

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

SIXTH STREET AT CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW WASHINGTON DC 20565 • 737-4215 extension 224

ADVANCE FACT SHEET

Exhibition: African Art and Motion

Dates: May 5 through September 22, 1974
(Please note change of dates.)

Guest Scholar: Robert Farris Thompson, Associate Professor
of Art History, Yale University

Scope: Unlike a previous show at the National Gallery, restricted to African sculpture, this exhibition will survey the variety of Sub-Saharan African visual creativity, including masks, sculpture, textiles and jewelry in the context of their relation to motion: implied, arrested or expressed. Film, recording, and the first use of videotape in field research will illustrate rarely-seen dances and ceremonies showing the use of objects similiar to those in the exhibition. In addition, these "motion stations" will display costumed figures with masks and other ritual objects seen in the recorded sequences. This joining of objects on view and in the films stresses Professor Thompson's point that, as the sculpture only has meaning through its use in the ritual ceremonies, African art can only be understood through African dance. Explanatory texts and photo murals will

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be used throughout the exhibition to amplify and elucidate the objects and films within the exhibition's conceptual framework.

African Art and Motion at the National Gallery is based on an exhibition held in Los Angeles earlier this year and organized by the University of California, Los Angeles, Frederick S. Wight Galleries.

Contents:

A selection of over 150 masks, sculptures, textiles, costumes, pieces of jewelry, and furniture from Sub-Saharan Africa will comprise this exhibition of African art as approached from a new viewpoint. The sculptures, made primarily of wood but also of fiber, iron, bronze, and ivory, represent the artwork of over fifty tribes--twenty-four present-day nations. All have been drawn to illustrate the themes of the show from the renowned collection of Katherine Coryton White of Los Angeles, who has acquired some material especially for this exhibition.

Installation: Gaillard F. Ravenel

James F. Silberman

George Sexton

Publications: A scholarly illustrated publication by Professor Thompson on the thesis of the exhibition will be available at the exhibition. Also available

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will be an explanatory brochure of the show
and its contents.

Lectures:

Art and Motion in Tropical Africa

Professor Robert F. Thompson
May 5; 4:00 p.m.

Motion, Meaning, and Social Context in
the Arts of Central Africa

Daniel P. Biebuyck
Professor of Anthropology and Humanities
University of Delaware
May 12; 4:00 p.m.

The Choreography of Akan Art

George Nelson Preston
Professor of Art History
City College, City University of New York
May 19; 4:00 p.m.

END

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION or photographs contact Katherine Warwick,
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737-4215, ext. 224.