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THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART CELEBRATES PATTERN IN AFRICAN ART

BALTIMORE, MD (January 14, 2008)—The third and final installation in the BMA's *Meditations on African Art* series exploring light, color, and pattern in the BMA's distinguished African collection, **Meditations on African Art: Pattern**, on view **March 12 – August 24, 2008**, features more than 70 diverse works that define the shape and surface of African art.

Dramatic textiles, whimsical adinkra dye stamps, delicately carved ivories, boldly painted shields, and figurative works show the role of pattern and how it defines the shape and surface of African works of art by proclaiming the distinctive styles of individual men, women, and cultures.

The gallery walls are adorned with breathtaking Kuba textiles—the largest of which is 25 feet long—in addition to masks, shields and sculptures ranging from diminutive hairpins to large-scale architectural sculptures. The relationship between patterns and the human body is also shown through intricately decorated figurative sculptures illustrating how individuals and artists used their bodies as canvases upon which to express identity and style.

As part of the exhibition Mary Evans, a Nigerian-born, London-based artist known for her compelling juxtapositions of signs and symbols, will create several site-specific works that reconsider perceptions of art, environment, and contemporary society. The installation features a video montage detailing the slave trade in British port cities and West Africa and on plantations the southern U.S. viewed through a kaleidoscope; floor to ceiling intricately patterned murals; framed works on paper; and a series of rosettes inspired by the BMA's collection that are displayed on the Rymland Terrace Windows above the BMA's Visitor Entrance.

The *Meditations on African Art* series is curated by BMA Associate Curator of African Art Karen Milbourne. The *Meditations* series is generously sponsored by Polk Audio, Matthew Polk and Amy Gould.



Female Mask (Ngaady Mwaash). Kuba, Congo (late 19th- early 20th- century). The Baltimore Museum of Art: Gift of Alan Wurtzburger, BMA 1954.145.77

EVENTS

Issues in African Art

Saturday, March 29, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

\$50 BMA Members

\$60 non-Members

Join curator Karen Milbourne on a special tour of the exhibition, then for conversation over a luncheon of African-inspired cuisine at Gertrude's restaurant. Call 443-573-1832 to reserve your space.

Family Workshop: African Textiles: Shapes, Patterns, and Symmetry

Sunday, April 6, 2 p.m.

Free

Explore the abstract patterning in the cloth of the Kuba people and the adinkra stamps the Asante people used to decorate fabric, then create your own textile piece.

The Leopard's Spots: Raffia Textiles and Surface Design Among the Kuba

Saturday, April 12, 1 – 2 p.m.

Free

Dr. Patricia Darish, co-author of the forthcoming volume, *Kuba*, part of the *Visions of Africa* series, presents a talk on the history of production, export, and display of Kuba textiles. Hosted by the BMA's Joshua Johnson Council.

African Fractals: Dr. Ron Eglash on the Intersections of Math and Culture

Saturday, April 26, 1 – 2 p.m.

Free

While studying aerial photographs of a Tanzanian village Ethno-mathematician Dr. Ron Eglash noticed a familiar pattern: the thatched-roof huts were organized in circular clusters that reminded him of his former days as a Silicon Valley computer engineer. Join Eglash as he talks about the intersection of math and culture, and the implication of his findings on math education, biological determinism, and patterns in African-American hairstyles. For more information call 443-573-1832.

Teaching Math and Culture

Saturday, April 26, 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Free

Presented in partnership with Arts Every Day, Ron Eglash leads this workshop exploring non-linear ways to teach and understand mathematics. For more information and to register, call Joan Weber at joan@baltimorepartners.org or 410-685-1172.

Mathematics and Design: The Art of Cornrows

Sunday, April 27, 2 p.m.

Free

Dr. Ron Eglash leads this computer workshop for kids ages seven and up. Participants learn about math and patterns through cornrow design. The best cornrow designs will be brought to life by Baltimore-area hairstylists! For information call 443-573-1832.

Baltimore Ink: Patterns on Bodies

Saturday, May 31

7 p.m. Talk; 8:30 p.m. Tattoo Runway Show & After-Party

\$10 BMA Members

\$20 non-Members

\$15 Students with valid I.D.

Tattoo Runway Show & After-Party

FREE to Members

\$10 for non-Members

View body adornment patterns displayed in *Meditations on African Art: Pattern*, then join Bob Baxter, Editor-in-Chief of *Skin & Ink Magazine*; Kip Fulbeck, Professor of Art at University of California, Santa Barbara; and acclaimed tattoo artists Mitch O'Connell, Jacci Gresham, Lyle Tuttle, and Zulu to learn about the state of tattoo art. Meet Baltimore tattoo artists Tom and Mick Beasley (Dragon Moon Tattoo); Jim Judeikis (Saints & Sinners); Johnny Love (Tattooed Heart Studios); Jacki Randall (Charm City Tattoo); Scott Clayton (Tattoo Charlie's) and revel at the tattoo runway show featuring some of Baltimore's most innovative ink.

Anticipated sell-out! Please order your tickets early to guarantee availability. Member tickets go on sale March 15 and are available in person or by phone at the BMA Box Office by calling 443-573-1701 (no service charges apply) or online at artbma.org (service charges apply). Non-Member tickets go on sale April 5. Call 443-573-1832 for information.

MEDITATIONS OF AFRICAN ART SERIES

Meditations on African Art: Pattern (on view March 12–August 17, 2008) is the final exhibition in a three-part series that explores light, color, and pattern in the BMA's distinguished collection of African art. The first exhibition—*Light* (December 17, 2006–April 1, 2007)—revealed the importance of light to the design and interpretation of African art, including an installation by video artist Theo Eshetu. The second exhibition—*Color* (April 18–August 19, 2007)—examined the importance of color symbolism in African art, and featured a site-specific installation by Tunisian-born Swiss artist Fatma Charfi.

AFRICAN ART COLLECTION AT THE BMA

One of the first American museums to start an African art collection, the BMA has one of the most important collections of African art in the country. Now featuring more than 2,000 objects that span from ancient Egypt to contemporary Zimbabwe, the collection includes works from Bamana, Yoruba, Kuba, Ndebele, and many other communities. The works of art are as diverse in form as they are in function and include headdresses, masks, figures, royal staffs, textiles, jewelry, tools, and pottery. Many pieces are distinguished by their use in royal courts, performances, and religious contexts, and several are internationally known as the best of their type, such as *D'mba*, an unparalleled Baga female dance headdress from Guinea. Highlights of the collection are early 20th century works by acclaimed Liberian carvers Zlan and Sonzanlwon and several figures by the legendary brasscaster Ldamie.

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

The Baltimore Museum of Art is home to an internationally renowned collection of 19th-century, modern, and contemporary art. Founded in 1914, the BMA's outstanding collection encompasses 90,000 works of art, including the largest and most significant holding of works by Henri Matisse in the world, as well as masterpieces by Pablo Picasso, Paul Cézanne, and Vincent van Gogh. An expanding collection of contemporary art features iconic post-1960 works by Andy Warhol and Sol LeWitt, as well as exciting acquisitions by artists such as Kara Walker and Olafur Eliasson. The BMA is also recognized for an internationally acclaimed collection of prints, drawings, and photographs from the 15th-century to the present; grand European painting and sculpture from Old Masters to the 19th-century; distinguished American painting, sculpture, and decorative arts and Maryland period rooms; one of the most important African collections in the country, and notable examples of Asian, ancient American, and Pacific Islands art.

VISITOR INFORMATION

General admission to the BMA is free; special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Friday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m.; and during the first Thursday of every month (except major holidays), 11 a.m.–8 p.m. The Museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The BMA is located on Art Museum Drive at North Charles and 31st Streets, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. For general Museum information, call 443-573-1700 or visit artbma.org.

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