



MEG

Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Press Release

5 March 2018

Africa exhibited at the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève from 18 May 2018.

At the MEG, the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève, every exhibition holds the promise of a journey. From 18 May this year, we stop off in Africa, to discover the religious cultures of the continent where humankind was born.

The exhibition «Africa. The Ecstatic Religions» reveals the wealth of religious practices in Africa. Throughout the visit, the public is plunged into an atmosphere of mysticism and discovers the fervour of believers.

More than 400 previously unexhibited pieces, from the MEG's collections, are enriched by fascinating images from five contemporary photographers of international repute. A series of short film documents presents the point of view of the followers themselves. Video installations by an Ethiopian artist punctuate the visit, displaying the notion of sacredness in African indigenous religions.

The exhibition's main theme is religious ecstasy, intense communion with divine forces. This is a state in which people find themselves carried away, as if transported out of their own being and the real world.

In «Africa. The Ecstatic Religions», religion is defined as a set of rituals connecting the living to each other, in the face of invisible powers: one god, multiple deities, spirits of ancestors or of the natural world.

Visiting the exhibition, we discover the monotheistic religions (Islam, Christianity and Judaism), indigenous African religions, possession cults and magico-religious universes. Here Africa is not seen as a geographical space but as a cultural one. For these religious practices can be found in regions as far afield as the Americas or Europe, where they have been spread by the diaspora.

Throughout the exhibition's duration, the MEG invites its public to a host of activities related to «Africa. The Ecstatic Religions»: shows, lectures, films, workshops, guided or offbeat tours. There are also many activities for families and schoolchildren.

Africa. The Ecstatic Religions
From 18 May 2018 to 6 January 2019

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A Few Objects from the Exhibition

«Africa. The Ecstatic Religions»



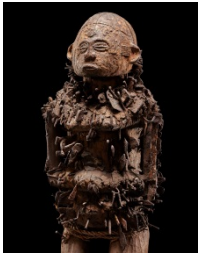
1. *Bwete* reliquary figure

Gabon, Upper Oggoue region
 Kota cultural area, Obamba or Mindumu subgroups. 19th century
 Wood, copper, brass. H 57 cm
 Gift of Dr Georges Graz in 1929
 MEG Inv. ETHAF 011925
 Photo: © MEG, J. Watts



2. Mask

Liberia, coastal region
 Wobe. Late 19th, early 20th century
 Wood, skin, iron, cotton. H 33 cm
 Acquired in 1935 at Edmond Morlet's in Brussels
 MEG Inv. ETHAF 014816
 Photo: © MEG, J. Watts



3. *Nkisi nkondi* anthropomorphic sculpture

Congo, Mouyondzi region?
 Kongo, Dondo, Bwende. 19th century
 Wood, iron, fibres. H 72 cm
 Acquired in Brussels in 1930, probably at Guillaume Dehondt's
 MEG Inv. ETHAF 021318
 Photo: © MEG, J. Watts



4. *Guro gyela lu zahouli (fiali)* or Baule *ndoma* mask

Ivory Coast
 Guro or Baule. 20th century
 Wood. H 50.5 cm
 Acquired from the German ethnologist Hans Himmelheber in 1967; collected by him in 1963
 MEG Inv. ETHAF 033697
 Photo: © MEG, J. Watts



5. Icon of the Archangel Michael

BälačäwYəmār (BelatchewYemer) (1869 or 1894-1957). Ethiopia, Addis Ababa
 Circa 1920. Parchment, pigments. H 74 cm w 54 cm
 Gift of René Évalet in 1947
 MEG Inv. ETHAF 021049
 Photo: © MEG, J. Watts



6. Star-shaped talismanic manuscript, composed of Quranic formulae

West Africa
 19th or early 20th century
 Paper, ink. L 21 cm w 16.7 cm
 Gift of the painter and collector Émile Chambon in 1981
 MEG Inv. ETHAF 042950
 Photo: © MEG, J. Watts



7. Statuette of a Catholic nun

Congo or DR Congo. Early 20th century
 Wood. H 13.4 cm
 Acquired in Paris in 1930
 MEG Inv. ETHAF 012950
 Photo: © MEG, J. Watts



8. *Nkisi nkondi* anthropomorphic figure

DR Congo, Mayombe region
 Kongo, Yombe. 19th century
 Wood, glass, iron, pigments, cotton. H 37 cm
 Acquired in Brussels circa 1930
 MEG Inv. ETHAF 021315
 Photo: © MEG, J. Watts

Left-hand and right-hand side sceptres:

***Makpo* sceptres evoking King Ghezo**

Benin, Zou Province, Abomey
 Fon. Late 19th or 20th century
 Wood, brass. L 49.5 cm; 60.5 cm
 Gifts of the painter Émile Chambon in 1981
 MEG Inv. ETHAF 011842 and 044510



Centre sceptre

Sceptre ou dance stick of the *vodun* Hevioso

Benin, Zou Province, Abomey
 Fon. Late 19th or 20th century
 Wood, brass. L 60.5 cm
 Gift of the painter Émile Chambon in 1981
 MEG Inv. ETHAF 044511



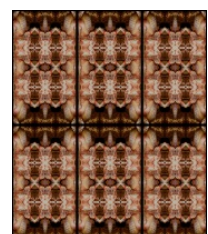
10. The Africans' Jesus Christ

Boris Wastiau (1970-)
 Zambia, North-Western Province
 Luvale. 11 August 1997
 Archives MEG : s.n.



11. Trip to Mount Zuqualla

Theo Eshetu (1958 -)
 Ethiopia, Oromia, Misraq Shewa
 Video installation, screenshot
 2005
 © Axis Gallery



12. The Festival of Sacrifice

Theo Eshetu (1958 -)
 Kenya, Lamu Island
 Video installation, screenshot
 2012
 © Axis Gallery



13. Veiled Woman on a Beachfront

Theo Eshetu (1958 -)
Kenya, Lamu Island
Video installation, screenshot
2011
© Axis Gallery



14. Untitled

Okerenkoko, Gbaramatu Kingdom
Christian Lutz (1973 -)
Nigeria, Niger Delta
May 2010
© Lutz / MAPS



15. Holy 1

From the *Vues de l'esprit* series
Fabrice Monteiro (1972 -)
2014 (2017)
Edition 5/5
Hahnemühle Etching Paper 350 gr.
167 x 125 cm
MEG Inv. ETHPH 421483



16. Holy 2

From the *Vues de l'esprit* series
Fabrice Monteiro (1972 -)
2014 (2017)
Edition 5/5
Hahnemühle Etching Paper 350 gr.
167 x 125 cm
MEG Inv. ETHPH 421484

**The images are available in high definition on:
www.ville-ge.ch/meg/presse.php**



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

MEG

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Open from Tuesdays to Sundays, from 11am to 6pm

Closed Mondays, 25 December and 1 January

Public transport access by bus 1, 2, 19 and 35 or tram 12, 15 and 18

Permanent exhibition: free admission

Temporary exhibition: 9/6 CHF

Free admission for under 18s as well as on the 1st Sunday of the month

An audioguide is available at the Museum's reception desk

Further information:

Totem, the MEG's magazine, is published three times a year

To receive the newsletter, **InfoMEG**, register on www.meg-geneve.ch

Follow us on:  Facebook,  Instagram and our  channel YouTube



**2017 Winner of the
European Museum of
the Year Award**

The **MEG (Musée d'ethnographie de Genève)** is a public institution, founded in 1901, whose first director was the Genevan anthropologist Eugène Pittard (1867-1962). The Museum's mission is to conserve objects illustrating the culture of peoples throughout the history of the world. It houses a collection of more than 70,000 objects and its library contains more than 50,000 documents on the cultures of the world. The Museum possesses a unique collection of musical recordings, the Archives internationales de musique populaire (AIMP), containing more than 16,000 hours of music including the collection gathered by Constantin Brăiloiu between 1944 and 1958. With more than 3,000 hours of historic recordings, this constitutes the core of the collection. Admission to the permanent collection, which presents more than a thousand objects from the five continents, is free. Along with its permanent collection and temporary collections, the MEG offers a programme of cultural and scientific mediation, concerts, film and lecture cycles as well as shows. Since October 2014, the MEG's treasures have been shown to advantage in a new building designed by the Zurich firm Graber Pulver Architekten AG on the site it has occupied since 1941.