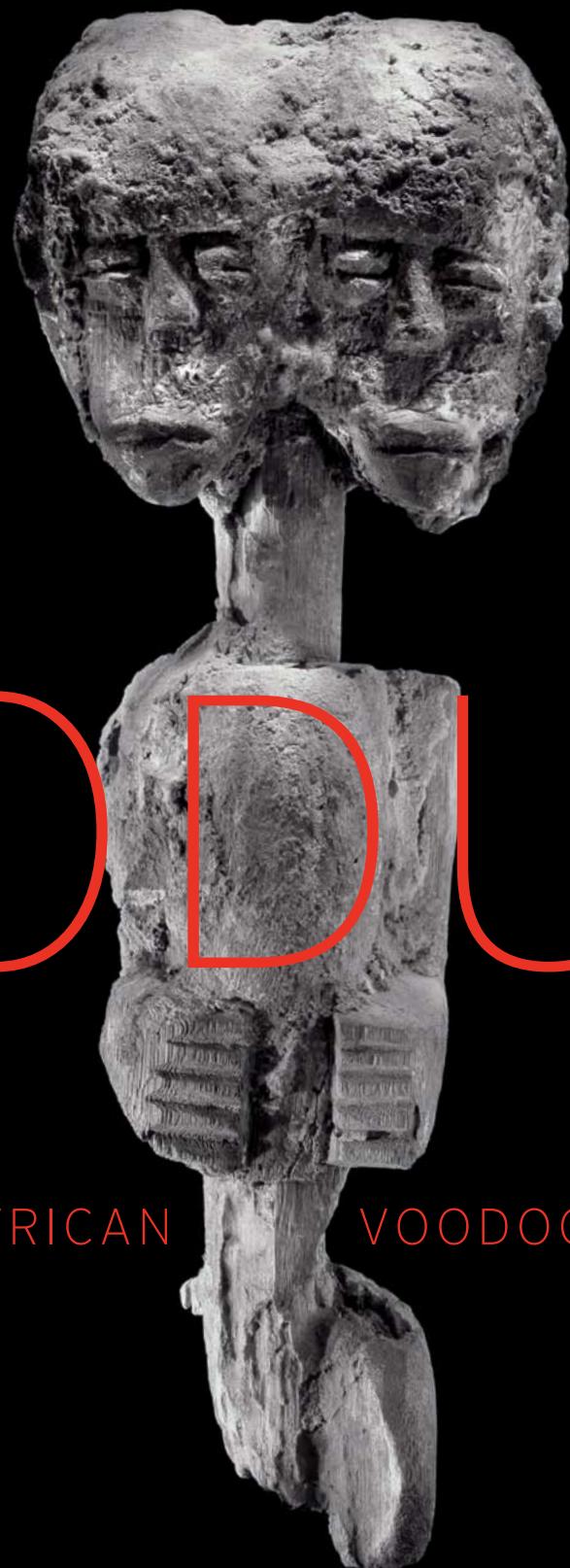


April 5 › Sept. 25, 2011



VODUN

AFRICAN VOODOO

Fondation *Cartier*
pour l'art contemporain



The Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain is pleased to present for the first time an exceptional group of Vodun sculptures from the collection Anne and Jacques Kerchache, in a scenography conceived by Enzo Mari, one of the great masters of Italian design. Bringing together nearly one hundred *bocio* and including works that now belong to other private collectors, *Vodun: African Voodoo* is the first major exhibition devoted uniquely to this West African sculptural tradition. Organized in close collaboration with Anne Kerchache (today Mrs Kamal Douaoui), the exhibition also reveals the personal notes, letters and photographs of Jacques Kerchache, that relate his travels to Africa, his research on Vodun, and his projects for presenting the Primitive Arts in French museums. The presentation of archive film footage of the expeditions of Jacques Kerchache situates Vodun within its context, providing the visitor with a deeper understanding of an art that reflects the timeless and universal concerns of humanity.

VODUN: AN ANCIENT RELIGIOUS CULT

Few subjects carry as much mystique and misunderstanding in the West as Vodun. Vodun is an ancient religious cult and philosophical tradition originating from the “Slave coast” of West Africa and still active today in the region, as it is practiced by populations from the coasts of Togo to Western Nigeria. Through the slave trade of the 17th and 18th centuries, this religious cult was brought to the Caribbean as well as North and South America where it mixed with Catholicism as well as other religious traditions. Vodun cosmology centers around the Vodun spirits and other elements of divine essence that govern the Earth in a hierarchy that range in power from the major deities that control the forces of nature and human society to the spirits of individual streams, trees and rocks. The followers of Vodun believe there is a link between the visible worlds of the living and the invisible worlds of the spirits. These worlds are allowed to communicate through sacrifice, prayer, possession and divination. The term has carried various spellings in the West throughout history—*vodu*, *vodou*, *voudou*, *voodoo*, *voju*—but first appeared in print in 1658 in the *Doctrina christiana*, a work by the ambassador of the King of Allada to the court of Philip IV of Spain. It has been translated by scholars in many ways over time. Some have linked the term to the Ewe word *vo* meaning “hole” or “opening,” which can be related to that which is hidden or secret, and *du* a term for Fa divinitation “signs” or “messengers.” This suggests the meaning of *Vodun* could be “messenger of the invisible.” More recently, Harvard scholar Suzanne Preston Blier has suggested that its origins lie in the phrase “rest to draw the water,” from the Fon verbs *vo* (“to rest”) and *dun* (“to draw water”), referencing the necessity to remain calm when facing whatever difficulties may lie in one’s path.

THE ART OF VODUN: *BOCIO* SCULPTURE

Greetings to the one who has just unraveled the enigma of the interwindings. Every time a knot is undone, a God is released.¹

Bocio sculptures are believed to function in conjunction with the energies of Vodun deities as mediators between the visible and the spiritual world. Assemblages of composite materials such as twine, bones,

shells, and locks, covered with a thick layer of matter that may include clay, palm oil and sacrificial materials, these strange and uncanny sculptures emanate qualities of tension and foreboding. Indeed these works, with their accumulation of diverse materials, are used for aggressive and protective ends to effect various changes in life. They seem to have a force that is both visual and metaphysical, as indicated by their name in Fon *bocio*, which means “empowered (*bo*) cadaver (*cio*).” Placed inside in houses and temples or outside in villages, fields or at crossroads, their functions are as complex and varied as the problems individuals face. Some are intended to protect crops, others to encourage fertility, still others to keep one’s family secure from sorcery. An alchemical object, the *bocio* is made of specific empowering materials or medicines that are applied to the surface or included within a sculpted wooden figure, the symbolic cadaver of the owner. Following consultation with the commissioner of a *bocio*, a diviner determines the components of which it will be made as well as its means of manufacture. Their complex mix of additive elements convey the deepest rawest features of human thought and emotion such as jealousy, fear, pain, despair, distrust, love. For example, the binding of twine around a statuette can be associated with feelings of anger and imprisonment, the piercing of a statue with wooden pegs with the desire to get to the root of a problem, and the inclusion of cowrie shells with longing or desire. The ingredients involved in the making of a *bocio* are so secret and their significance so varied that only a chosen few are aware of their exact contents and purpose.

JACQUES KERCHACHE: AN ART EXPERT AND TRAILBLAZER

We looked on the map for places where there were no roads and that is where we went.²

A trailblazer and self-taught connoisseur, Jacques Kerchache (1942-2001) was known for his exacting eye and profound knowledge of the Primitive Arts. His numerous trips to Africa and later to Central and South America, made him one of the foremost experts on African Art as well as the Art of the Americas. As early as the mid-sixties, Jacques Kerchache began a series of expeditions on the African continent in search of rare and remarkable works of art as well as the great

artists behind them. It was at this time, during his first trips to the birthplace of Vodun currently known as the Republic of Benin, that he discovered the aesthetic potency and stunning originality of Vodun statuary and began to bring together what has become one of the most significant existing collections of African Vodun sculpture. Frequently called upon to serve as an advisor or curator, Jacques Kerchache strongly encouraged French museums to move beyond what was a primarily ethnographic approach to the Primitive Arts in order to consider them for their universal aesthetic value. It was under his initiative that the Pavillon des Sessions—devoted to the arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas—was created at the Louvre in 2000 as well as the Quai Branly Museum which opened after his death in 2006. The same open-minded, avant-garde spirit also led Jacques Kerchache to work with the Fondation Cartier on many occasions, contributing as an advisor to the thematic exhibitions *À visage découvert* (1992) and *être nature* (1998) and as an author for the exhibition catalog of the contemporary Haitian artist Patrick Vilaine, *Réflexion sur la mort* (1997).

THE VODUN EXHIBITION

Following these collaborations, Jacques Kerchache and the Fondation Cartier began planning an exhibition devoted to African Vodun statuary, but this project was postponed following his passing. To commemorate the tenth anniversary of his death, the Fondation Cartier has realized the exhibition project that was his dream. Organized with Mrs. Kamal Douaoui (who was the wife of Jacques Kerchache until his death in 2001), the exhibition unveils to the general public the fascinating and mysterious collection of Vodun objects.

The exhibition design realized by Enzo Mari allows these mysterious and impenetrable pieces to speak for themselves in a presentation based on simplicity, sobriety and elegance.

1. Amadou Hampâté Bâ.

2. Jean-Pierre Lang. Excerpt from “Le Secret intérieur,” interview with Jean-Pierre Lang, in *Jacques Kerchache. Portraits croisés*, Gallimard, Paris / musée du quai Branly, Paris, 2003.

THE JOURNEY OF AN EXHIBITION: AN INTERVIEW WITH ENZO MARI

The Fondation Cartier has invited Enzo Mari, known for his thoughtful rationalism and restraint, to create the exhibition design.

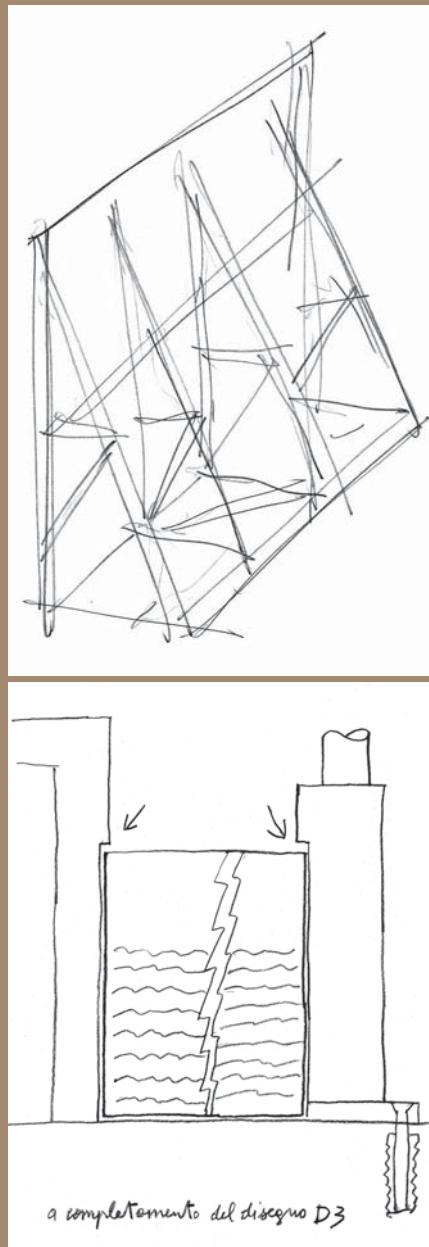
Grazia Quaroni: *The first time we discussed this project, it became apparent that the subject of Vodun was not one completely new to you.*

Enzo Mari: No, that's true. I had the opportunity to come in contact with Vodun during a trip. Toward the end of the 1990s, I went to Brazil, to the Bahia region, and visited an extremely poor village with African roots. There, I took part in a festival with singing and dancing, in honor of a large tree. And while witnessing initiation rites, I saw scenes of ecstasy and fainting. A rooster was sacrificed. The members of the community lived in small, very modest and simply constructed houses. They told me about their arrival from Africa. Precisely the same region that Jacques Kerchache had visited. I even had the opportunity to speak with a 100-year-old priestess. They showed me their divinities that held remedies for the hardships of life, of war... These were little, very simple objects. I was very interested in these fetishes, which for them were closer to a form of medicine than a work of art. When I got home, I read books and watched films on the subject. So, when I started working on the exhibition, Vodun was not totally foreign to me, although my experience with it was quite limited.

How did you approach the story of Jacques Kerchache? The subject of the exhibition?

As to the scenography that I was asked to do for this exhibition, I first thought about all that you had told me regarding the past exchanges between the Fondation Cartier and Jacques Kerchache. Then I discovered the hundred or so Vodun objects—mostly small in size—in the collection of Anne and Jacques Kerchache. And finally, I met with a Vodun expert at the Fondation Cartier. So that was the basis of my work. At first, I looked at these objects primarily from the point of view of an anthropologist. But Hervé Chandès, the director of the Fondation Cartier, explained to me that Jacques Kerchache had made his choices based more on aesthetic criteria.

The first time I saw the pieces that were going to be exhibited, I immediately thought of Marcel Duchamp. The objects that he chose for his readymades were first and foremost very beautiful designs. Each had, in its own way, a great aesthetic quality. This is true with *Fontaine* (Fountain) and *Porte-Bouteilles* (Bottle Rack).



For Duchamp, it was important to consider not only oil paintings and bronze sculptures as having aesthetic value but also manufactured objects. Looking at the objects of the exhibition, I sometimes found this same aesthetic quality. Particularly among the smallest, simplest objects that had been reduced to the essential. More frequently, I noticed they were less interesting as objects of formal beauty than as objects of medicine.

These statuettes, as well as their components, function as a grammar. The rope, a recurring attribute, affects the part of the body it's wrapped around. Remember, each of these objects has a curative, restorative function. It's a kind of grammar. That's how I see it. I wanted to tell the story of each object, but they have come to us without stories, without dates. Each object is invested with a special power related to the different materials used by the Vodun priest when he made it, as well as by the addition of palm oil and medicinal herbs. It seemed to me that it was possible to tell all of this, in one way or another, directly through the exhibition design.

What was the concept behind the exhibition design? What was your approach to the different spaces of the Fondation Cartier?

I imagined I was Jacques Kerchache arriving for the first time in Benin, with some idea of the subject, but no direct experience. I don't know anyone, I can't yet enter any home. So the first things I see are the largest objects, those standing in front of the houses. I wanted the experience to be the same for visitors here. Then I meet someone from the village, listen to stories, visit homes and discover other objects. Similarly, visitors to the exhibition will then discover the more secret objects: those kept in the house. This defined the second stage of the journey of Jacques Kerchache, of the development of his knowledge, and thus, also defines the second stage of the visit. In the main room on the ground floor, the sculptures are placed at their post like guardians keeping the evil spirits from entering the house. There weren't many statues of this kind to exhibit and they were all very similar. I would have loved to show the houses, but the idea wasn't to create a film set. Just to exhibit the objects. That was the only choice.

Thus, the homes are stylized, reduced to the simple form of a house, the idea of a house without any particular connotation, and identifiable as such by Africans, Europeans, everyone. And the sculptures are placed in front quite simply because that's how they are in reality. It's a scene constructed with basic forms.

The second stage of my journey is a room on the lower level with 48 columns. This is the most important room, where the visitor enters into the mystery found within the houses. In most homes, there are only a few examples of these medicinal objects. Only in the home of the Vodun priest, where the components needed to create these objects are kept, is there the sense of the divine. Similarly, upon discovering this room, the visitor enters into the heart of the mystery. While the use of the objects is unknown, we do know that they are remedies to improve life. I thought it would be interesting to place all the small objects at eye level to avoid an accumulative effect. And I chose to isolate each object as if it were a Greek or Roman *testina*.

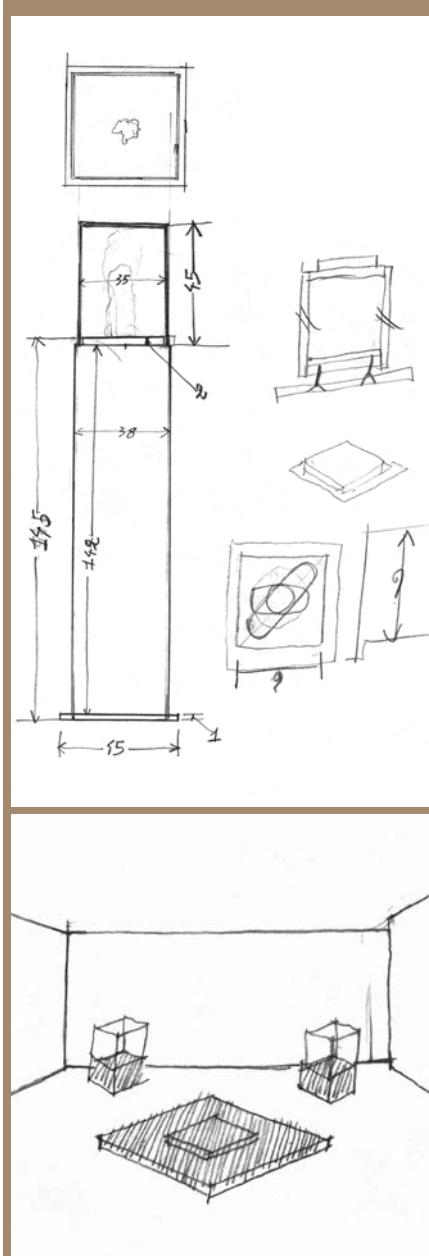
How does the journey continue?

Then come dreams, delirium, death and its allegory. In the small room on the lower level the *Chariot of Death* emerges from the dark waters of a basin, just as Jacques Kerchache had imagined the presentation of this work. Perhaps it was his way of playing with art. And this is how the journey of the exhibition ends. It ends with death.

The Jacques Kerchache archive room, located on the ground floor, is separate. It's not part of the journey. It was not designed to be an integral part of the journey, but merely to make available to the public a different kind of document. These are not works, but rather information about the works.

In this room, there are various documents, materials that Jacques Kerchache brought back from his travels. Photographs, films, books, handwritten letters, objects, catalogs. The public can look at them, consult them, use them for research. Tables and chairs are known elements of your work, such as in your 1974 Proposta per un'autoprogettazione. This was, in your own words, a "project for making furniture that the user could assemble simply from raw planks of wood and nails. A basic technique through which anyone with a critical mind could address the production of an object." The showcases, designed for the exhibition, partake of the same vocabulary. In fact, in these four spaces, one finds four very distinct atmospheres but which together, compose a strong, unified project.

The exhibition design is, of course, a set. I superimposed myself onto the journey of Jacques Kerchache, the collector, the man. After first encountering the venues, the exteriors of the houses, the lower level spaces are then defined by the exhibited works. The condition of man, the desire to escape death is inscribed on the



48 columns. This is the idea I wanted to convey. That slowly, by getting closer and closer to these objects, Kerchache's passion for them and his desire to collect them was born. Then comes death. Death has its own, very specific appearance. Through the progression of the exhibition design, I reconstructed the journey of the man, the collector, Jacques Kerchache.

You have always worked by subtraction. "Per forza di levare," as Michelangelo said. How would you apply this principle in this case?

I played down and resolved the compromises. Subtraction was an absolute requirement for me, less so for some others involved. That's why, regardless of the circumstances, there are always compromises to make. To clarify my desire to subtract, let me refer to History. The history of all that's expressive—music, the arts... I have found that all intellectual efforts are never anything other than desperate processes involving subtraction. It has always been this way. There are no formulas, it's a mysterious process. It can only be done in fragments. Under the weight of scientific observation, you try to connect all the fragments. That's what we strive for. Every project is a puzzle. Always. The principle of subtraction is not unique to my poetics, it has been there throughout the history of creativity.

Every project is a journey, with a beginning and an end. This principle is clear in literature, but it must also have the same importance, the same clarity, in an exhibition. I abhor exhibitions where the visitor meanders by chance. An exhibition must have its journey. I strove to create the design of this exhibition in this light, with the limits it imposed on me.

Interview by Grazia Quaroni, March 2011.

FIGURES 1 AND 2

Placed on top of stakes that are to be driven into the ground, these statuettes are double: in one case, four legs and two separate bodies; in the other, two bodies on each side of a central rod, their two heads joined together at the nape of the neck. Neck bindings are supposed to cause aphasia in the adversary; chest bindings attack the breath of life, those around the lower abdomen attack sexual potency and leg bindings lead to paralysis. Slave irons are represented twice on the second statuette. Slavery was widely practiced in this region until the second half of the 19th century. These vodun are very powerful "medications" that ensure the death of the enemy if the bindings are not broken.

FIGURE 3

These statuettes with a stake-leg planted in the ground are typical of variable and multiple-use objects. The pegs are attached together and are inserted into the figure's body near the ears, in the chest and in the pelvis. The statuettes are covered with sacrificial blood and are used to induce all kinds of disorders in the adversary: speechlessness, suffocation, stomachaches, sterility. The jaw tied to the body signifies the desire to hush up an unwanted witness. When the pegs are removed, the enemy recovers the ability to speak or no longer suffers. The little sticks were later replaced by locks. For this sort of operation to have any effect, of course, the adversary had to be aware of it.

FIGURE 4

This little figure is standing up, with its head slightly tilted forward, a hunched back, no arms and one leg that is deliberately shorter than the other. Its body is bound up in tightly wrapped fibers tied around the hasp of a lock that sticks out in front of the body. It is an imported European lock that can be opened or closed. Its position accentuates the sense of instability that is purposely sought: the threat is not about an imminent fall; rather the idea is that instability will seize the mind of the enemy who is likely to be overcome by some sort of madness. When viewed from the side, the hasp plays the role of an arm, and the lock, which is the same color as the brown patinaed body, acts as a counterweight. The hunched back seems to result from the pull of the weight of the lock. The face is well depicted and the piece as a whole exhibits an extremely fine quality of expression.

FIGURE 5

This little figure has its feet positioned on top of a stake to which a metal spike has been added so that the statue can be planted in the ground without coming into contact with it. The hands hanging at its sides, the prognathic chin and globular eyes deeply embedded in hollow sockets are all suggestive of a skull. It is covered with a granular crust from the blood and oils of the sacrifices. The jaw of a rodent is tied to its back with thick cords. The two holes in its abdomen mark the places where pegs that have since disappeared could be freely put in or taken out. Speech was thus returned to the enemy.

FIGURE 6

This little bronze monkey is a type of reliquary. In a small round box on the front of its body, the presence of mica can be glimpsed; the two little hanging cords once held the keys (one of which is now missing) to the locks. With its two hands it is holding an unidentifiable object in its mouth. The locks—which are linked to the acts of sorcery—are covered by a thick patina, while the bronze on its head, which is often rubbed, remains shiny and the chiseled lines perfectly visible. A necklace containing six strands of beads adorns its neck. The two locks are carefully tied together with a series of thin strings. Although the body has disappeared under the sacrificial coating, the little tail continues to rise out of its back where it is formally framed by the locks. There is a lot of elegance in the little details: the two tiny balls for the eyes, the long oblique planes of the face, the two pierced ears. The object's use and function has not obscured the fine quality of the sculpture or its carefully designed exterior. For our own visual pleasure, let us compare this sculpture to Picasso's work, *Monkey and Her Baby*, bronze, 1952.

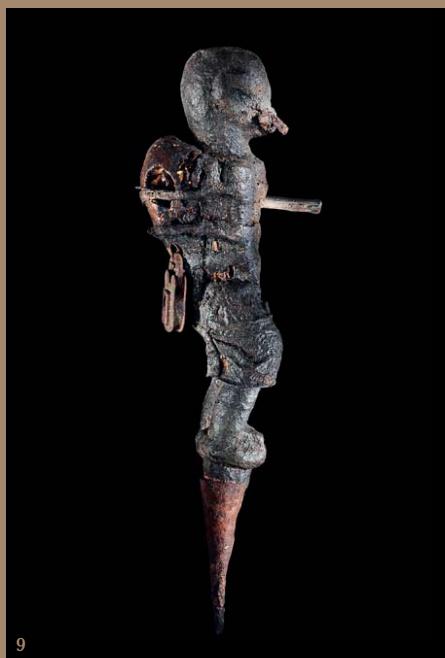
FIGURE 7

Double heads are an important characteristic; they are aimed at individuals and their doubles who may return after death. The Fon had a secret society of ghosts: some of the deceased would come back and, with masked faces, dance among the living on specific dates. Obtaining full satisfaction against an enemy meant dealing not only with the physical person, but also with his or her potential double (*yé*) in order to make sure that it would not come back to haunt the seeker.

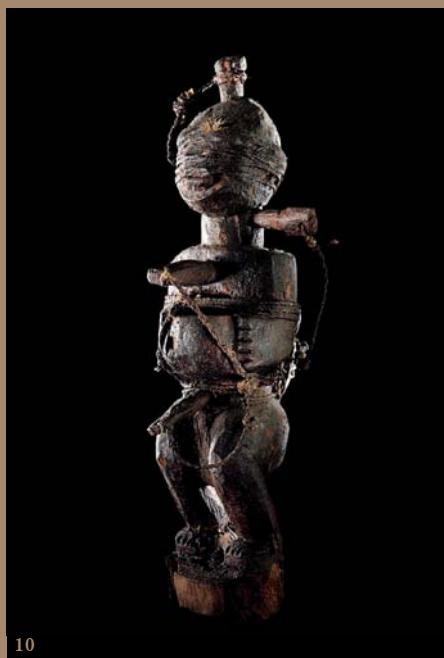




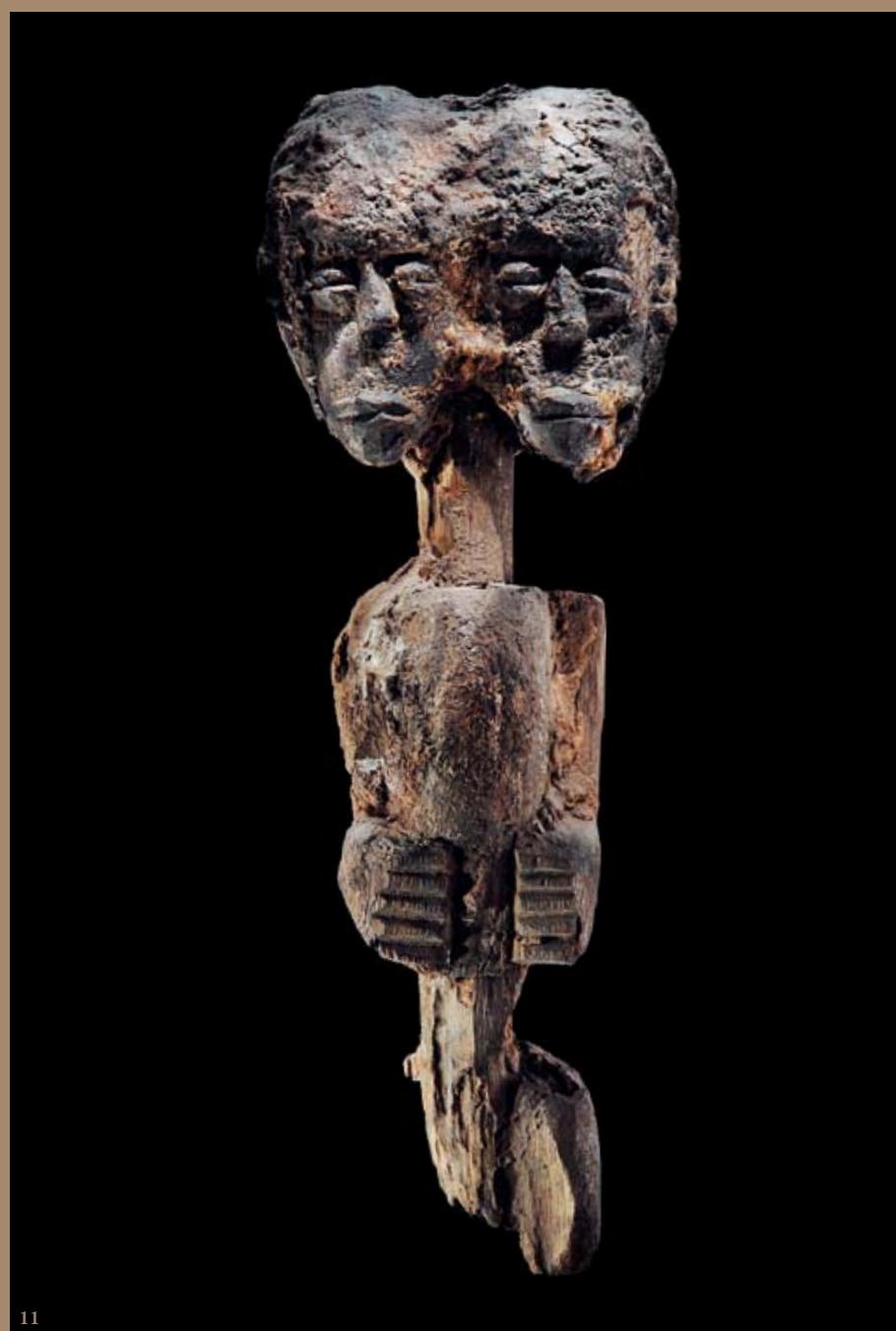
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9



10



11



12

FIGURE 8

This female (?) figure is carrying two children on her breast and one on her back. It is probably associated with maternity and female fertility even though an iron nail is embedded in the place of the penis. This piece was undoubtedly associated with several functions: protecting children or pregnant women, doing harm to threatening individuals. The small terracotta pot once contained medicines recommended by the fetisher who was consulted and responsible for making them after the Fa divination session. Objects of this kind are personal and belong to the fetisher; depending on their effectiveness, they may be used several times and for different purposes. The cowries and the kola nuts are related to Fa divination. The duck's bill, however, "ties up" speech because ducks are discreet, according to tradition, they do not emit "loud shrieks like roosters." On the other hand, their blood is poisonous, which protects them from birds of prey and fish.

FIGURES 9 AND 10

These statuettes were used to cause aphasia or death. In the first statuette, we can see that a slave iron has been used to seal its lips, while the second one is blindfolded. The wooden peg embedded in its chest—the place of breathing, or in other words, of life—brought death, as did the jaw tied onto its back and closed twice over with cords and a lock. Opening it up was all that was needed to release the patient from the spell. The face has almost disappeared under the sacrificial coatings, which proves that this object worked successfully for a very long time.

FIGURE 11

This statue was used to protect a temple or "convent" reserved for initiates. With its legs cut off halfway down, it was perched on a pile of skulls and jaws and covered in sacrificial matter; it did not, however, seem to have the same role as the statuettes seen previously that were used for acts of sorcery. It lacks the usual ingredients (cords, locks, pegs, etc.) and is thus closer to the *bocio* that protect villages or places, although this statue is not meant to be seen by the entire community. The thickness of its sacrificial coating suggests that it "worked" for a certain amount of time, but as soon as it stopped being cared for, it began to deteriorate around the thighs where it came into contact with the ground. Its double head is face on as if opened up in the middle, which is relatively rare: only ten or so pieces are known to have this feature. Though it is different from the other Janus figures joined at the nape of the neck, it is still directly related to the notion of doubleness that is so important in the Vodun religion. Even greater care was taken with the sculpture itself: the two heads have a beautiful oval shape; the face displays certain traits that are common to other pieces from the same region, for example the thick-lidded eyes, the short, straight nose, the prognathic mouth with parted lips, the pointed chin. The eyes, lips and fingers marked by horizontal lines create a sculptural caesura in the statue's overall verticality. In formal terms, the position of the two hands in the middle of the body reflects the double face. Although this object has been removed from its original context, it still inspires awe; it seems to allude to the power of a religion about which we know very little and from which it would be preferable to keep away.

FIGURE 12

[This *bocio*] is severely damaged; it is missing a part of its head, but the skill of the artist can be seen in its facial features. He chose a tree and then preserved its irregularities: the hole in the middle, for example, could be a navel. He shaped it so that the absent arms seem to be wrapped in a garment that holds them against the body. Below the slightly rounded belly, the trunk was pared down in order to create the lower limbs. The back bulges out below a very short neck and forms a small hump. The face, whose features have been softened by the wearing of the wood, expresses great emotion with its slightly pointed chin, its mouth displaying a faint pout on its thick, closed lips, the short triangular nose without nostrils, and its eye, a circle in relief. Its face was once painted white—a few traces remain on its body—but the cracks in the wood also play a decisive role in this interaction between man and nature that engenders a work of art.

Annotations by Jacques Kerchache first published in *Sculptura Africana. Omaggio a André Malraux*, Villa Medicis, Rome/De Luca, Rome/Arnoldo Mondadori, Milan, 1986, p. 116-301 (excerpts).

Akloga

Royal minister, keeper of the guardian vodun and organizer of the great religious ceremonies.

-
Asen

A small parasol in wrought iron representing the ancestors.

-
Chest bindings

Their purpose is to interfere with breathing.

-
Duck's bill

Ensures silence. The blood of the duck is poisonous and thus protects from danger.

-
Eagle's claw
Gives strength.

-
Fa

Represents destiny. Associated with divination practices. Fa is a sort of guide for the kingdom (in religious as well as political, social and cultural matters).

-
Fetish

Any formal representation of a spirit or the power of a god. It is sacred and used in divination rituals. The ornaments or elements that cover it are supposed to reactivate the object's power and effectiveness.

-
Fetisher
Healer.

-
Gu
God of war and blacksmiths.

Hevioso (Shango, in Yoruba)

God of thunder.

-
Irons on the feet

A sign of slavery.

-
Jaw tied to the back and closed with cords and a lock

Its purpose is to cause death.
Opening the lock undoes the spell.

-
Jaw tied to the body

Its purpose is to hush up an unwanted witness.

-
Legba

A god who serves as an intermediary between the earthly world and the supernatural world.

He also protects houses.

-
Leg bindings

Their purpose is to cause paralysis.

-
Locks

They contain the poisons used in casting a spell on the enemy.

-
Lower-abdomen bindings

Their purpose is to attack sexual potency.

-
Mawu

Supreme deity.

-
Neck bindings

Their purpose is to cause aphasia.

-
Off-balanced body

Its purpose is to cause the enemy to be overcome by madness.

-
Peg in the throat

Its purpose is to control speech.

Peg on top of the head

Its purpose is to cause mental instability in the adversary.

-
Placebo effect

A supernatural power that enables the diviner's words to act, to "take effect."

-
Sacrificial coating

The longer the object has "worked," the thicker it is.

-
Sagbata

God of smallpox.

-
Serpent of Ouidah

The god of a conquered tribe assimilated into the Dahomean religion

-
Sorcerer

Diviner who also uses poisons.

-
Statuette in the form of a stake

Its purpose is to induce various disorders (aphasia, suffocation, stomach aches or sterility).

-
Wooden peg embedded in the chest

Its purpose is to cause death.

-
Yè (two-headed figure)

A representation of the spectral double, a person's ghost.





BOCIO GENRE

BOUND OR BONDAGE BOCIO (BLA-BOCIO)

The most common and prototypical of the *bocio* genre, are *bla-bocio* whose surfaces have been bound tightly with cord, cloth, fur, chains, vines or other wrapping materials. The tying and knotting of cords or other materials around a *bocio* serve to activate its power and bind other potent additive matter to the work.

The materials chosen to bind a sculpture vary; the most frequently employed are cotton thread, twisted feathers or plant parts, and strips of animal hide. The placement of the bondage—usually on the stomach, chest, arms or head—affects the meaning of the sculpture, since each body part is considered as the seat of different emotional concerns.

Bondage is associated with a range of emotionally charged ideas, the most powerful of which is death. The Fon bind their corpses before burial and the cord used in such contexts is called *adoblakan* (“cord to bind the stomach”). Used *adoblakan* cord is for this reason frequently tied around the waists of sculptures of this genre, especially for works intended to overcome problems related to death. Bondage is also closely associated with slavery, the term for slave in the area being *kannumon* “the one who remains in cords.” Works of this genre are thus also respond to problems such as imprisonment, impotence and personal pain.

While often related to negative ideas, cords are also identified with positive values such as life. For example, pregnant women will often wear special cords around their hips as a protection against miscarriage. The cords so prominently displayed in *bocio* sculptures can thus also be said to allude to similar ideas of security, life, and family continuity.

PIERCED OR PEGGED BOCIO (KPODOHONME-BOCIO)

Kpodohonme bocio are characterized by the holes in their surface into which pegs, pins, or other objects are inserted. The term *kpodohonme* derives from early architectural practices in the area in which doors, gates and other means of access were closed and opened by wooden logs or long sticks. Significantly, an important subset of this genre of *bocio* includes those objects with padlocks.

To activate the *bocio*, one must pronounce an incantation in the hole of the *kpodohonme bocio*, which is then closed with a peg, thus containing a wish, desire or fear that the sculpture is supposed to promote or negate. Pegs or pins thus secure the spoken word, and have the power of activating or deactivating speech.

The precise placement of particular piercing forms within the body is essential to the sculpture's significance. A peg placed in the chest will promote a well-being, and calming of the heart, or conversely asphyxiation. A peg placed in the head may cause speechlessness, loss of memory and lack of awareness. Placed in the thighs or buttocks, pegs may lead to immobility or incapacity of movement. Secured to the arms, pegs may stop another's offensive action.

DEFORMITY BOCIO (BOCIO-BIGBLE)

The *bocio* are characterized by an excess or lack of key body parts. While some such figures show missing legs or arms, by far the most common are those incorporating two heads, faces or bodies. In some, facial features are carved on both front and back; in others two or more heads are positioned on a single pair of shoulders, in still others a single pair of legs and hips support two torsos.

Sculptures identified with this genre often are employed as guardian figures to protect the house, compound, temple or city. Janus *bocio*, named after the Roman god with two heads, play an important role in safeguarding residents from evil because associated with two-directional sight. These sculptures may derive their power from gods such as Mawu, the solar deity or Fa, the deity of geomancy, both said to have multi-eyed sight such. This type of *bocio* may also counter an act of sorcery or promote a sorcerer's own malevolent ends.

SWOLLEN OR PREGNANT BOCIO (WUTUJI-BOCIO)

Swollen or pregnancy *bocio* (*wutuji-bocio*) are characterized by the inclusion of various bulges, humps or mounds of materials that are attached to various parts of the body, usually on the stomach or back. The works of this type draw considerable power from the fact that their surfaces have dense opaque protrusions of rare, secret materials—often including plants, powders, oils, alcohol—which when activated can affect the world in significant ways.

These works clearly allude to childbearing (they are sometimes called “pregnant woman of the house”), their swollen shape recalling pregnancy or the later burden of carrying a child on the back. While associated with positive ideas such as birth and motherhood, body swellings are also identified with infections, disease, death, emotional stress or burden, and acts of sorcery.

An important reference for the previous descriptions is Suzanne Preston Blier's *African Vodun. Art, Psychology and Power*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1995.

EXCERPTS FROM THE CATALOG

A reference book on Vodun, the catalog of the exhibition *Vodun: African Voodoo* gathers contributions by specialists such as French anthropologist Marc Augé, Harvard Professor of African Art and Architecture Suzanne Preston Blier, African Historian Gabin Djimassé, and by the Haitian artist Patrick Vilaira.

"VODUN AND FON CULTURE" BY GABIN DJIMASSE

If, around the bend on a Fon path, you should suddenly come face to face with a long piece of wood planted deep in the ground, whose upper part, standing at human height, suggests a more or less subtly sculpted face, do not be afraid. It is almost certainly a *bocio*, the powerful guardian of that particular place, a sort of active and protective sentry. You are in fact in the heart of Fon culture, the culture of the former kingdom of Dahomey, which is now present-day Benin, where a religion has developed that, like any religion, responds to the preoccupations that all human beings have always had, and continue to have, in spite of the extraordinary progress of science in every domain. These preoccupations can be summed up in the following questions: Who are we? Where are we? Where do we come from? People all over the world try to provide answers to these questions based on the environments in which they live. The Fon call Vodun the original formulation of these answers, starting with the widely shared notion of a force that exists above and beyond everything, that is unknowable, and upon which everything that exists depends; we ourselves are nothing but the products of that force which is transmitted through breath. The kingdom of Dahomey turned this Vodun into an official institution by combining in an unprecedented way things that already existed, disparately and without any hierarchy, among the Ashanti of Ghana and the Yoruba of Nigeria. During the expansion of the kingdom of Dahomey from the mid-16th century to the end of the 19th century, Vodun not only became an institution, it became the second pillar of royal power in addition to the rulers' worldly power, and dignitaries and priests were placed under the direct authority of the king.

Along the way, Vodun met up with Fa. Fa is a divinatory art that came out of ancient Egypt, traveled down the Nile and ended up in the mythic city of Ife in Nigeria. This art of reading the past, present and future by deciphering the forces at play in a given situation became the codifier of Vodun. This was a direct result of its ability to adapt to any kind of human environment. Fa is based on two fundamental pillars: Boko-Legba (a man in possession of all of his biological capacities, usually represented by a phallus in erection) and Minona (a woman in possession of all of her biological capacities). These three entities, Fa, Boko-

Legba and Minona, constitute a sort of trinity of the Vodun pantheon. This short explanation of Vodun is necessary in order to understand what a *bocio* is in the context of the culture and imagination of the Fon. In Fon culture, anyone can gain access to the unknowable divine power by using the closest intermediary at hand, an intermediary through which breath is manifested. A *bocio* is one such object. *Bocio* can literally be translated from Fongbe (the Fon language) as "cadaver that possesses divine breath." *Cio* is the cadaver. *Bo* is sometimes translated as "evil spell" or "talisman." However, we understand the *bo* in *bocio* to mean "breath" or "power." A sculpture or a statuette does not at first possess life: it is thus a cadaver, *cio*. But when it is sculpted by a human being, who is at the beginning and end of any social or environmental process, it becomes the presence, the materialization of power. Through the human hands that make it and the words that are pronounced, breath enters into it. A force gives life to the cadaver. *Bocio* can thus mean "a cadaver that contains a force."

"BRUTAL ARTS – POTENT AESTHETICS OF BOCIO VODUN ARTS IN COSTAL BENIN AND TOGO" BY SUZANNE PRESTON BLIER

In psychological terms, these works speak to the challenges and fears of the world as it is experienced, a world rife with circumstances and events of the unknown. Such works address the array of emotions that impact humans regardless of status, wealth, or personal history. Referred to historically in the West by largely pejorative terms—fetish, idol, *gris-gris*, *marmouset*, *magot*, devil—*bocio* forms speak to potent fears of the unknown. These works relate to the power of belief at local level, here specifically the religion and philosophy of Vodun, and the array of forces such as gods and spirits that shape this worldview. While the term Vodun has been translated by scholars in many ways over time, my sources have suggested that its origins lie in the phrase "rest to draw the water," from the Fon verbs *vo* "to rest" and *dun* "to draw water," referencing the necessity to remain calm when facing whatever difficulties may lie in one's path.¹ According to this Vodun philosophy, life is like a pool that humans find in the world into which we are born. Patience and calm are necessary if we are to effectively draw from the pool of water that defines our lives, if we are to conduct our lives in a manner that will bring one

greatest fulfillment. Rather than simply rushing through life, it is incumbent upon one to keep one's composure and to take the time to "breathe." Following on the tradition of local women who will sit quietly by the side of the spring or river before collecting the daily water, in Vodun belief one is encouraged to take time for reflection. Like the serene, straight-standing human figure that serves as the base and center of *bocio*, encumbered often by potent additive materials, one is encouraged in these *bocio* and Vodun traditions to draw on one's inner strength and serenity as one pursues one's course in life. The ethos of Vodun thus has meaning for all of us.

Also of broader interest, are the specific aesthetic issues and the means through which these works come into being. Some artists historically have made a point of hiding the processes of their artistic engagement; others highlight the production processes involved. *Bocio* artists represent the latter group, providing these works with key attributes of raw energy and visual primacy that add to their larger significance. *Bocio* at the same time are collaborative arts, the product not only of the carver, but also of other individuals involved in their creation and the user himself. A close bond necessarily develops between the user and the variant artists and "activators" of the objects, reinforced by the acknowledged risk incurred in the very process of creating and empowering these objects. Questions of reception and audience response also are complex. Each user's relationship to a given work is different, based on his or her personal link to it and the myriad of issues involved. Some of these sculptures offer a notable sense of security and calm in the face of real or potential danger; other objects carry associations of fear, concern, and mystery—their raw aesthetic power being intended to convey potent ideas of shock and distance—ideas also underscored in the specific functions such works are seen to fulfill.

"VODUN GODS" BY MARC AUGÉ²

Today in southeastern Togo a nearly complete reproduction of the entire [Vodun] pantheon can be found in every village;³ this means that every god is present in every village, but it also means that each god can be present several times over.

This reduplication of the whole system, along with the multiplication of its individual elements, is linked to the social dimension of the pantheon: a god is inherited through agnatic transmission when its installer dies; convents are founded and perpetuated on the basis of lineage. The vicissitudes of life interpreted on certain occasions (usually unfortunate) are reorganized according to two basic criteria: family ties among men and family ties among the gods. The relationship between men and gods is thus well mediated socially through the institution of divination as well as through inheritance rules that impose a father's obligations on his son. [...] The gods, taken as a whole, constitute an ordered system capable of providing guidance amidst the apparent chaos of human lives that are so singular and so diverse. However, the individual figure of a god (not only such-and-such a god in the sky pantheon, but also the latest model of that god in the courtyard of such-and-such a lineage) acquires singularity at the expense of clarity, probably because it tends to resemble the person who looks after it. Its symbolic position does not exhaust its complexity. Just like a human body, it has moods, good and bad moments, whims, is both similar to and different from the person who considers it to be his god. Although the statue of the god allusively represents a human body, although it has to eat and drink like one, and can die like one, this metaphorical physiology does not exhaust the mystery of its materiality. Gods are things, composite objects whose formulas can be more or less faithfully reproduced or devised for each individual figure; gods are conceived of as living bodies, but they are also matter, and the stories about their births, deeds and inventions form a literally problematic reflection on the issues of matter and life.

"VODUN OBJECTS" BY PATRICK VILAIRE

How are the spirits that populate the world of Vodun represented for believers? Whenever one thinks of Vodun, one thinks of fetishes. The importance of fetishes or symbolic objects in animist religions is such that the word "fetishism" has often been used to designate animism. Fetishes are talismans. They are used for protection as well as to cast spells. They protect women in labor, enhance sexuality and protect from illness and death.

In Africa, sculpture is a symbolic writing intended for ritual use. The artist who makes a fetish has been commissioned to do so, usually by a fetisher. The artist makes the fetish accessible to the Vodun user through the things that the object expresses; there is no functional quest for beauty. Everything is pared down to the essential, dedicated to the purpose of the object, which is primarily mystical, magical. The structural details are there to support the sculpture and enhance its emotional power. Magical elements are adjoined, based on established codes. The Africans who were brought to the Americas stripped of everything that constituted their humanity could not, for many reasons, recreate their own ethnic aesthetics. The Vodun that developed thus had no statuary. It incorporated the artistic representations of divinities and other religious figures from the Christian pantheon, beginning with the pictorial and sculptural representations of the saints and major icons of Catholicism. Thus, Erzulie, in her many different forms—Freda Dahomey, Ge Rouge, etc.—embraces different representations of the Virgin Mary. Legba, who provides access to people and their private lives, is found at the entrance to villages in the Gulf of Benin in the form of clay statuettes with scarlet phalluses or of a *bocio*; they are protectors as well as scapegoats who are able to take upon themselves the malicious intentions of enemies. In Haiti, Legba became St. Peter, the former providing access to houses, villages and gods, the latter to the gates of paradise. Haitian Vodun is lacking in objects. And its priests have become its artists, so that the religious function and the aesthetic function are both embodied in the same person. Just as Neolithic objects are found in African temples, American Indian "thunder stones" (carved rocks, polished stones, pottery shards) are found on the *pe*, the Haitian Vodun altars. Bottles, *paquets*, ritual pottery are very popular, but there are no actual representations of gods, no

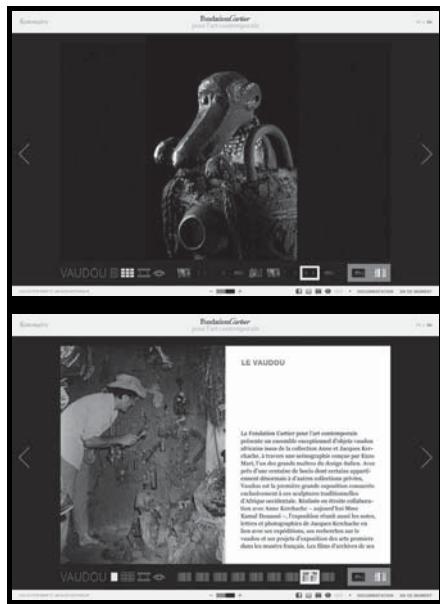
fetishes as in Africa.⁴ "Talismans" and fetishes are unknown. Among the few magical objects specific to Haitian Vodun, there are the *gardes*, small cloth bags containing roots and leaves, the medals of guardian saints (St. James or St. Michael) pinned to garments that come in contact with the skin and the *paquets*. And, of course, the *veve* that symbolize the deities of the Haitian pantheon, symbols reduced to the purity of simple lines drawn on the ground, each one evoking a spirit.

1. Suzanne Preston Blier, *African Vodun. Art, Psychology, and Power*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1995, p. 39-40.

2. First published in Marc Augé, *Le Dieu Objet* Flammarion, Paris, 1988.

3. Marc Augé, *Génie du paganisme*, Gallimard, Paris, 1982, p. 123ff.

4. The Marianne Lehmann collection recently exhibited at the Museum of Ethnography in Geneva gives the opposite impression; it was created at the demand of the collector, in the same way as anthropological rituals are often created at the demand of anthropologists.



THE VODUN WEBSITE

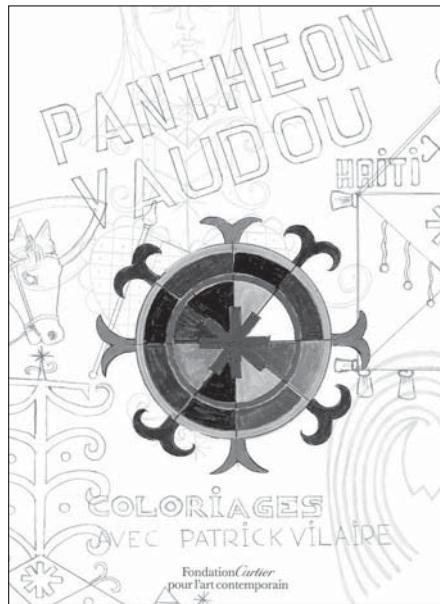
In conjunction with the *Vodun: African Voodoo* exhibition, the Fondation Cartier has launched a website devoted to the Voodoo of West Africa. Available in four languages, vaudou-vodun.com is the educational website of the exhibition and a rich and unique online resource.

With archival films of Jacques Kerchache's trips, interviews with specialists and artists, photographs of works from the collection of Anne and Jacques Kerchache, and texts from the catalog, this website offers online access to the mysterious and fascinating universe of the *Vodun: African Voodoo* exhibition.

Find us also on



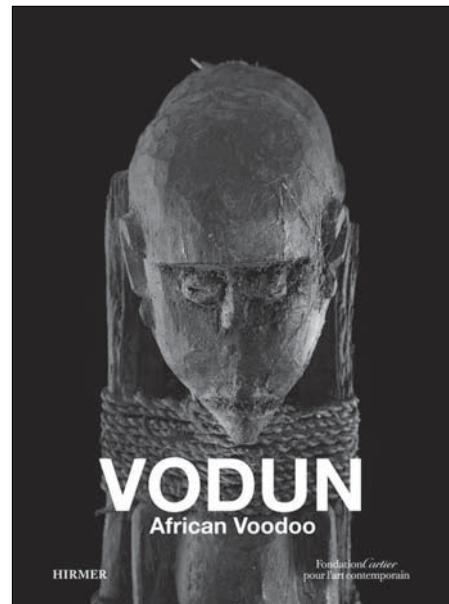
On iTunesU, download podcasts and exclusives contents to continue the visit of the exhibition.



COLORIAGES AVEC PATRICK VILAIRE

The Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain has asked Patrick Vilaire to realize a coloring book on the Haitian Voodoo pantheon. Following the publications of two similar books by Takeshi Kitano and Moebius, *Coloriages avec Patrick Vilaire* is the third in a collection of coloring books published by the Fondation Cartier.

Panthéon Vaudou.
Coloriages avec Patrick Vilaire
 Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris
 Coloring book #3
 24 pages, 24x34 cm
 Price: 6.50 €



THE VODUN CATALOG

The exhibition is accompanied by a richly illustrated catalog with more than 150 photographs taken by Japanese photographer Yuji Ono as part of a special commission. Including Jacques Kerchache's personal photographs and archives, the publication provides a first-hand account of his early travels to Benin and his research in this region. The catalog also includes Jacques Kerchache's writings on African Art and the Vodun art of Benin. Essays by Harvard Professor of African Art and Architecture, Suzanne Preston Blier, African historian Gabin Djimassé, French anthropologist Marc Augé, and Haitian artist Patrick Vilaire explore Vodun art and culture from a variety of perspectives.

Vodun: African Voodoo
 Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris
 Bilingual English/French
 Hardcover, 236 pages, 24x32 cm
 200 color and black and white reproductions
 Price: 49 €

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BIOGRAPHIES

Jacques Kerchache

Born in 1942 in Rouen, France
Died in 2001 in Cancún, Mexico

A self-taught galerist and connoisseur known for his exacting eye and profound knowledge of the Primitive Arts, Jacques Kerchache was during his life one of the most passionate and vanguard figures of the French art world. Born in 1942 in Rouen, he had precocious beginnings, opening his first gallery in 1960. From 1959 to 1980 he travelled frequently to Africa, Asia, America and Oceania, venturing in regions few other dealers dared to explore in search of exceptional works of art. It was during his first trip to Benin that he became fascinated by Vodun sculpture. This passion led him to bring together what would become one of the most significant existing collections devoted to African Vodun. Jacques Kerchache would frequently be called upon to serve as an advisor or curator, working on such groundbreaking exhibitions as the New York MoMA's *Primitivism in Twentieth Century Art* (1984), which explored the influence of Primitive art on the work of 20th century artists, or the Musée du Petit Palais' *L'Art des sculpteurs Tainos* (1994), which presented for the first time to a large public pre-Columbian art from the Caribbean islands. He is also one of the main authors of the seminal work, *Art of Africa* published in 1993 by Harry N. Abrams. Throughout his career, Jacques Kerchache strongly encouraged French museums to move beyond what was a primarily ethnographic approach to the Primitive Arts in order to consider them for their universal aesthetic value. In 1990 he launched a manifesto entitled "The masterpieces of the World are Born Free and Equal," promoting with great conviction the entry of Primitive Arts into the collections of the Louvre. It was thus under his initiative that the Pavillon des Sessions—devoted to the arts of Africa, Asia, Oceania and the Americas—was created at the Louvre in 2000. He also promoted the creation of the Quai Branly Museum, which opened its doors following his death in 2006. His wife has since donated many works of their collection to the museum. The interests of Jacques Kerchache were not limited to the arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas. His universalist approach to art and aesthetics also led him to support the work of contemporary artists as well, developing close friendships with Sam Szafran, Paul Rebeyrolle and Georg Baselitz. The same open-minded, avant-garde spirit also led Jacques Kerchache to work with the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain on many occasions, contributing as an advisor to the thematic exhibitions *A visage découvert* (1992) and *être nature* (1998) and as an author for the exhibition catalog of the contemporary Haitian artist Patrick Vilaire, *Reflexion sur la mort* (1997). Jacques Kerchache received two of France's highest decorations, the *Chevalier de l'Ordre national du Mérite* and the *Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur*.

Enzo Mari

Born in 1932 in Novara, Italy

An alumnus of the Academy of Fine Arts of Brera (Milan), Enzo Mari has, since the 1950s, pursued a multidisciplinary career that has involved art, industrial design, graphic design, technical innovation and teaching. He is also the author of important theoretical texts. He has worked on numerous projects for large Italian and foreign firms such as Danese, Olivetti, Driade, Alessi, Zanotta, as well as Muji, and has taught at some of the most prestigious universities and academies of Europe in Parma, Milan, Berlin and Vienna.

Enzo Mari has defined himself as "a technician serving society." His work is based on research regarding the question of form, its role in everyday life as well as in art. "Form is everything. It is form that enables me to decipher and understand ideological and political forces."

Aside from the creation of objects and furniture, his work as a designer has led him to examine in depth the origins of form and to take an interest in the "anonymous archetypes of manufactured products" as he calls them, such as a tube or a metal bar. It was in this light that in 1953 he created *Putrella*, a section of a slightly curved industrial beam that he considers an "allegory of design." For each commissioned object, Enzo Mari attempts to trace the history of its archetype from its origins, drawing information both from the latest examples of international design, as well as from ancient civilizations, a process that led him to define two broad categories of objects—"signed" and "anonymous." However, many of his projects, while attracting much admiration, have not met commercial success, as they have been deemed too simple, too poor. In order to provide the public with the experience of manual labor and increase their awareness of what he considered the serious issues regarding form, Enzo Mari came out with *Autoprogettazione?* (1974), a series of objects and simple, functional furniture to be made at home from detailed technical instructions.

Enzo Mari has received numerous prizes and distinctions, primarily in the field of design, including the Compasso d'Oro in 1967, 1979, 1987 and 2001. In 1997, he received the Barcelona award for design and in 2000, he was named Honorary Royal Designer for Industry in London. In 2008, the Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Turin mounted the exhibition *Enzo Mari—L'Arte del Design*. In spring 2011, the Italian publisher Mondadori will publish Enzo Mari's autobiography, *25 modi di piantare un chiodo*, edited by Barbara Casavecchia.

The above information has been extracted from the biographical notes edited by Francesca Giacomelli in the exhibition catalog *Enzo Mari—L'Arte del Design* at the Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Turin (Federico Motta Editore, Milan, 2008).

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In conjunction with the *Vodun: African Voodoo* exhibition, from April through June 2011, Nomadic Nights is pleased to present a series of events based on the theme of mystery. Enigmas, secrets and the cult of the strange will all be scrutinized.

MYSTÈRE

PROGRAMMATION AVRIL > JUIN 2011

Miracles, apparitions, paranormal activities, spells, psychic powers: inexplicable occurrences that defy reason have always lain behind a belief in the occult and mysterious or supernatural forces. Since ancient times, these phenomena have been publicly staged and exploited for either healing, ritual or ceremonial purposes, or merely as entertainment. Magic shows became quite the craze at the turn of the 20th century, and demonstrations of hypnosis as well as séances, both of which featured broadly in the literature of the time, proliferated. While the evolution of scientific knowledge has progressively diminished the place of magic in our culture, the irrational remains a subject of intrigue, as evidenced by an unending fascination with mediums and UFOs.

Works of art, across the disciplines, have explored the mysterious, using its power to frighten and amaze. Nomadic Nights takes on this theme through a series of events that unfold in a part-carnival, part-mystical atmosphere which is by turns dark, strange and dreamlike. Magic, spells, tarot, hypnosis, witchcraft, mind control and even ufology will be addressed by artists of all disciplines in shows, films, performances, as well as audiovisual and musical works.

PROGRAMMING

GHEDALIA TAZARTÈS, "HÄXAN: WITCHCRAFT THROUGH THE AGES"
BY BENJAMIN CHRISTENSEN
Thursday, April 21 at 9 p.m.
(film-concert)

DAVID GIRONDIN MOAB, ÉDITH SCOB, "BOOK OF POISONS"
BY ANTONIO GAMONEDA
Thursday, April 28 at 9 p.m.
(performance/shadow art)

**CHRISTINE REBET,
"POISON LECTURE"**
**ASTA GRÖTING,
"THE INNER VOICE / I AM BIG"**
Thursday, May 5 at 9 p.m.
(performances in English)

"ZOMBIE ZOMBIE AND ALAN HOWARTH PLAY JOHN CARPENTER"
Thursday, May 12 at 9 p.m.
(concert and video projection)

CABARET MYSTÈRE
Monday, May 16 at 9 p.m.
(show)

ARTIST'S VIDEOS ON THE THEME OF MYSTERY
Thursday, May 19 at 9 p.m.
(projections)

**PATRICK MARIO BERNARD,
"EXORCISNE"**
Thursday, May 26 at 9 p.m.
(performance)

JORIS LACOSTE, "HYPNOGRAPHIE"
Thursday, June 9 at 9 p.m.
(Illustrated conference)

**JEFF MILLS PRESENTS
"SOMETHING IN THE SKY"**
Thursday, June 16 at 10 p.m.
(concert and video projection)

LAURENT GRASSO
Thursday, June 23 at 9 p.m.
(conference)

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Information and reservation (essential) every day except Monday, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Tel. +33 (0)1 42 18 56 72
Admission: 9.50 €/reduced rate*: 6.50 €
* Students, under 25, "carte Senior" holders, unemployed, ICOM members, "Maison des Artistes."

Programming: Isabelle Gaudefroy
Artistic adviser: Françoise Lebeau
Acknowledgments: Grazia Quaroni
Production manager: Camille Chenet assisted by Daphné Panacakis

fondation.cartier.com/nomadicnights

EXCEPTIONAL EVENTS

NO AGE
Monday, April 11, at 9 p.m.
(concert)

Information and reservation (essential) every day except Monday, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Tel. +33 (0)1 42 18 56 72
Admission: 9.50 €
Reduced rate*: 6.50 €
* Students, under 25, "carte Senior" holders, unemployed, ICOM members, "Maison des Artistes."

**ARCHIE SHEPP
AND JOACHIM KÜHN, DUO**
Friday, May 13, at 9 p.m.
(concert)

Pre-selling from Wednesday April 13, on digitick.com or at the Fondation Cartier, every day except Monday, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Admission: 25 €
(retailer's commission not included)
Weather permitting, the concert will take place in the garden and 500 additional tickets will be put on sale at the Fondation Cartier on May 13.
Please check fondation.cartier.com on the day of the concert for details.

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

In conjunction with the *Vodun: African Voodoo* exhibition, the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain invites children to partake in original workshops and family visits every Wednesday and Saturday at 3 p.m.

PROGRAMMING

FAMILY VISITS

Saturday, April 23 and 30, May 7, 14, 21 and 28, June 11, 18 and 25, July 2, 9, 23 and 30, August 20 and 27, and September 10, 17 and 24

(age 7 and older, duration: 1:30)

Children and their parents go on a fun and creative visit of the exhibition with a special guide.

POP-UP MYSTERY

Wednesday, April 13 and July 13

Pop-up workshop with graphic artist

Clémence Passot

(age 8 and older, duration: 1:30)

With the help of a pair of scissors, Vodun statuettes spring up from sheets of colored paper to make pop-up cards.

clemencepassot.com

AMULET POUCHES

Wednesday, April 20, May 25 and July 27

Textile workshop with Stéphanie Brunet, children's artist

(age 7 and older, duration: 1:30)

Using African fabrics and an array of small accessories, children make small pouches for their lucky charms that can be worn either on a shoulder strap or a belt.

SECRET STATUETTE

Wednesday, April 27, June 29 and

September 21

Sculpture workshop with Elsa Maurios, costume and marionette artist

(age 8 and older, duration: 1:30)

The young sorcerers' toolbox teeming with odds and ends will be used to make individual statuettes, each holding a personal secret safeguarded by the protective magic of the group.

TALES OF VODUN

Wednesday, May 4, June 8, July 20 and September 14

Tales by Gabriel Kinsa, Kongo storyteller (age 6 and older, duration: 1:00)

A mysterious encounter with spirits in a world where the breath, gestures, eyes and voice of the Vodun gods take you on a fantastic journey.

gabrielkinsa.com

SMALL VODUN ICON

Wednesday, May 11, June 1 and 15

Painting workshop with Aurélia Fronty, illustrator

(age 8 and older, duration: 2:00)

Children create a portrait of the statuette of their choice, bestowing on it African colors using a paint-on-glass technique.

aureliafronty.com

VODUN MONTAGE

Wednesday, May 18 and June 22

Collage workshop with Éric Fourmestraux, artist and art teacher

(age 7 and older, duration: 1:30)

Children create designs by overlapping pieces of paper printed in black and white. Amulets and objects are incorporated to form a statuette on a color background.

eric.fourmestraux.free.fr

PAPER FETISH

Wednesday, July 6

Making a booklet with Clémence Passot, graphic artist

(age 7 and older, duration: 2:00)

To protect themselves from the small fears of everyday life, children create and inscribe the story of their statuettes in a little book filled with surprises.

clemencepassot.com

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Information and required registration (available one month prior to date of workshop) every day except Monday, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Visitors Department:

Tel. +33 (0)1 42 18 56 67

info.reservation@fondation.cartier.com

Admission: 9 €

Programming:

Vania Merhar and Marine Drouin
fondation.cartier.com/enfants

EXHIBITION

General Curators

Anna Douaoui and Hervé Chandès

Curators

Grazia Quaroni and Leanne Sacramone assisted by Philippine Legrand and Anna Milone

Lighting Design

Julia Kravtsova and Vyara Stefanova (conception), Nicolas Tauveron (realization)

Audiovisual Design and Production

Blowout Studio

Installation Coordinator

Christophe Morizot

Registrar

Corinne Bocquet and Alanna Minta Jordan assisted by Annette Borla

Installation

Gilles Gioan

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The exhibition is open to the public every day except Monday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Open Tuesday evenings until 10 p.m.

Admission: 9.50 €

Reduced rate*: 6.50 €

Admission free**

Free entry for visitors under 18 on Wednesday from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Ticket sales: Fnac stores, fnac.com

* Students, under 25, "carte Senior" holders, "Amis des Musées," unemployed.

** "Laissez-passer", children under 10, ICOM members.

Group Visits

Guided tours, Tuesday to Friday, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. (min. 10 people).

Adults: 10 € per person

Students and "Carte Senior" holders:

5 € per person

(free admission for group leaders)

Self-guided tours, Tuesday to Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. (min. 10 people).

Adults: 8 € per person

Students and "Carte Senior" holders:

4 € per person

(free admission for group leaders)

Advance booking essential

Visitors' Department:

Tel + 33 (0)1 42 18 56 67

info.reservation@fondation.cartier.com

Laissez-passer

The Laissez-passer offers free and unlimited priority access to the Fondation Cartier, free access for a guest accompanying the cardholder on Wednesdays, guided visits to the exhibitions, invitations to Nomadic Nights events, and reduced prices for special events (limited number of tickets available, reservation only), a 5% discount at the bookstore, as well as privileges in numerous other cultural institutions in Paris (museums, theatres...).

Annual membership: 38 €

Reduced rate (students, "carte Senior" and "carte famille nombreuse" holders): 25 €

Youth rate (under age 25): 18 €

Visitors' Department:

Tel. +33 (0)1 42 18 56 67

info.laissezpasser@fondation.cartier.com

Access

261, boulevard Raspail 75014 Paris

Tel. +33 (0)1 42 18 56 50

Fax +33 (0)1 42 18 56 52

Metro Raspail or Denfert-Rochereau

(lines 4 & 6) / Bus 38, 68, 88, 91

RER Denfert-Rochereau (line B)

Vélib' 2, rue Victor Schoelcher

Disabled parking at

2, rue Victor Schoelcher

PRESS INFORMATION

Matthieu Simonnet

Tel. +33 (0)1 42 18 56 77/65

Fax +33 (0)1 42 18 56 52

Images on line: fondation.cartier.com



“Showing here what's happening there, showing there what's happening here.”
The place for pluralism, multiculturalism and diverse points of view, TV5MONDE, the leading global, general-interest channel in French, joins the *Vodun: African Voodoo* exhibition with the production of a multimedia module that will allow all Internet users to delve into the mesmerizing and mysterious world of Vodun art.

The module is to see on tv5monde.com/Afrique, the first 100% African web TV.

Press contact

Thomas Legrand
thomas.legrand@tv5monde.org



Direct Matin is pleased to partner with the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain in conjunction with the *Vodun: African Voodoo* exhibition. *Direct Matin*, launched in 2007 by the Bolloré and Le Monde groups, is a free general-interest daily newspaper. Large due to its partnership with PQR (Regional Daily Press), *Direct Matin* is available in 13 regional editions. These editions deliver breaking news, as well as practical and local information for each region and the Île-de-France.

Press contact

Élodie Lerol
Tel: +33 (0)1 46 96 48 93
e.lerol@bolloreintermedia.net



“We at *Le Point* find ‘culture’ exciting. In its literal sense: film, music and art forms push us to broaden our perspectives, nourish us with beauty for the soul. But also in the plural sense of the term. Because in life, there's not just one emotion to feel, but an entire range to explore. We want to give you our world, for you to see and to understand, because it is true that great artists have always created in reaction to their time, and in terms of their time.” Christophe Ono-dit-Biot, Deputy Editor of *Le Point*.

Le Point is thrilled to partner with the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain and present to the public an opportunity to discover the fascinating and poorly understood art of Vodun.

Press contact

Sophie Gournay
Tel: +33 (0)1 44 10 13 56
sgournay@lepoint.fr



RFI, the top French radio station for nonstop international news, is pleased to support the *Vodun: African Voodoo* exhibition both on our airways and Internet stream: rfi.fr. RFI broadcasts around the world 24 hours a day in 13 languages on the FM channel (in Paris, at 89FM), as well as on cable, satellite, Internet and phone connections. Through our team of journalists based in Paris and a network of 600 correspondents, RFI offers listeners immediate access to world news and feature reporting.

Press contact

Anthony Ravera
Tel: +33 (0)1 56 40 29 85
anthony.ravera@rfi.fr

CAPTIONS AND CREDITS

Cover, page 8 (figure 11)
Fon Vodun Sculpture, Benin.
Courtesy Robert T. Wall Family. Photo © Yuji Ono

Page 2
Archives Anne and Jacques Kerchache.
Photo © Marcel Arbouy

Pages 4 and 5
Preparatory drawings for the exhibition design.
© Enzo Mari

Pages 7 (figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7),
8 (figures 8, 9), 11, 18, 21, 22, 27
Fon Vodun Sculptures, Benin.
Collection Anne and Jacques Kerchache. Photo © Yuji Ono

Page 7 (figure 5)
Fon Vodun Sculpture, Benin.
Private collection.
Photo © Yuji Ono

Pages 8 (figure 10), 12
Fon Vodun Sculptures, Benin.
Collection Michel Propper.
Photo © Yuji Ono

Page 8 (figure 12)
Fon *bocio*, Benin.
Collection Françoise Propper.
Photo © Yuji Ono



“Artists have always had a privileged relationship with works of art based on their experience of the sensual. I have endeavored to make that unique way of seeing mine, a way of seeing that creates strangely familiar bonds between humans and works of art. It has accompanied me throughout my career.”

JACQUES KERCHACHE