

“Relations Between Thoughts and Hands”¹

Expressive Themes of African Arts

Allen F. Roberts

After fifty years of uninterrupted publication, *African Arts* is venerable by any measure. Given how sadly shorter-lived most humanities journals have proven, that *African Arts* remains relevant to sharp-edged creativity across and about the continent is all the more remarkable. An argument can be made that *African Arts* has been progressive from its inception, insofar as Eurocentric notions of what constitutes “art” have been challenged through in-depth, archival, and feet-on-the-ground research of local aesthetics (e.g. Thompson 1973, Abiodun 1994), bringing voices and choices of African interlocutors to the fore. Even the “s” of *African Arts*—the plural, that is—is provocative, for it challenges any sense that African “art” as a collective noun is to be understood of a piece, or that artworks are only “high” and thus worthy of consideration if confined to the sculptures that first caught European eyes, influenced early European Modernists so famously, and currently sell at auction for astronomical sums. Instead, as Herbert Cole (1969) presciently encouraged us to consider in an early issue of *African Arts*, if art is understood as a verb as well as a noun, emphasis may be placed upon processes rather than solely given to final forms, helping us to grasp the ever-changing reasons why and how artists create what they do (Fig. 1). In other words, we may consider philosophies and methods of making, rather than admiring formal qualities of art objects as the end-all of scholarship.² The “s” of “Arts” further recognizes the astonishing multiplicity of perspectives across the continent’s fifty-five states (including the disputed Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic); its

more than 2000 ethnicities, languages, and religions; its long and shorter histories, including those of various colonial moments; and its profusion of intellectual and artistic achievements over the millennia and up to this very second.

Many expressive themes have been addressed in *African Arts*, from “traditional” ritual arts to “contemporary” theatrical performances.³ Before considering some of these, let us ponder the quotation marks of this last sentence, for among the theoretical and ideological issues long debated in the journal’s pages, distinct issue has been taken with spurious notions of stasis all too readily associated with “tradition,” as though African peoples are somehow timeless and without long and complex exchanges of ideas and practices within the continent and across the waters.⁴ Similarly, from the very first issue of *African Arts*, the question has been raised as to whether expression can ever be anything but “contemporary.” What points of reference are appropriately considered with regard to this latter term of such evident temporal relativity? Surely not Europe alone or even primarily, even though sub-Saharan African histories have been closely bound to those of Europe for well over 500 years now, and those of northern Africa and the Horn for far longer than that. Just as surely, “contemporary” must refer to senses of self and circumstance held and most probably debated by all human communities and their various members at every moment of time. The point to be made here is that positions of “conventional wisdom” about African peoples and their arts have been questioned from the journal’s beginnings.

The first issues of *African Arts* present the panoply of expressive themes that have characterized the journal for the last half century. Reflective yet theoretically stimulating pieces by Léopold Sédar Senghor and Albert Memmi (both 1967) introduced *African Arts* to the world. President Senghor’s important contribution is published in English for the first time in the present issue of *African Arts*, introduced and translated by Brian Quinn. Albert Memmi offered an allegorical prose poem about the great ambivalences of his own existence as an “Arab Jew” of Tunisia, thus positing mimetic perplexities similar to those developed in his landmark polemic *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (1965).⁵

ALLEN F. ROBERTS is Professor of World Arts and Cultures and (affiliated) Professor of French and Francophone Studies at UCLA. He has served as a co-editor of *African Arts* since 1999, and he conducts research, writes, organizes museum exhibitions, and sometimes co-teaches about African humanities with Mary “Polly” Nooter Roberts. His most recent book, *A Dance of Assassins: Performing Early Colonial Hegemony in the Congo* (2013), won ACASA’s Outstanding Publication Award of 2011–2013 and was a finalist for the 2013 Herskovits Prize of the African Studies Association. aroberts@arts.ucla.edu



ONE SPIRIT WORKER (RIGHT) SINGS AND DANCES PRAISE TO THE UNPAINTED FIGURE OF ALA, WHILE OTHERS LOOK ON. FROM TIME TO TIME WORKERS SPONTANEOUSLY BEGIN TO DANCE

forth. Nor is this all human activity, for that is clearly, there are distinctions between art and one thing the art process is a creative process, unified by particular motivations and desires. Judging from most publications on African art art is thought to be the object alone: The *nsibiri* house, the Ibo mask, or the sculptured figure. The importance of such forms cannot be judged about their centrality can be, Jones does when he entitles his article: "Hunting those heads on the wall." By this I take him to the Ibo context, that most writing on art miscreative essence by pinning it, like the heads on the wall of an incompatible environment. The patibility of African masks, say, with our museums or the homes of collectors begs the question here masks are visualized and understood within the western value system.

Edmund Carpenter counters this attitude directly he says: "The study of tribal art begins with the question: What did this art mean to the people for whom originally intended?" Or, as Coomaraswamy says early forties: "We must examine their theory of it." Though the difficulty of understanding points of view can hardly be overestimated, the attempt of attempting to do so is nonetheless imperative long time we have been superimposing our values on their lives, their thought, their art. We least try to find the points of intersection between value systems and those of the Africans whose art we are discussing.



1 Herbert Cole's "Art as a Verb in Iboland" (Cole 1969); the caption of this illustration reads, "One spirit worker (right) sings and dances praise to the unpainted figure of Ala, while others look on. From time to time workers spontaneously begin to dance or sing or both."

The gauntlet was thrown: Difficult questions about life in early postcolonial Africa would not be ignored in the journal's pages, and instead, they would be among the publication's primary *raison d'être*, as they remain today.

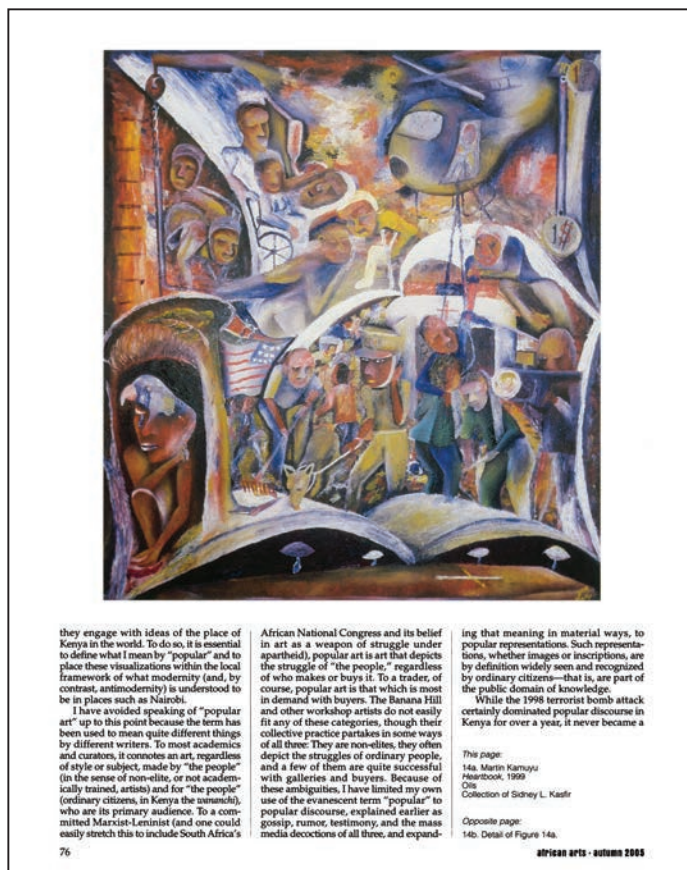
Literary criticism, original poetry, and fiction were early features of the journal. For example, Albert Gérard provided an overview of literature from Cabo Verde, still a Portuguese colony in 1968 but independent after 1975. The presentation of "an impressive body of imaginative writing" in Portuguese and Crioulo, often inflected by *saudade*—plaintive distress from the difficult circumstances of life in a small archipelago whence Cabo Verdeans were and are longing for better elsewhere (Gérard 1968:62–63)—was engaging and instructive unto itself. Yet Gérard's piece also bespeaks two important features of *African Arts*: attention to less-familiar communities of the continent and recognition of how significant Lusophone and Creole forms of expression have been and are to African histories of "thoughts and hands."⁶

Senegalese literary critic Mohamadou Kane (1968) presented a caveat in his contribution to the first volume of *African Arts*, however, urging that expatriate writers verse themselves in the languages and cultures of the African authors whose works they would discuss. While such an assertion may seem self-evident in 2017, it was progressive indeed so few years after independence was won by most African states in the early 1960s and noteworthy that African scholars such as Kane should choose the pages

of *African Arts* to make such potent declarations.

In a similarly provocative manner, Dorothea Gallup (1968) discussed how violence was a theme of Francophone Algerian novels written during the convulsive years 1950–1962. In so doing, not only did she bring attention to how the arts contribute to understanding and, one can hope, resolution of fraught political circumstances, she also set in train an ongoing sensitivity to such courageous productions in the pages of *African Arts*. That similar positions remain integral to the journal is evident in a special issue on "trauma and representation in Africa" organized by Kim Miller and Shannen Hill in 2005, which featured pieces on artistic reactions to the bombing of the US Embassy in Nairobi (Kasfir 2005; Fig. 2) and to the Rwandan genocide of 1994 (Mirzoeff 2005).

Two moving works in the first issue of *African Arts*, a poem by "Ghana's most interesting younger poet" George Awoonor-Williams and a short story by the Nigerian novelist John Munonye, introduced these idioms to many readers. More affecting writing would come, such as "Of Silence, of Noise" by the celebrated Somali novelist Nuruddin Farah (1972), even if formal interest in fiction would soon be ceded to more evidently literary publications. Notably, Munonye's piece was illustrated with drawings by Ibrahim el-Salahi, then professor at the School of Fine and Applied Art in Khartoum. The cross-regional nature of the decision to illustrate Nigerian writing with Sudanese drawings should be recognized as progressive indeed.⁷



2 A special issue on "Trauma and Representation" included Sidney Kasfir's article on reactions to the US embassy in Nairobi (Kasfir 2005). The caption reads:
"Martin Kamuyu
Heartbook (1999)
Oils
Collection of Sidney Kasfir"

3 The first issue of *African Arts* included a color portfolio of paintings by Ibrahim el-Salahi. The caption reads:
"*The Last Sound Prayer*"

entrepreneurial activities of contemporary Christian artists of Ethiopia by Neal Sobania and Raymond Silverman (2009; Fig. 5).

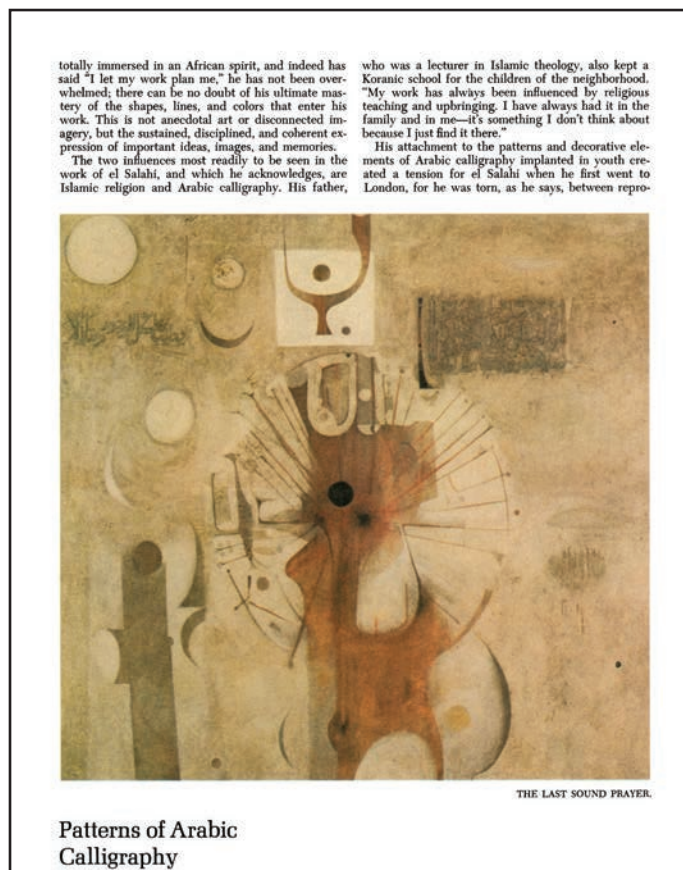
Interestingly enough, in a provocative "Letter from London" by Dennis Deurden in the journal's same first issue, el-Salahi's work was discussed in the context of a London exhibition of works by contemporary artists Skunder Boghossian of Ethiopia and Twins Seven Seven of Nigeria, among others.¹⁰ Following what Deurden called the "cultural ethnocentrism" of Europeans "who regard[ed] Africa as their lost Arcadia" and who longed for the sorts of "naked, direct communication" they perceived as yet possible on the continent, unnamed London critics found el-Salahi "too much like an artist in Paris or New York," with the further "faint suggestion" that as an African, he was "inevitably doomed to become a poor example of the latter," even as he had become insufficiently "African" to suit the tastes of some (Duerden 1967:29, 67). Contestations of the sort are still the stuff of postcolonial debate (e.g., Chakrabarty 2007), and clearly, such controversy has been welcome in the pages of *African Arts* from the start. In el-Salahi's case, it is a joy to see that his work continues

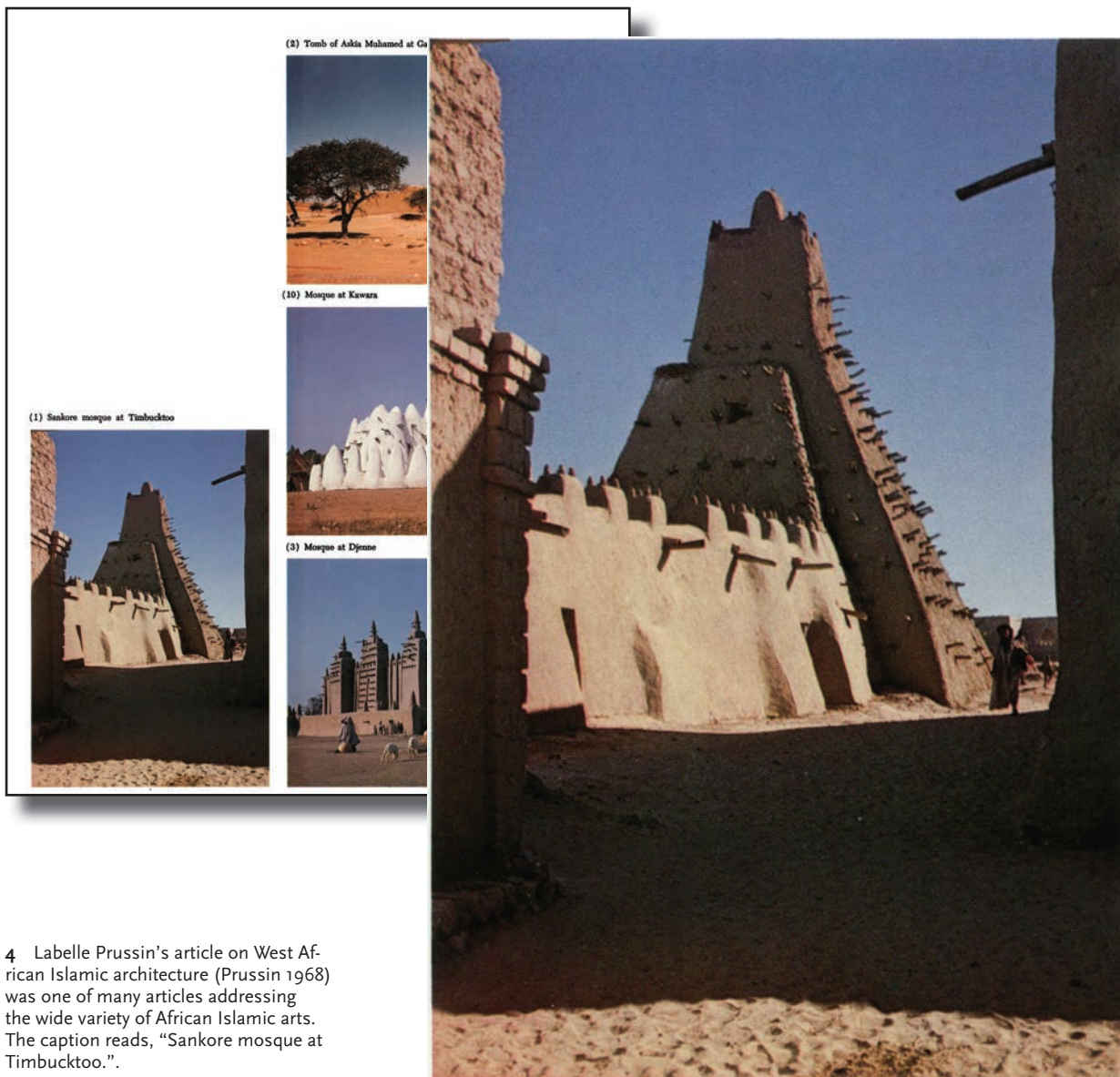
El-Salahi's first color portfolio appeared in the same issue of *African Arts*, following exhibition of his paintings at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1965 (Fig. 3). As he explained, "through the abstracted rhythmic shapes of calligraphy," he was

led to visualize the presence of objects, the human figure, and a whole world of imagery." He further asserted that "Islamic scholars say there is nothing at all to restrict you from reproducing the human image as you want. In a way it's a kind of prayer too, because you are appreciating God's creations and trying to think about them and meditate on His creativity" (el-Salahi 1967:21, 26).

In so doing, el-Salahi averred that he discovered himself through his work.⁸

That a Muslim contemporary artist from the Sudan should be featured so prominently in the first issue of *African Arts* is significant in its recognition of complexities of African life that are still very much with us fifty years later, including the fact that while Islam has been a religion of Africa since the days of the Prophet nearly fourteen hundred years ago, some assume that it is a faith foreign to the continent.⁹ Countering any such sense, a wide variety of arts of Islam in Africa have been written about in the journal, including a signal introduction to the architecture of Islam in West Africa by Labelle Prussin (1968; Fig. 4), a discussion of Muslim masquerade in western Burkina Faso by René Bravmann (1977), and an engaging photo essay on "Sufi Sheikhs, Sheikhas, and Saints of the Sudan" by Frédérique Cifuentes (2008). Christianity is as African as Islam, of course, and as one would expect, Christian arts of Africa have also received extensive attention in *African Arts*; witness recent pieces on early visual and performance arts of Kongo kingdoms by Cécile Fromont (2011) and Geoffroy Heimlich (2016), and on the creativity and





4 Labelle Prussin's article on West African Islamic architecture (Prussin 1968) was one of many articles addressing the wide variety of African Islamic arts. The caption reads, "Sankore mosque at Timbuktoo."

to be recognized, as in an exhibition at the Tate Modern in 2013. Indeed, he is the first African artist to be accorded a retrospective at that hallowed institution, as celebrated in *African Arts* by another visionary African Modernist, the Ghanaian painter Atta Kwami (2014).¹¹

Theater found a place in the first issues as well, with an illuminating piece by Jean Decock (1967) discussing two plays by the great Martinican writer Aimé Césaire, *La Tragédie du Roi Christophe* about the king of Haiti, and *Saison au Congo* concerning the assassination of Patrice Lubumba. In an article two issues later, Decock (1968) discussed staged productions of what was then called the National Folk Troupe of Mali, suggesting that such spectacles blur distinctions between ritual and theater. In so doing, he foreshadowed many thoughtful contributions to *African Arts*, such as Polly Richards's "Masques Dogons in a Changing World" (2005; Fig. 6), as well as conversations of the early 1980s between Victor Turner, as a scholar of African ritual, and Richard Schechner, as a director of avant-garde theater, that would lead to foundation of Performance Studies as a discipline.¹²

Such progressive approaches to contemporary writing have long been balanced by writers' consideration of oral narrative as

a more "traditional" mode of expression, as exemplified by an early article by Elie Ekogamve (1969) on the praise poems of Fang people of Cameroon, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea (then still the Spanish colony of Rio Muni). A brief piece by Daniel Ben-Amos (1967) recounts collective presentation of tales that "are both history and art" in the Nigerian Kingdom of Benin, stressing the significance of women's participation in such storytelling. Later contributions have explored other aspects of African folklore, such as Donald Cosentino's 1980 study of a particular storyteller in Sierra Leone named Lele Gbomba, whose style he termed "Mende Baroque." In this same piece, Cosentino brought attention to humor, both as enjoyed by Gbomba's audiences and by readers of *African Arts* through Cosentino's rollicking writing. His "Mende Ribaldry" of 1982 signaled a no-holds-barred approach to profoundly grounded yet startling presentation of lived realities that would carry Cosentino—and his many fans—through presentations of Haitian Vodou (e.g., Cosentino 1988) that remain gripping, insightful and, often enough, hilarious.

While both theater and oral narratives have received enduring if intermittent attention in *African Arts*, music, dance, and related performance arts, also discussed in first issues, have

5 The entrepreneurial activities of Ethiopian Christian artists were discussed in an article by Neal Sobania and Raymond Silverman (2009). The caption reads, "Hailemariam Zerue explaining the qualities of an icon he considers particularly fine. 2001."



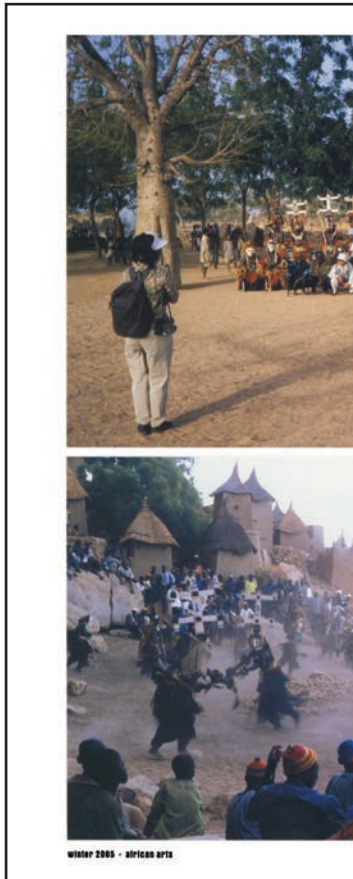
received increasing coverage, as witnessed by a recent piece by Robert Bellinger on "The Géwël Tradition Project" (2013), about praise-singing in Senegal and adjacent countries. Such expressive scenes were set by Lois Anderson's survey of "the African xylophone," with specific attention to Uganda and adjacent eastern Africa. One can assume that the article has been useful to undergraduate teaching, given the engaging ethnographic details Anderson provided about an instrument and its music that may seem well known yet differ so remarkably from place to place—as when wooden keys were affixed to resonating banana trunks and played by as many as six musicians at the Buganda royal court, producing compelling rhythms conveyed over great distances (1967:47). It is worth underscoring that teaching was an explicit purpose of the founding of *African Arts* in the 1960s, given the dearth of attention to African humanities in college textbooks then as now.¹³

The pedagogical potential of *African Arts* is further illustrated by an exceptional piece in the second issue by David Ames (1968) comparing musicians and musical practices among Igbo and Hausa peoples of Nigeria. During Ames's fieldwork, the small cluster of rural Igbo hamlets known as Obimo reflected precepts and everyday activities of subsistence farming in an "egalitarian," "individualistic" society. Music accompanied many different circumstances, from sacred rituals to leisure-time recreation, but while expertise was appreciated, there were no professional musicians. In contrast, Hausa society was strictly stratified, and musicians and a number of other professionals were not well regarded by elites, even though their praise-singing was widely

sought. Ames was well ahead of his time in his nuanced study matching a keen eye for cultural dynamism with broader societal comparison. Breakthrough work of this sort has made *African Arts* a platform for development of fields like Ethnomusicology, still in its infancy in the late 1960s when the journal first appeared.¹⁴

Also of note in the Ames article are the brilliant color illustrations that have remained a hallmark of *African Arts* throughout its half century of publication.¹⁵ One dramatically composed photograph (Fig. 7) shows two heralds playing meters-long trumpets before the ornate façade of the Emir of Zaria's palace, one blowing "a traditional trumpet made of brass, the other an instrument made of kerosene tins" (Ames 1968:40). This tiny detail, so easily passed over, nonetheless suggests that updated expressive practices have been studied by hundreds of the journal's contributing authors over all these years (e.g., Seriff 1996). Brass creatively replaced by recycled tin is incorporated into Ames's presentation as though such updating of material culture is to be expected and celebrated rather than decried, as Eurocentric romanticists might in pursuit of an "Arcadian Africa," following Dennis Deurden's (1967) reasoning mentioned above.

Dance and related performance idioms were understood to be of fundamental importance to any presentation of African arts, whether in "traditional" or "contemporary" circumstances. In the journal's third issue, for instance, anthropologist Hilda Kuper evocatively discussed movement practices in Swaziland, southern Africa. Every year at the summer solstice, Incwala celebrates kingship as associated with "fertility, authority, and order in the universe." As "the Bull, the Lion, the Inexplicable, the Great



winter 2005 - african arts

49



6 Polly Richards (2005) is one of many authors to address the blurring of distinctions between ritual and theater in African art. The caption reads, "Mask dance requested by tourists in Sangha, (Dogon region), 1996. Photo: P. Richards."

7 David Ames's 1969 article on musicians and musical practices among Igbo and Hausa peoples included the kind of dramatic color photography that has become a hallmark of the journal. The caption reads, "Two of the Emir's trumpet players (*masu Kakari*) in front of the Emir's palace in the old city of Zaria. One is playing the *kakari*, a traditional trumpet made of brass, the other an instrument made of kerosene tins."



Emir's palace politer
In the background, th
Two of the Emir's tr
Emir's palace in the
traditional trumpet m
▼ kerosene tins.
Housewife in purdah
▼ made of a gour



THE M

Bien que les soc
situées au Nigéria
tes que possible.
La société Igbo
trouve des classes
biens et des titres
apparentes. Par
Haoussa possède
le rang d'un indivi
férentiation affect
sociétés vis à vis de



The dance is the central feature of the lives of the performers.



of dance in a production of Wole Soyinka's play, *The Lion and the Jewel*, Arts Theatre of the University of Ibadan. Photograph by Francis Speed.

... of transition in the arts from an ethnic to a more theatrical situation is evident in Nigeria at different times and in various ways. The use of traditional dance as a motif for the dancers to perform in their context and performance is usually one of necessity and changes in form dictated by the circumstances surrounding the meeting. In all but the most remote areas of Nigeria there is a transference of dances which have evolved as part of an ethnic culture to situations in which they are performed as entertainment for a foreign audience. In this context "foreign" implies people of a different culture and not necessarily of a different country. Dancers trained in a traditional setting are placed in a context stripped of their familiar setting and specific audience. The dances necessarily change radically and rapidly to meet the demands of the new situation.

Continued on p. 76

8 The journal's first issue included an article by Peggy Harper (1967) that referenced staged performances for urbane, multicultural audiences. The caption reads, "Dramatic use of dance in a production of Wole Soyinka's play, *The Lion and the Jewel*, staged in the Arts Theatre of the University of Ibadan. Photograph by Francis Speed."

Mountain," the Swazi king "performs an inspired solo" dance to empower the moment (Kuper 1968:58).¹⁶ As significant as such artistry may be to social harmony, however, Kuper suggested that "body movement ... is a particularly suggestive symbol for evoking mixed reactions," for "dance is an approved public declaration of a specific identity," and indeed, "the dance is made by the person, but the person is in turn made by the dance" (1968:57). The political and reflexive implications of Kuper's thoughts foreshadow elements of dance theories of our own days (e.g., Lepecki 2016).

"Dance in a changing society" was a topic engaged by Peggy Harper in the journal's first issue, with primary reference to her own work as a choreographer then directing the School of Dance in the Drama Department at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. As yet another *African Arts* author ahead of her time, Harper began with a discussion of dance criticism and how "the audience-performer relationship" differs "in ethnic and theatrical dance situations," with this latter referring to staged performances for urbane, multicultural audiences before which works by Wole

Soyinka and other local playwrights were performed by professional actors and dancers (Fig. 8). In a related vein, Judith and William Hanna explained how performances at the Expo '67 World's Fair in Montreal by "Heart Beat of Uganda," a national troupe of dancers and musicians, were meant to "enhance ... national pride and unity" by "trying to forge a 'traditionalized' national identity" presented to a global audience (1968:42). The tensions of continuity and change were performed as well, as they are by various African national ballets in our own days (see Kringelbach 2008). Finally, Harper's approach to "dance in a changing society" is echoed in the self-conscious performances of South African choreographer Gregory Maqoma (2011; Fig. 9), or the activism of the Congolese choreographer Faustin Linyekula with whom Maqoma sometimes collaborates, as Linyekula and his colleagues seek to direct young people toward dance rather than violence in the war-torn city of Kisangani (Dupray 2013).

Needless to say, many more expressive themes featured in *African Arts* over the decades might be mentioned, such as

1 Gregory Maqoma performing *Beautiful Us*.
PHOTO: JOHN HOGG



many cultures that differed in traditions, norms, and values, and at the same time that I was made to feel like an outcast, some of the youth, like a group called the Mapantshus, who intentionally went against the "traditional" structures, still managed to gain the respect and acceptance of the communities.

In high school we faced the same problem of having to fight for space and for our identity. It was not only space but also dealing with the names that were given to us, like the "Michael Jackson plastics" or "punks." We were seen as unruly and this perception created much confusion, since I thought that we were the most humble and the most vulnerable, and yet we were subjected to various forms of humiliation and discriminated against. We started missing school, since it wasn't the best place for us, and anyway education was destroyed by school riots taking their toll in the townships. We had to learn with the South African Defense Force

surrounding our school and even present in our classrooms, with their guns pointing in our direction. How on earth do you even dare to watch or listen to a teacher while you are imagining a gun being fired in your direction, even by mistake? Our teachers had the difficult task of teaching only according to the textbook; anything else called for trouble. The students took great advantage of the situation, and they just caused chaos. If the soldiers gave chase to a student, that called for school "out." Great! It was a chance for my group and me to miss school without feeling any guilt for playing truant. We were not wasteful when it came to time; we directed our energies into something meaningful: dancing. We called ourselves "Joy Dancers." *Vuyani*, which happens to be my ethnic name, means "joy." My present company is called *Vuyani Dance Theatre*, a project-based dance company that performs my works in Africa and the rest of the world.

WINTER 2011 *afRICan arts* | 67

women's arts, which were implicit in early contributions that mentioned women's roles in artistic production but did not focus upon them as a topic unto itself (e.g., Davis 1974), and then received more direct attention as culturally specific feminist approaches became developed and applied (Kasfir 1998). Body arts (e.g., Klemm 2009), ceramics (Berns 1989), textiles and dress (Daly, Eicher, and Erekosima 1986; Fig. 10), and contemporary fashion (Loughran 2003) have also been covered extensively. But what about film (Vieyra 1968), graffiti (Marschall 2008), cartooning and comics (Repetti 2007), colonial postcards (Prochaska 1991), and even philately (Posnansky 2004)? Consideration of these and a host of other topics still leaves *Loxodonta africana* in the room: What about sculpture? We may respond and close this conversation with another question: Has there been an issue of *African Arts* over the last half century that has not celebrated such wonderful works?

9 African dance performance has been further illuminated in articles by choreographers such as Gregory Maqoma (2011). The caption reads, "Gregory Maqoma performing *Beautiful Us*. Photo: John Hogg."

10 Articles on African textiles and dress have filled an increasing place in the journal, as in this article on Kalabari dress by Catherine Daly, Joanne B. Eicher, and Tonye V. Erekosima (1986). The caption reads, "Three Women Dressed as *Iria Bos* seated with a women's society."



Notes

1 From a statement by the poet-nationalist Léopold Sédar Senghor, then President of the Republic of Senegal, welcoming inauguration of *African Arts* (1967:6). The piece was published in French, and a full English translation is offered to readers for the first time by Brian Quinn in the present issue of the journal.

2 For a most stimulating discussion of “making” that is apposite for reflecting upon African artistic production, see Stewart 2011.

3 The obvious should be stated: Two hundred issues of *African Arts* have been published over the last fifty years, offering well over 2500 articles and other scholarly features to readers around the world; see Herbert Cole’s 2007 review of the first forty years. By no means do the themes and authors mentioned in the present piece represent the totality or the “best” of all accomplishments of and writers for the journal.

4 Pertinent retorts abound; see, for example, Duerden 1967, Lamp 1996, and Sobania and Silverman 2009; yet unfortunate terms like “primitive” and “crude” (*brut* in French) continue to be used in some circles. It may be noted that although *African Arts* was called a “magazine” in its early years, I refer to it in the present article as a “journal” because of its consistent contributions to scholarship.

5 Memmi (1968) published a second provocative piece in *African Arts* three issues later that was dedicated to Senghor and that contrasted the latter savant’s sense of Négritude with Memmi’s own of what he termed Judéité. The piece was illustrated by a Janus mask of Ekoi people of Nigeria from the UCLA Wellcome Collection (now at the Fowler Museum), and one may note that in translating the title as “The Negro and the Jew,” the editors misconstrued the author’s dualistic ontological intentions. If I may be permitted the conceit of a personal anecdote regarding Memmi’s principal oeuvre, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* was among works in the book locker I was provided as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Republic of Chad (1968–1970), and reading it in tandem with its locker-mate, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* by Octave Mannoni (1956), set the intellectual course of my career in African Studies. As a further conceit, I dedicate the present paper to Polly and her parents, Nancy and Robert Nooter, for whom African arts have been a life-long joy.

6 Attention to less familiar places and artistic media is exemplified by Doran Ross’s 1993 piece on Carnival masquerades of Guinea-Bissau, or Prita Meier’s of 2009 on display tactics along the Swahili Coast. Attention to Lusophone Africa is manifest in Marie-Louise Bastin’s several contributions on Angolan arts, such as her piece on ritual masks of Chokwe peoples in 1984, as respectfully updated by Manuel Jordán in 2000. Initiatives of the sort are ongoing, as the arts of many African communities have yet to be presented in the pages of *African Arts*, whereas all are welcome topics.

7 For more recent consideration of relationships between verbal and visual arts, see Palmeirim 2008 on Aruwund/Lunda people of southwestern DRC and northeastern Angola.

8 In the “First Word” of the first issue of *African Arts*, it is explained that “the el-Salahi portfolio first took form ... when one of the editors met el-Salahi in Khartoum; this chance encounter was an important stimulus to our efforts to found this magazine” (Anon. 1967). See Steven Nelson’s discussion of contemporary arts in *African Arts* in the present issue. It may be noted that in the fifty years since el-Salahi shared these thoughts, Wahhabi conservatism has precluded depiction of humans by Sudanese artists remaining in their native land, despite the reality that el-Salahi expressed so clearly, that the Qu’ran does not prohibit any such practice; see Naef 2004.

9 In 613 CE (sometimes understood as 615), the Prophet sent a small group of followers and members

of his family into exile from their persecution in Mecca, in what is known as the First Flight or Hijrah (Hegira) of Islam. They were obeyed and protected by the Christian king of Abyssinia, Negus Ashama of Axum. Such histories are to be found on many online sites, e.g. <http://mercyprophet.org/mul/node/1023>.

10 The careers of these same artists have been traced in the pages of *African Arts*, as in a review of *Oshun*, a record by Twins Seven Seven who was a talented musician as well as painter (Witmer 1982), and a moving tribute to the same artist offered by Henry Glassie (2012). Skunder Boghossian’s work is contextualized by Rebecca Nagy (2007) in a preview of the “Continuity and Change: Three Generations of Ethiopian Artists” exhibition organized by the University of Florida’s Harn Museum.

11 El-Salahi’s more recent work is discussed by Sarah Adams (2006), and the book *Ibrahim El-Salahi: A Visionary Modernist*, edited by Salah Hassan and written to accompany an exhibition of the same title that was organized by the Museum for African Art in New York that then traveled to the Tate in London, is reviewed by W. Ian Bourland (2012). On Atta Kwami’s modernist achievements, see Kristen Windermuller-Luna’s 2016 review of the artist’s monograph *Kumasi Realism, 1951–2007: An African Modernism* (Kwami 2013).

12 See, for example, Turner’s *From Ritual to Theater* (2001) and Schechner and Turner’s *Between Theater and Anthropology* (1985).

13 As an example of the editors’ educational intent, the anonymous author of the “First Word” to the first issue of *African Arts* explained that “a colorful and varied offering” would be presented to readers through offset printing of color photographs, and choice of a heavy paper stock would “insure better production of illustrations and ... preclude deterioration in tropic climes” in hopes that the magazine would be widely distributed to African readers via African university libraries. Furthermore, a thousand extra sets of color pages would also be created for use by schools in the United States (1967:58).

14 Ethnomusicology has nineteenth-century roots but is generally considered to have become an academic discipline in 1960 when Dr. Mantle Hood created the Institute of Ethnomusicology at UCLA as the first degree-granting university program in the United States (see <https://www.ethnomusic.ucla.edu/history-of-ethnomusicology-at-ucla>). Ames was trained as an anthropologist, and his comparative consideration of “musical behavior” rather than the particularities of musical composition and style appears to differ from some directions of Ethnomusicology; see, for example, Bruno Nettl’s criticism of the Ames article (1983:63), in which analogy is nonetheless drawn to the similar approach of Alan Lomax, who remains an avatar of the discipline.

15 Herbert Cole (2007:1) reported that “19,565 photographs (including objects in advertisements)” were published during the first forty years of *African Arts*.

16 Incwala is still understood as “Swaziland’s most important cultural event ... that has lasted for hundreds of years”; see <http://www.thekingdomofswaziland.com/pages/content/index.asp?PageID=55>.

References cited

Abiodun, Rowland. 1994. “Understanding Yoruba Art and Aesthetics: The Concept of *Ase*.” *African Arts* 27 (3):68–78, 102–103.

Adams, Sarah. 2006. “In My Garment There Is Nothing but God: Recent Work by Ibrahim El Salah.” *African Arts* 39 (2):26–35, 86.

Ames, David. 1968. “Professionals and Amateurs:

The Musicians of Zaria and Obimo.” *African Arts* 1 (2):40–45, 80, 82–84.

Anderson, Lois. 1967. “The African Xylophone.” *African Arts* 1 (1):46–49, 66, 68–69.

Anonymous. 1967. “First Word.” *African Arts* 1 (1):1, 58–59.

Awoonor-Williams, George. 1967. “Night of My Blood.” *African Arts* 1 (1):50–51.

Bastin, Marie-Louise. 1984. “Ritual Masks of the Chokwe.” *African Arts* 17 (4):40–45, 92–93, 95–96.

Bellingier, Robert. 2013. “The Gwèl Tradition Project: Supporting a Living Tradition.” *African Arts* 46 (1):62–71.

Ben-Amos, Daniel. 1967. “Story Telling in Benin.” *African Arts* 1 (1):54–59.

Berns, Marla C. 1989. “Ceramic Arts in Africa.” *African Arts* 22 (2):32–37, 101–102.

Bourland, W. Ian. 2012. “*Ibrahim El-Salahi: A Visionary Modernist*, ed. Salah M. Hassan” [book review]. *African Arts* 47 (1):94–95.

Bravmann, René. 1977. “Gyinna-Gyinna: Making the Djinn Manifest?” *African Arts* 10 (3):46–87.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2007. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. New ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Originally published 2000.

Cifuentes, Frédérique. 2008. “Sufi Sheikhs, Sheikhas, and Saints of the Sudan.” *African Arts* 41 (2):50–59.

Cole, Herbert M. 2007. “First Word: Forty Years of African Art.” *African Arts* 40 (1):1, 4–5.

_____. 1969. “Art as a Verb in Iboland.” *African Arts* 3 (1):34–41, 88.

Cosentino, Donald. 1988. “Divine Horsepower.” *African Arts* 21 (3):39–43.

_____. 1982. “Mende Ribaldry.” *African Arts* 15 (2):64–67, 88.

_____. 1980. “Lele Gbomba and the Style of Mende Baroque.” *African Arts* 13 (3):54–55, 75–78, 92.

Daly, M. Catherine, Joanne B. Eicher, and Tonye V. Erekosima. 1986. “Male and Female Artistry in Kalabari Dress.” *African Arts* 19 (3):48–51, 83.

Davis, Marian. 1974. “Akwete Cloth and Its Motifs.” *African Arts* 7 (3):22–25.

Decock, Jean. 1967. “Faut-il jouer Césaire? Réflexions sur le sens du Tragique au spectacle de deux pièces d’Aimé Césaire.” *African Arts* 1 (1):36–39, 72–73, 75.

Decock, Jean. 1968. “Pré-théâtre et rituel.” *African Arts* 1 (3):31–37.

Duerden, Dennis. 1967. “Letter from London: The London Exhibition of Contemporary African Art/1967.” *African Arts* 1 (1):27–29, 67.

Dupray, Virginie. 2013. “Kisangani: A Chronicle of Return.” *African Arts* 46 (1):30–35.

Ekogamve, Elie. 1969. “La littérature orale des Fang / The Oral Literature of the Fang.” *African Arts* 2 (4):14–19, 77–78.

el-Salahi, Ibrahim. 1967. “Portfolio: Paintings and Drawings.” *African Arts* 1 (1):16–26, 70–71, 74.

Farah, Nuruddin. 1972. “Of Silence, of Noise.” *African Arts* 6 (1):14–15, 57–58.

Fromont, Cécile. 2011. “Dance, Image, Myth, and Conversion in the Kingdom of the Kongo, 1500–1800.” *African Arts* 44 (4):52–63.

- Gallup, Dorothea. 1968. "Le thème de la violence dans le roman algérien d'expression française, 1950–1962." *African Arts* 1 (2):26–31, 75–77.
- Gérard, Albert. 1968. "The Literature of Cape Verde." *African Arts* 1 (2):62–64.
- Glassie, Henry. 2012. "Prince Twins Seven Seven: 1944–2011." *African Arts* 45 (1):8–11.
- Hanna, Judith Lynne, and William John Hanna. 1968. "Heart Beat of Uganda." *African Arts* 1 (3):42–45, 85.
- Harper, Peggy. 1967. "Dance in Changing Society." *African Arts* 1 (1):10–13, 76–77, 79–80.
- Heimlich, Geoffroy. 2016. "The Kongo Cross Across Centuries." *African Arts* 49 (3):22–31.
- Jordán, Manuel. 2000. "Revisiting Pwo." *African Arts* 33 (4):16–25, 92–93.
- Kane, Mohamadou. 1968. "Recherche et critique." *African Arts* 1 (4):37–39, 103–104.
- Kasfir, Sidney L. 2005. "Narrating Trauma as Modernity: Kenyan Artists and the American Embassy Bombing." *African Arts* 38 (3):66–77, 96.
- _____. 1998. "Elephant Women, Furious and Majestic: Women's Masquerades in Africa and the Diaspora." *African Arts* 31 (2):18–27, 92.
- Klemm, Peri. 2009. "Oromo Fashion: Three Contemporary Body Art Practices Among Afraan Qallo Women." *African Arts* 42 (1):54–63.
- Kringelbach, Hélène Neveu. 2008. "Choreographies of African Identities, Négritude, Dance, and the National Ballet of Senegal by Francesca Castaldi" [book review]. *African Arts* 41 (2):94–95.
- Kuper, Hilda. 1968. "Celebration of Growth and Kingship: Incwala in Swaziland." *African Arts* 1 (3):56–59, 90.
- Kwami, Atta. 2014. "Ibrahim El-Salahi: A Visionary Modernist," Tate Modern, London, July 3–September 22, 2013" [exhibition review]. *African Arts* 47 (3):82–84.
- _____. 2013. *Kumasi Realism, 1951–2007: An African Modernism*. London: C. Hurst.
- Lamp, Frederick. 1996. "Art of the Baga: A Drama of Cultural Revolution." *African Arts* 29 (4):20–33.
- Lepecki, André. 2016. *Singularities: Dance in the Age of Performance*. New York: Routledge.
- Loughran, Kristyne. 2003. "Jewelry, Fashion, and Identity: The Tuareg Example." *African Arts* 36 (1):52–65, 93.
- Mannoni, Octave. 1956. *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonialization*. New York: Praeger.
- Maqoma, Gregory. 2011. "Identity, Diversity, and Modernity in an Urban Cultural Cocktail." *African Arts* 44 (4):66–71.
- Marschall, Sabine. 2008. "Transforming Symbolic Identity: Wall Art and the South African City." *African Arts* 41 (2):12–23.
- Meier, Prita. 2009. "Objects on the Edge: Swahili Coast Logics of Display." *African Arts* 42 (4):8–23.
- Memmi, Albert. 1991. *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. Expanded edition with an introduction by Jean-Paul Sartre and an afterword by Susan Gibson Miller. Boston: Beacon. Originally published 1965.
- _____. 1968. "The Negro and the Jew/Négritude et Judéité." *African Arts* 1 (4):26–29, 96–101, 122–123.
- _____. 1967. "On dit la mer, on dit le soleil." *African Arts* 1 (1):14–15.
- Miller, Kim, and Shannen Hill. 2005. "First Word: Special Issue on Trauma and Representation in Africa." *African Arts* 38 (3):1, 4.
- Mirzoeff, Nicholas. 2005. "Invisible Again: Rwanda and Representation After Genocide." *African Arts* 38 (3):36–39, 86–91, 96.
- Munonye, John. 1967. "The Bird." *African Arts* 1 (1):40–44, 65–66.
- Naef, Silva. 2004. *Y-a-t'il une "question de l'image" en Islam?* Paris: Téraèdre.
- Nagy, Rebecca. 2007. "Exhibition Preview: 'Continuity and Change: Three Generations of Ethiopian Artists.'" *African Arts* 40 (2):70–85.
- Nettl, Bruno. 1983. *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Twenty-Nine Issues and Concepts*. Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press.
- Palmeirim, Manuela. 2008. "Masks, Myths, Novels, and Symbolic Ambiguity: Dialogues Between Verbal and Visual Arts." *African Arts* 41 (3):74–77.
- Posnansky, Merrick. 2004. "Propaganda for the Millions: Images from Africa." *African Arts* 37 (2):53–57, 94.
- Prochaska, David. 1991. "Fantasia of the Photothèque: French Postcard Views of Colonial Senegal." *African Arts* 24 (4):40–47, 98.
- Prussin, Labelle. 1968. "The Architecture of Islam in West Africa." *African Arts* 1 (2):32–74.
- Repetti, Massimo. 2007. "African Wave: Specificity and Cosmopolitanism in African Comics." *African Arts* 40 (2):16–35.
- Richards, Polly. 2005. "Masques Dogons in a Changing World." *African Arts* 38 (4):46–53, 93.
- Ross, Doran. 1993. "Carnaval Masquerades in Guinea-Bissau." *African Arts* 26 (3):64–71, 88.
- Schechner, Richard, and Victor Turner. 1985. *Between Theater and Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Senghor, Léopold Sédar. 1967. "Standards critiques de l'art africain." *African Arts* 1 (1):6–9, 52.
- Seriff, Suzanne. 1996. "Recycled, Re-Seen: Folk Art from the Global Scrap Heap." *African Arts* 29 (4):42–55, 93–94.
- Sobania, Neal, and Raymond Silverman. 2009. "Icons of Devotion / Icons of Trade: Creativity and Entrepreneurship in Contemporary 'Traditional' Ethiopian Painting." *African Arts* 42 (1):26–37.
- Stewart, Susan. 2011. *The Poet's Freedom: A Notebook on Making*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Thompson, Robert Farris. 1973. "An Aesthetics of the Cool." *African Arts* 7 (1):40–43, 64–67, 89–91.
- Turner, Victor. 2001. *From Ritual to Theater: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: PAJ Publications.
- Vieyra, Paulin Soumanou. 1968. "Le film africain d'expression française." *African Arts* 1 (3):60–69.
- Windmuller-Luna, Kristen. 2016. "Kumasi Realism, 1951–2007: An African Modernism by Atta Kwami" [book review]. *African Arts* 49 (1):92–93.
- Witmer, Robert. 1982. "Records: *Oshun* by Twins Seven Seven, *Agbadza* by the Ano-Afiadenyigba Agbadza Group, and *Safari to Sierra Leone* by The Golden Kings." *African Arts* 15 (4):76–78.