Power: Asafo Flags from Ghana" 2013 p. 74 Fig 63. This book is only available from the authors at ppr2001@med.cornell.edu.



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Qty
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6
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RARE DIGBA STAFF OF AUTHORITY. Mende people, Sierra Leone. Collected in Mblama town in the Bo region in 2004. The Digba is a woman who is in charge of and leads the ceremonies by which girls are initiated into the women's Bundu Society. She and the other women who perform the ceremony wear distinctive, hand carved helmet masks and black raffia costumes (see example and picture in LOT #4). As the emblem of her authority, the handle of this hand carved staff depicts an ideal Digba whose helmet mask has an elaborate coiffure that includes ram's horns. Her costume is embellished with white cowry shells symbolic of wealth and a band of white protective amulets above her forehead. She wears a goat horn amulet hung by a chain on her chest. The handle and tip of the staff show wear from use. Wood, pigment. H 34in. SEE CATALOG NOTE FOR A RELATED STAFF IN SOTHEBY'S NOVEMBER 14, 2003 AFRICAN AND OCEANIC ART AUCTION LOT #11, p17. CATALOG AVAILABLE ONLINE AT SOTHEBY'S WEBSITE.



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Lot #

7

Qty

1

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TWO WEST AFRICAN DOUBLE GONGS WITH ARCHED HANDLES. These musical instruments were used during ceremonial dances and rituals like funerals and were carried as symbols of prestige. They were struck with a wooden or metal rod. Each of a pair of bells emits a different sound because they differ in size and thickness. Both of hand forged iron. (A) Ubangi people, Congo. Rainbow-shaped handle. H 10in. Width 12in. (B) Lobi people, Burkina Faso. Pinched arched handle joins the bells. Note striations on sides of bells suggesting use as rasp gong as well as struck gong. On custom base. H 9.5in Width 11.5in. Both exhibited at the Pen and Brush Gallery New York 2003.



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Lot #

8

Qty

1

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TWO WEST AFRICAN RASP GONGS. A rasp gong is a slit tubular musical instrument forged from a single piece of iron. The edges of the slit are serrated. Various sounds are produced when a wooden or metal rod is used to strike the tube or is rubbed along the striations. Some rasp gongs are held by a flat extension at one end and others by a ring passed through the tube at mid-shaft. They may be played as part of an ensemble that includes drums and indigenous stringed instruments accompanying festive dances or by dancers to accompany their performance. Each on a custom base. (A) Senufo people, Mali. Rasp gong with ring handle. H 9.5in. (B) Bambara people, Mali. Tapered gong with flat handle at one end. Serpentine line etched on back of shaft. Was carried by a leather thong passed through the holes at the tapered end. H 12in. Both exhibited at the Pen and Brush Gallery New York 2003.



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Lot #

9

Qty

1

Title

EXTRAORDINARY DATED WEDDING BLANKET. Fulani people, Mali/Niger. Wedding blankets are gifts presented to a newly wed nomadic couple who are among the people who roam the south Sahara bordering on Mali and Niger. What makes this example special is the date "1985" which is boldly stitched at both ends of the cloth. The wedding blanket is a cover for warmth, protection against insects, and a tent divider for privacy. This blanket consists of 9 hand woven, hand sewn strips measuring 7in to 7.5in. A central white square representing the family nucleus is outlined with orange and green blocks. Tasseled at the ends. Cotton. 128in x 64.5in. Exhibited at the Pen and Brush Gallery New York 2004.



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Lot #

10

Qty

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VERY RARE COMPLETE MEDICINE HEAD FIGURE. Mende people, Sierra Leone. The medicine head is a solid replica of a Bundu Society helmet mask. It serves as an oracle or altar that women consult to cure illness or injury which is thought to occur when a woman fails to obey the rules of the Bundu Society. The illness or injury is attributed to anger of ancestral spirits at the transgression and the figure serves as an intermediary in securing a cure. Although most medicine head sculptures that reach Western collectors consist only of the head, there are rare examples in which the head is part of a full body figure such as this one from the Bonthe district estimated to date from the 1930s. The 9inch tall medicine head has a tri-lobed coiffure drawn to a top knot. Scarifications are indicated on the brow and cheeks. There are red bead earrings. The armless wood body is dressed in a tightly wrapped, hand sewn country cloth fringed robe that is adorned with a variety of very old beads and cowry shells. A kola nut hangs from a rope belt at the waist. Her legs and the pedestal on which she stands have been damaged by exposure to the elements in the poorly enclosed Bundu shrine where the figure was kept. On custom base. Wood, pigment, beads. Cowry shells, kola nut, cloth, string. H 27.5in.



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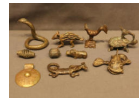
Lot # 11
Qty 1
Title THREE CONICAL BELLS. Fon people, Benin. Bells like these were kept in Voodun shrines and used to summon ancestral spirits. All hand forged. Each on a custom base. (A) The single cone folds around the handle with a fiddlehead top. The clapper is suspended from the handle in the cone. Iron. H 11in. (B) Bicone bell with cones folded around the Y-shaped base of the handle. Iron. H 7.5in. (C) Twelve cone bells (six at each end) with handles merged into a single shaft. Iron. H 12in.

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Lot # 12
Qty 1
Title EARLY 20TH CENTURY GOLD WEIGHTS. Ghana, formerly the Gold Coast, and the surrounding region is naturally rich in gold which is found mainly in the form of small particles or dust. Gold was an important form of currency in the region for many centuries and by the 18th century it was used in virtually all transactions from buying yams in a market to affairs of state. Every person engaged in any form of commercial activity (buying and selling) needed to have equipment for measuring and weighing gold “dust”, including a set of weights. Although many brass weights were cast by the lost wax method specifically for this purpose, commonly available brass objects like beads and pendants were also used as weights. (A) Coiled fanged cobra. (B) Bird riding on a land turtle (certain birds do this to pick insects off the turtle). (C) Mammary-form shield pendant. (D) Two old brass beads. (E) Hippo. (F) Hornbill bird on pedestal. (G) Mudfish with coiled tail. (H) Porcupine. (I) Crocodile with fish in its mouth.

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Lot # 13
Qty 1



Title NINETEENTH CENTURY GOLD COAST EQUIPMENT TO STORE AND WEIGH GOLD. This material includes: (A) a portable, light weight hand held balance scale (nsania) consisting of two thin brass pans (this lot) suspended by strings from a balance beam (see picture showing such a scale hanging on the wall in a jeweler's shop); (B) small brass box for storing gold dust (adaka ketwa) with crocodile gold weight lid; (C) large container for storing gold dust or gold weights with mammary-form top; (D) a long-handled spatula (saawa) with punched designs used to remove adulterating debris from gold dust; (E) a funnel-shaped scoop resembling a dust pan (famfa) used to examine large amounts of gold dust for impurities; (F) two small scoops used to transfer gold dust from the famfa to the scale. These scoops have punched designs and one has a fish tail handle.

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Lot # 14
Qty 1



Title ELEVEN 15TH TO 17TH CENTURY BRASS GOLD WEIGHTS. The earliest gold weights introduced by Islamic traders from the north were small, geometric forms reflecting Islamic aversion to representational and figurative sculpture. Raised decorative designs found on flat weights from this era often represent elements of calligraphic motifs. Weights depicting everyday objects, people, and animals first appeared in the 17th century. The weights in this lot are numbered G1-G11. G1 is relatively large and triangular with a fortress design. G2 is a crenellated half circle. G4 and G5 are tiered. Note that one corner of G5 has been cut off. This was sometimes done to adjust the weight. All were lost wax cast and show wear consistent with age. Weights range from 0.2oz to 1.9oz.

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Lot # 15
Qty 1



Title NINE EARLY TO MID-20TH CENTURY GEOMETRIC BRASS GOLD WEIGHTS. Various forms in this lot include triangles, a crenelated circle, a fortress, squares and rectangles. All lost wax cast. Weights range from 0.6oz to 2.5oz.

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Lot # 16
Qty 1



Title MAN'S KENTE PRESTIGE ROBE. Asante people, Ghana. This cloth is named "Mmaaban", meaning "unity" because it has multiple warp stripe patterns. The dominant warp design is Oyokoman, consisting of red, green and gold stripes in several variant forms. Oyokoman refers to the Oyoko clan from which Asante Kings (Asantehene) were chosen. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the independent Asante clans joined forces in wars against British efforts to gain control over the Gold Coast. The powerful Oyoko clan was chosen to lead this confederation and it's leaders became hereditary Asantehene in subsequent generations. Other warp stripe patterns represented are Kyemee, named for the powerful Asante Chief Kyime, and Mmееeda, meaning "something extraordinary". This hand woven, hand sewn cloth was collected in Bonwire, Ghana, the center of the Asante kente weaving tradition. The weaver is said to have been Nana Kwabena Boateng and it is estimated to date from around 1930. Silk and cotton. 22 strips. 128in x 73in.

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Lot # 17
Qty 1



Title SEATED CAPTIVE OR SLAVE WOMEN. Mende people, Sierra Leone. Africans carvers rarely made sculptures depicting bound captives or slaves. This rare, enigmatic sculpture shows a seated woman with her hands tied behind her back and manacles on her ankles. Despite these circumstances, her countenance is composed and reveals no anguish. The hair style and facial features with a prominent forehead, low-set face, and multiple neck rings is reminiscent of a Bundu helmet mask. Damage to one side of the figure could be the result of the application of libations. An informant stated that the figure was used to pray for rain, but this has not been confirmed. Collected in the Bo region. Wood, pigment. H 16in.

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Lot # 18
Qty 1



Title FOUR AFRICAN BELLS. (A) Luba people, Congo. Unusual hand carved wooden wrist bell suspended by rope and a goat skin strap. Worn during celebratory dances. The wooden ball-shaped clapper was inserted through a hole in the top that is now closed. Wood, rope, goat skin. H 3in Width 4in. (B) Kuba people, Congo. Hand forged ceremonial bell with repousse designs front and back. Clapper suspended from wire at the top. On custom base. Iron. H 5in. (C) GoGo people, Tanzania. Hand forged cattle bell suspended by leather strap. On custom base. Iron, leather. H 3.5in. (D) Yoruba people, Nigeria. Hand forged, long handled ceremonial bell suspended from a chain. On custom base. Iron. H 8in.

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Lot # 19
Qty 1



Title AFENATENE ROYAL CEREMONIAL SWORD. Asante people, Ghana. This distinctive tall sword belonged to the Asantehene (King) of the Asante and was placed by his side as a symbol of his authority when he was seated in state in his palace in the Asante capital, Kumase. With the advent of the colonial period in 1896, display of this insignia was no longer permitted after the Asantehene became a subject of the British empire. This example is the most elaborate version of the afenatene since it's long twisted shaft opens at the bottom into 3 broad blades. As if creating the twisted shaft were not a sufficient feat of metalworking, the blacksmith has adorned the shaft with proverbial animals including 3 snakes (one holding a lizard in its mouth), a frog and a mudfish at the top. The mudfish and frog refer to the proverb, "No matter how fat the frog grows, it can never be as great as the mudfish". The mudfish, highly edible and prized, is a metaphor for the King, whereas the frog positioned among snakes lower on the shaft represents the King's subjects over whom he has authority. The blackened surface shows evidence of libations. Dated to mid-19th century or earlier. On custom base. Hand forged iron. H 58in. Ex Eric Robertson Gallery.

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Lot # 20
Qty 1



Title ASAFO MILITA FLAG. Fante people, Ghana. This flag depicts a large griffin (a mythical winged lion) confronting a small porcupine. The message to enemies of the Company that owns the flag is: “You may be as fierce as a griffin, but you are not a match for our Company (represented by the porcupine), and we will keep coming after you if attacked”. The porcupine is likened to an invincible warrior because it is believed to shoot and quickly regenerate its quills (as in the Akan proverb, “If you kill a thousand, a thousand more will come”). This flag is entirely hand sewn with embroidered details. Dated 1920s-1930s. Cotton textile. 61in x 35in. Ex Owen Hargreaves/Jasmine Dahl collection London. Exhibited at the Free Library Gallery Philadelphia 2012, SMA Fathers Museum of African Art Tenafly NJ 2013 and the University of Memphis Museum TN 2015. Published in “Emblems of Power. Asafo Flags from Ghana” 2013 p71 Fig 57. THIS BOOK IS ONLY AVAILABLE FROM THE AUTHORS AT ppr2001@med.cornell.edu.

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Lot # 21
Qty 1
Title



AFRICAN BLACKSMITH'S TOOLS AND RARE IRON "BLOOM" FROM ANCIENT FORGE. Many of the traditional tools used by African blacksmiths were made by the blacksmiths themselves and passed on from one generation to the next. Smithing was often a hereditary occupation, with sons serving as apprentices to their fathers. Consequently, the tools of the trade were highly prized by the family and would only be sold with the concurrence of the male members of the family. Proceeds of such a sale were then divided among the male family members or used to purchase new tools. (A) Adze. Baga people, Guinea. Used to carve wood, as handles for hoes. Fine patina on handle. Wood, hand forged iron. H 11.5in. (B) Awls (2) Mandingo people, Guinea. Used to burn holes in wood or thin sheets of metal. Each on custom base. Shaft of B1 hand forged iron. Handle reinforced with wire. Wood, wire, iron. H 9in. Shaft of B2 forged from rebar. Handle partly charred. Wood, iron. H 12.5in. (C) Tongs for holding heated iron (2). C1 hand forged and made by blacksmith. On custom base. Iron. H 8.5in. C2 with spatula jaws. Hand forged by blacksmith. Iron, pigment. H 8in. (D) Pliers. Dogon people, Mali. Used to grip heated iron. H 8in. (E) Soldering iron. Senufo people, Ivory Coast. Wood, iron. H 11.5in. (F) Anvil. GoGo people, Tanzania. The spiked end was stuck in the ground. Interesting shape with shoulders. On custom base. Hand forged iron. H 13in. (G) Anvil. Matakam people, Cameroon. Hand forged iron with oxidation. On custom base. H 10in. (H) Anvil/punch. Tanzania. Note decorative rings on shaft. Hand forged iron. On custom base. H 13.5in. (I) Hammer with white pigment on head. Wood handle with fine patina. Baga people, Guinea. Head 9lb. Wood, iron. H 14in. (J) Hammer head (11lb). Mandingo people, Guinea. Also used as an anvil. On custom base. H 5in. (K) Iron "bloom" from an ancient smelting forge. Excavated near Kumbija Kaabaakoun village, Gambia. Estimated to date from the 1700s or earlier. This find is extremely rare because most excavations of ancient iron forges uncover only slag. For some unknown reason, the "bloom" was left at this site. This is the form that iron took after the ore was smelted in the forge and extracted from the furnace as the "bloom". The furnace was considered to be a womb and the smelting process the gestation period. Thus, extracting the "bloom" was giving birth to the iron. The next step was to separate the slag consisting of remnants of the ore from the "bloom". This "bloom" measures 8.5in in greatest diameter and weighs 4.5lb. See picture showing blacksmith hammering a "bloom" to loosen the slag.

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Lot # 22
Qty 1



Title FOUR WEST AFRICAN RING GONGS. The small ring gong is held in one hand by its neck and struck with a ring placed on a finger, typically the thumb, while a person is dancing. A large ring gong, held by its neck in one hand, is repeatedly swung up and down in a twisting motion to cause a ring attached by a cord to strike the bell. The ring may be hung inside or outside the gong. (A) Bobo people, Mali. Small ring gong on custom base. Hand forged iron. H 6.5in. (B) Samo people, Burkina Faso/Mali. Small ring gong collected from a blacksmith in Bamako, Mali. On custom base. Hand forged iron. H 7.5in. (C) Samo people, Burkina Faso/Mali. Small ring gong collected from a blacksmith in Bamako, Mali. Ring cut from pipe attached with rope made from cloth. Ring strikes gong when it is shaken. Hand forged iron, cloth, steel ring. H 7in. (D) Kabre people, Togo. A large ring gong with a ring attached by rope. Ring can be hung inside or outside of gong. On custom base. Hand forged iron, rope. H 12in.

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Lot # 23
Qty 1



Title TWISTED "PENNY" CURRENCY BUNDLE. Kissi people, Guinea/Liberia. T-shaped iron rods with a twisted shaft that terminate at one end in lateral pointed appendages symbolic of wings or ears (nileng) were widely used as currency among the Kissi people, even as late as the 1950s. During the colonial period, one rod had the value of a British penny, hence the name "Kissi penny". Bundles of these rods are still used as bride wealth in traditional marriage ceremonies. The flat, round or oval enlargement at the non-T end is considered to be the foot (kodo) or tail. These rods came in various lengths, with the examples in this lot among the longest. The structural features of the rod are an indicator of the quality of the iron as indicated by the ability to twist the shaft, draw the wings out to fine points, and flatten the foot into a thin plate. The value of Kissi pennies was increased when they were forged into bundles which played an important role as symbols of wealth and prestige. When given as bride wealth, the bundle signifies the bond of marriage at which time the wings were folded. Dated 1930s. On custom base. Hand forged iron. H 21in. Exhibited at the Pen and Brush Gallery NY 2003.

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Qty 1



Title TORQUE OR NECK RING. Yoruba/Nupe people, Bida region of Nigeria. Although the word “torque” means a necklace or neck ring, among Africanists it has come to refer to a specific form of neck ring in which the ends have been drawn into points that nearly come together to form a complete ring. The torque is considered to be one of the aesthetically perfect forms of African metalwork. This example dates from the mid to late 19th century. On custom base. Brass. H 7.5in Wt 7.8lb.

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Lot # 25
Qty 1



Title TWO EAST AFRICAN HEAD RESTS. (A) Bongo people, Sudan. A unique head rest that was probably made on a commission with a form that is vaguely suggestive of a bovine animal. It stands on 4 legs (pegs) inserted beneath the body at angles giving maximum stability. A canvas carry strap is attached to knobs (‘ head and tail) at either end of the body. The sides of the body are decorated with carved amulet designs. Underside also has amuletic carvings and an excavated area carved to make a handle. Wood, nails, canvas, metal ring. H 8in. (B) Mwila people, Angola. Carvings from Angola are uncommon and headrests from this country are very rare. Post has been hollowed to create 4 pillars that support the top. Hourglass designs carved on base. Very light weight. Wood. H 5.5in.

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Lot # 26
Qty 1



Title ODE-LAY SOCIETY HEAD CREST MASK. Temne people, Sierra Leone. A snake encircles the ringed neck of the fierce, spotted leopard head with a lolling tongue at the top of this sculpture. The female bust below is Janus-faced with slightly different faces with Hindu-inspired features front and back. The coiffure is braided with dependent braids on either side of the frontal face. A hair knot containing a red jewel protrudes above the forehead of the frontal face. Two detachable wings are present. The snakes and Hindu-inspired features refer to the dangerous, seductive female water spirit, Mami Wata (mother of water), who plays an important part in the ritual life of many African cultures. Probably dates from the mid-20th century. Wood, paint, nails. H 22in. Exhibited at the Free Library Gallery Philadelphia 2010. Published in “Masks from West and Central Africa” p. 76, Figs 95-96.

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Lot # 27
Qty 1



Title TWO ELU FACE MASKS. Ogoni people, Nigeria. Elu masks are caricatures of members of the community. Masquerades in which they perform illustrate humorous, happy, and tragic events in oral traditions and songs, as well as commentary on recent events. The white kaolin pigment refers to ancestral spirits. The mask is part of a costume that shrouds the masker's body. The message intended by the mask is made known by the songs sung during the performance. These masks with articulated jaws. (A) Man with heavy arched eyebrows and very full lips wearing a black derby hat. Possibly reference to a colonial man or a member of the community who mimics the behavior of the colonials. Scarifications carved on the temples. The significance of the tattoo-like design on the chin is obscure. Carved with no teeth. Wood, pigment. H 7.5in. Published in "Masks from West and Central Africa" p 154 Fig 114. (B) Female mask with narrow slit eyes and hair in two lobes drawn into braids that arch over to the temples. Circular tattoo-like designs on either side of her jaw. Seven teeth in either side of jaw. Wood, pigment. H 8in.

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Lot # 28
Qty 1



Title ELEGANT SERPENTINE RITUAL RING. Chamba or Mumuye people, Nigeria. This nearly complete hand forged iron ring narrows and is twisted at both ends. The taller, flat end is the head of a snake. The other end (tail) forged into a socket probably contained ritual material. Rings such as this were sometimes used as "currency" for major transactions like bride wealth. Mid-19th century. On custom base. H 13in.

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Lot # 29
Qty 1



Title FOUR WEST AFRICAN ANKLETS. (A) Wodaabe people, Niger. The Wodaabe people lead a nomadic life in the southern Sahara. Light weight anklets such as this are worn by young girls as a form of jewelry. The anklet is commissioned from a Hausa blacksmith who decorates it with symbols having meaning to the Wodaabe as instructed by the person who orders it. Brass. H 5in. (B) Kutu and Mongo people, Congo. This heavy anklet/leg band is forged by a blacksmith who pours molten brass into a mold. The mold is created by pressing a wooden form (B1) in specially prepared wet sand mixed with clay which hardens like concrete when dry. While the metal is still very hot, the ingot is bent over the trunk of a tree to achieve the correct shape. The anklet is worn by a woman during celebratory events as a sign of wealth. Her feet and ankles are protected with pads of cloth and leaves (litelele). See picture. The anklets are also a form of currency in important transactions. A high sheen is created by polishing the surface with a smooth stone. H 9in Weight 5.6lb. Wood form on custom base. H 12in. (C) A smaller version of the anklet in (B). Brass. H 4in. Weight 3.4lb. (D) Ngelima people, Congo. Spiral anklet with engraved diamond-shaped designs. Brass. H 4.5in. Weight 3.4lb.

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Lot # 30
Qty 1



Title UNIQUE JUMPING BUSH BUCK WALL TAPESTRY. Shangaan people, South Africa. This tapestry was hand woven on commission by Shangaan women at the Masana workshop in Buckridge (Lebowa) northeast of Johannesburg in 1985. The weaving was done with hand carded, hand spun wool sheared from Karakul sheep using a traditional loom. Each tapestry made in this workshop is unique. Wool. 51in x 71in.

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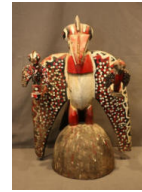


Title THREE WEST AFRICAN HEDDLE PULLEYS. Each hand carved and on a custom base. (A) Guro people, Ivory Coast. Face with features of a Guro face mask. Wood, pigment. H 5in. (B) Senufo people, Ivory Coast. Hornbill bird. Pulley has a bobbin. Wood, H 6.5in. (C) Ewe people, Ghana. Abstract form with two heads. Bobbin present. Collected from Kwasi Gbobgo in Kpetoe village in 2005. See picture of heddle pulley in situ. Wood. H 5.5in.

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Lot # 32
Qty 1

Title RARE EAGLE HEAD CREST MASK. Djimini subgroup of Senufo people, Mali. The eagle is considered to be the King of the birds and master hunter of fish. This sculpture presents the eagle in all of its majesty with a powerful beak and enormous wings. Two eaglets, one on each wing, are supported on perches under the protection of the eagle's wings. This mask was worn during celebrations honoring the exploits of hunters and fishermen. The eagle's extraordinary visual acuity is indicated by the large eyes and the large beak is the weapon it uses with great skill. The meaning of the words "Na bé de la" written on the back is unknown despite numerous inquiries here and Mali. There is a necklace of multicolored string. Wood, paint, string. H 23in.



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Lot # 33
Qty 1

Title EXTRAORDINARY ROYAL AKUNITAN ROBE. Asante people, Ghana. Akunitan robes were commissioned by and exclusively used by the Asante King (Asantehene). This is one of the finest examples that should have a treasured place in any museum or private collection. The 16 hand and machine embroidered images arrayed in 4 lines of four represent the full spectrum of emblems of royal power and authority. However, it is the numerous seemingly abstract (but probably meaningful) embroidered designs that surround the 16 images which make this such a stunning akunitan robe. Black felt cloth with multicolored cotton thread. Collected in Bonwire, Ghana in 2005. 110in x 76.5in.



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Lot # 34
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Title SERPENTINE ROD CURRENCY. Iyembe people, Congo. Copper rods imported to Africa by Europeans as early as the 16th century were traded in many regions for goods such as palm oil, gold, and slaves. African blacksmiths cut the rods up, reshaped them, or melted them down. The molten copper was cast into a vast variety of objects, especially jewelry. In this case, the rod has been twisted into the shape of a snake, probably for some ceremonial purpose. A knob representing the head has been created at the upper end. The surface of the rod has many blacksmith's hammer marks left when the heated rod was shaped into this spiral form. Copper. H 18in.



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Lot # 35
Qty 1
Title CEREMONIAL NKUMI SOCIETY GONG. Jonga or Nkutshu people, Congo. Near the bottom, the surfaces of the gong are embossed with a linear dot design that probably indicates the “sweet spot” where the gong should be struck. In contrast to many African gongs, this gong resonates for several seconds after being struck. It belonged to a member of the Nkumi Society composed of elder blacksmiths known for their wisdom who were tutors to sons of the King’s family. As a symbol of membership in this association, the gong could be beaten only by members who attained the highest grade. The beater was a stick wrapped with rubber at one end. In some situations, the gong was used as currency. Dated around 1910. On custom base. Hand forged iron, rope. H 21.5in.



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Lot # 36
Qty 1
Title WOMAN’S “CACHE SEXE” BELT. Kirdi people, Cameroon or Chad. The belt consists of iron beads and pointed, fang-shaped thin pieces of iron hung on string. Worn as a form of jewelry and to hinder unwanted advances from men during dancing ceremonies. On custom base. Hand forged iron, string. H 7in



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Lot # 37
Qty 1
Title FIVE ANCIENT IRON OBJECTS. Bura/Pabir people, Niger. The Bura culture was discovered in the mid-1970s and was first investigated when excavation was begun at the “Bura site” in southwestern Niger in 1983. This work revealed that the Bura were an early iron age people determined by radiocarbon testing to date from the 3rd century AD until around the 15th century. They were probably descendants of people who are known to have smelted and forged iron in sub-Saharan Africa as early as 1200 BC. Because the objects in this lot are still partly embedded in the hardened iron rich soil in which they were found, the precise forms of the objects are partly obscured. However, the following objects appear to be present: a bird shaped object with a large beak, a hook, large figure eight objects, and manilla-form bracelets. The figure eight objects are reminiscent of the figure eight copper currency of the Mongo people in the Congo. What appear to be indigenous iron manilla-form bracelets were probably models for the copper and brass manilla-form currency exported to Africa by Europeans starting in the 15th century. Total weight 8lb. Ex Eric Robertson collection.



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Lot # 38

Qty 1

Title LARGE HANDA OR KATANGA CROSS. Luba people, Congo. Copper ingots cast in the shape of an X or H were a form of currency originating in the copper-rich Katanga region of the Congo and other parts of the African copper belt. (A) Handas were distributed as a form of currency along major trade routes with values that generally increased with increasing distance from the point of origin. Molten copper obtained by smelting copper-rich malachite ore was cast in molds carved in clay, soapstone or wet sand. The upper side of the handa has a rippled surface formed as the molten, viscous metal cooled and solidified. In the Congo, it was reported that a goat would cost 3 handas, a male slave 3-5 handas and a female slave 5-10 handas. In some remote areas, handas were used as currency until the 1950s. On custom base. Copper. H 8in. Weight 2.4lb. (B) Malachite copper ore from Lumbumbashi, Katanga province, Congo.

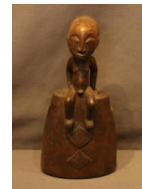


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Lot # 39

Qty 1

Title UNUSUAL WOODEN BELL. Kuba people, Congo. The figure seated on the bell has an unusually large head indicative of a person of great wisdom. The arms set back support the figure perched precariously at the edge of the bell and balance the position of the legs in the front. The juxtaposition of the arms and legs creates an interesting visual dynamic. The head, which serves as a handle, has a patina consistent with repeated ritual use. Geometric designs typical for the Kuba have been carved on the bell. The wooded clapper is suspended from a wood rod that passes through the upper part of the bell. Wood. H 11in.



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Lot # 40
Qty 1



Title FIVE EXAMPLES OF AFRICAN HOE CURRENCY. Because the hoes used by different African tribes tend to have forms that are nearly as unique as their face masks, they are often named after the tribe itself. In general, the shape and weight of the blade was adapted to local farming conditions where it was used. Most hoes were functional tools which could also be used as currency, but in some instances a non-functional form was created to be used exclusively as currency. Each example in this lot was hand forged and is on a custom base. (A) Tsonga people, Swaziland. Objects of material culture from Swaziland are rarely found in Western private or museum collections. This hoe was forged from locally smelted iron and is believed to date from the mid-to-late 1800s. Iron. H 18in. (B) Ngelima and Mbole people, Congo. This thin feather-shaped blade, an example of currency derived from a hoe form, would be too fragile to actually use for farming. It comes from the region of the Ituri and Lomani Rivers where it was called “jembe” or “dupa”. As late as 1894, 3 “jembe” were required as payment by the Belgian colonial administration for “hut” taxes. The explorer David Livingston reported paying 3 “jembe” to have his party of 36 men and a number of animals ferried across Lake Bemba in the Congo. Iron. H 15in. (C) Source uncertain. Feather-shaped hoe strengthened by a central ridge. Iron. H 11in. (D) Chamba people, Nigeria. Reportedly from Kafancham village. Iron. H 14in. (E) Source uncertain. Unusual form with a socket for the handle. Forged from a single piece of iron. H (blade) 10in.

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Lot # 41
Qty 1
Title ANCIENT OBJECTS FROM REGION OF DJENNE, MALI. The area around the current city of Djenne in Mali is known to have been settled since about 250 BC based on radiocarbon dating. After 900 AD, population growth shifted to what became the city of Djenne which became (and still is) a regional center for trade. The objects in this lot were collected by farmers working in fields around Djenne in the 1950s-1960s and are thought to have been made by the earliest inhabitants of this region. Each on a custom base. All copper except (G). (A) Two small cups and 2 spoons, probably having a ritual function. H 6in (tallest spoon). (B) Four bracelets. Diameter 2.5in to 3.5in. (C) Needle with eye and 2 hair pins. H 2in to 5in. (D) Small pedestal with notched arms. Zig-zag designs on sides of arms. Use unknown. H 2.5in. (E) Man's tear drop ring. H 1.5in. (F) Man's bosselated ring. H 1.5in. (G) Man's tear drop ring. Iron. H 2in. Collected in Mali in 2003.

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Lot # 42
Qty 1
Title FOUR WEST AFRICAN BRACELETS AND ONE ARM RING. (A) Lobi people, Ivory Coast. Worn by men and women. Used as a weapon. Early 1900s. On custom base. Iron. H 3in. (B) Yoruba people, Nigeria. A remarkable feat of blacksmith's skill when one considers that it was made from a single copper rod that was twisted and knotted at the ends while sufficiently hot to be malleable. Excavated in southeastern Nigeria. Probably early-to-mid 1800s. Copper with heavy oxidation from being buried. Diameter 4in. (C) Cast in a form that resembles a twisted bracelet. Darkened patina from extensive wear. On custom base. Copper. H 3in. (D) ' Yoruba people, Nigeria. Complex design engraved on surface is obscured by oxidation. Copper. H 2.5in. (E) Tuareg people, Niger. Arm ring. One or more of these rings are worn by a man on each arm just above the elbow. On custom base. Hand carved veined gneiss rock. Diameter 4in.

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Lot # 43
Qty 1
Title COMPLEX CEREMONIAL GONG/RATTLE. Kirdi or Chamba people, Cameroon/Nigeria. This is classified as a complex gong/rattle because it can be struck like a gong or shaken like a rattle. The 9 tubular gongs and one tulip-shaped gong hang from a round iron ring. Several of the tubular gongs hang from the ring by fiddlehead loops. On custom base. Early 1900s. Hand forged iron. H 15in.
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Lot # 44
Qty 1
Title FIVE EXAMPLES OF WEST AFRICAN MANILLA CURRENCY. Manillas are a diverse group of iron, copper, and brass forms of African currency. Origin of the term manilla has been attributed to manilho or manillio, said to refer to bracelet in Portuguese and Spanish. Manillas have semi-circular C-shapes, U- or elongated U-shapes, as well as ring and coiled forms. The majority of manillas used in Africa were of European origin, but some were also produced by Africans, especially in the Congo. The major European sources of manillas were the Portuguese, the English who brought Birmingham manillas, the French who brought “popo” manillas cast in Nantes, and the Dutch with manillas made in Amsterdam. Manillas were accepted by Africans in trade for a vast variety of goods which Europeans shipped back to their countries, including slaves. Manillas were also used as currency by Africans in major transactions such as bride price, as prestige items (often placed in tombs) , and as a store of wealth which frequently was hidden and buried. Each on custom base. (A) French C-form “popo” manilla from Nantes. Copper alloy. H 3in. Width 3.5in. (B) Extended U-form “queen” faceted manilla with flared ends called “onganda” or “onglese”. Collected in Congo. H 4.5in. Width 7.5in. Weight 1.6lb. (C)English C-form faceted manilla . Collected in Nigeria. Copper alloy. H 4in. Width 4.5in. (D) Bracelet-form manilla with flared ends cast by Hausa blacksmith. Surfaces covered with punched designs that are partly effaced by wear. Dates from 1800s. Copper. Collected in Niger. H 4in. Width 4.5in. Weight 2.6lb. (E) English round, extended-U “king” manilla with flared ends and extensive surface designs partly obscured by oxidation after having been buried and excavated in Nigeria. Dated early 1800s. Copper alloy. H 5.5in. Width 10in. Weight 9lb.
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