



Kente Cloth

Ghanaian

1960s

Cotton and silk or rayon

Hope College Collection, gift of Bruce and Ann Haight, 2018.3.103

Kente is a type of cloth traditionally woven by the Asante and Ewe peoples of Ghana. It is usually woven in narrow strips that are sewn together to make larger cloths which can be worn wrapped around the body in various ways by both men and women. Historically, kente cloth was worn only by the wealthy and powerful, but since Ghana gained independence from Britain in 1957, kente cloth has been worn by a broader range of people as a symbol of national and cultural pride. The various colors, shapes, and patterns that appear in kente cloth designs have different symbolic meanings. For example, the predominantly green palette of this cloth symbolizes growth, fertility, and

spiritual renewal, while the horizontal striped panels signify innovation, ingenuity, and achievement.



Star-Burst Quilt

Willie Maddox (American, 1910-1988)

Ca. 1970s-early 1980s

Cotton

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Bruce Haight, 2018.3.214

The history of African American quilt making is not well documented but dates back at least to the 19th century and possibly earlier. Before 1865, enslaved African American women in the South often made quilts for their owners and sometimes for themselves using scraps of leftover fabrics. After slavery was abolished, Black women continued to make quilts for their own families and sometimes to sell commercially. This quilt was made by Willie Maddox, an African American woman who was born and raised in Alabama, and who moved to Kalamazoo, Michigan as part of the Great Migration. Maddox learned the art of quilting as a child from her mother and elder sisters and remained active as a quilter for her entire life. What began as an economic necessity became for Maddox a source of enjoyment and an outlet for her creativity. As she said once in an interview, "I do it for the pleasure...I just like to piece."



Slaves

Nike Davies-Okundaye (Nigerian, born 1951)

1975

Batik on linen

Hope College Collection, gift of Alan Johnston and Ann Cross, 2020.34.3

Nike Davies-Okundaye is the most prominent female artist associated with the Oshogbo art movement in Nigeria. As a young girl, Davies-Okundaye learned traditional Yoruba textile dyeing from her elder maternal relatives and she has used those skills in her artistic career ever since. This wax-resist dyed panel depicts a group of slaves with collars around their necks standing chained to a post beside a village hut. Slavery was part of traditional Yoruba culture for centuries, predating and later coexisting with the European slave trade in Africa. Yoruba slaves were often people who had been taken captive in territorial wars between different Yoruba groups or between the Yoruba and other West African cultural groups. These enslaved people typically served their masters as domestic servants, laborers, guards, or in other menial positions. They were not allowed to marry without their master's permission, and if they married another enslaved person, their children were also considered slaves. The Yoruba traditionally did not buy and sell enslaved people, but that changed with the arrival of European slave traders, and some Yoruba rulers became quite wealthy and powerful through their participation in the Atlantic slave trade during the 17th and 18th centuries.



Return to the Door of No Return

Crettia Hunter (American, born 1958)

2015

Color photographs

Hope College Collection, 2023.21

Cape Coast Castle is a fortress on the coast of modern Ghana that was used by European merchants as a commercial trading post between the 17th and 19th centuries. Among the “goods” that were traded at Cape Coast Castle were human slaves. The enslaved people were brought to the castle from the continental interior by African and European slave traders. They were kept in dungeons until there were enough of them to be shipped to markets in the Caribbean and Americas. The portal that led from the dungeons to the beaches where the slave ships were loaded became known as “The Door of No Return.” This sequence of photographs by Detroit artist Crettia Hunter depicts an unidentified figure coming into the castle dungeon from the outside through the Door of No Return. Hunter took the photographs during a 2015 trip to Ghana to symbolically represent the reconnection of African Americans to the continent from which many of their ancestors were forcibly taken.



Jar

Nigerian, Nupe people

20th century

Terracotta

Hope College Collection, 2019.26

The Nupe people live primarily in central and northern Nigeria. Nupe ceramics are traditionally made by women, who pass down knowledge of the art within their families from mother to daughter. This distinctive Nupe jar has a flared neck and breast-like protrusions on its body. Such jars were typically set on the ground around the interior walls of a Nupe house and used for storage. They were sometimes also used as stands to support other round-bottomed clay and metal pots.



Ancestral Bottle #6

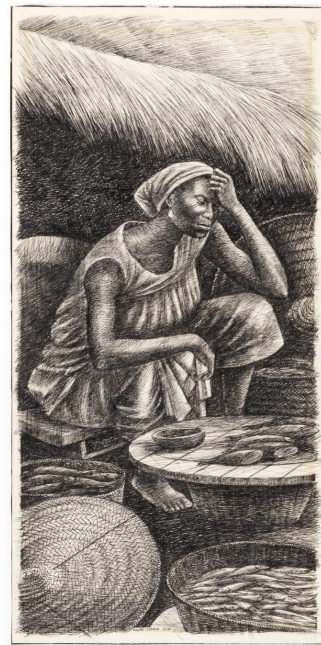
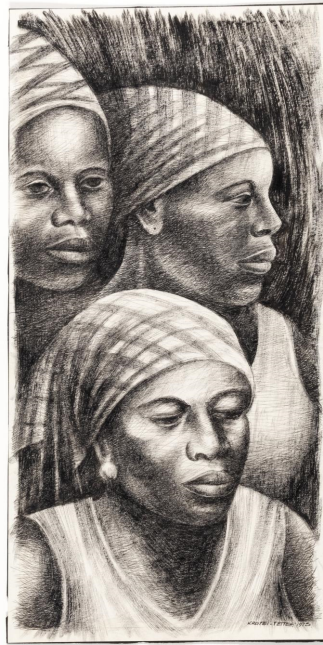
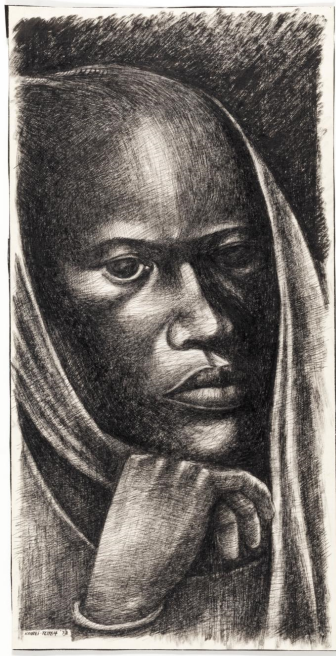
Willis "Bing" Davis (American, born 1937)

Ca. 1975

Glazed stoneware

Hope College Collection, 1975.3.13

Like many African American artists of his generation, Willis "Bing" Davis often draws inspiration from traditional African art. He made this ceramic sculpture after a research trip to Ghana in 1973. The sculpture's shape recalls, but does not mimic, the forms of traditional ceramic vessels found in a number of West African cultures.



Sad Memories, Three Sisters, The Lone Seller

Emmanuel Krotei Tetteh (Ghanaian, 1939-2012)

1973

Ink on paper

Hope College Collection, gift of Bruce and Ann Haight, 2018.3.99-101

Influenced by American and European Social Realist art, Ghanaian artist Emmanuel Krotei Tetteh earned national and international recognition in the 1960s and 70s for his images of everyday Ghanaian life. Although the women portrayed in these drawings may appear to be tired and sad, they are also meant to be seen as strong and resilient like the nation of Ghana itself.



Harriet Tubman, Our Moses

Margaret Burroughs (American, 1917-2010)

First printed 1953; this impression printed 2001

Lithograph

Purchased with funds donated by Judith Kingma Hazelton '56, 2019.81.2

Harriet Tubman (1822-1913) was born into slavery on a plantation in Maryland. In 1849, she escaped from bondage and made her way to Philadelphia where she proclaimed her freedom. Over the next ten years, Tubman returned to the south thirteen times to rescue other enslaved family members and friends, bringing them north to freedom along the Underground Railroad. During the Civil War, Tubman served in the Union Army as a cook, nurse, armed scout and spy, and helped to liberate more than 700 additional enslaved people. Tubman eventually settled in upstate New York and became an activist for women's right to vote. Even during her lifetime, Tubman was regarded as a hero by many African Americans, who sometimes referred to her as "our Moses."

This image of Harriet Tubman was created by Margaret Burroughs in 1953. When she was three years old, Burroughs' family moved from Louisiana to Chicago as part of the Great Migration. Burroughs earned a teaching certificate from the Chicago Teacher's College in 1937, and bachelor's and master's degrees from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1946 and 1948. She worked as an art teacher at DuSable High School in Chicago from 1946 to 1969, and as a humanities professor at Kennedy-King College in Chicago from 1969 to 1979. In 1961, Burroughs and her husband founded the Ebony Museum of Negro History and Art (now called the DuSable Museum of African American History), where she served as director until 1985. Throughout her career, Burroughs was proud to promote African American history and identity, but she also believed in bringing different communities together through the power of art.



Premonition

Kunle Filani (Nigerian, born 1957)

1985

Linocut

Hope College Collection, gift of Bruce and Ann Haight, 2018.3.10

Nigerian artist Kunle Filani is a founding member of the Ona Movement, which in the 1990s and 2000s aimed to create contemporary art that was rooted in traditional Yoruba aesthetics and design principles. This print comes from an earlier phase of Filani's career when he was exploring more Expressionistic styles of art and experimenting with different printmaking techniques. The linocut image depicts a family huddled together in a dark space looking sad and fearful. The cause of their distress is unclear, but the sense of danger and foreboding calls to mind scenarios ranging from the Atlantic slave trade to the terrors of Nigeria's 1967-70 civil war.



Pressed Iron Blossom No. 2

Willie Cole (American, born 1955)

2005

Color lithograph

Hope College Collection, 2014.3

Willie Cole is a contemporary African American artist best known for using found objects to create sculptures, paintings and prints that comment on race relations, social history and cultural exchange. Images of steam irons and ironing boards appear frequently in Cole's work. As symbols of domestic servitude, the steam irons and ironing boards function as reminders of class, race and gender divisions in American society. Cole also uses irons to evoke the forms and loading diagrams of 18th-century slave ships. However, in *Pressed Iron Blossom No. 2*, the negative connotations of the steam iron are belied by the cheerful colors and floral design that more closely recall African American quilt patterns.



The Folly of Baron Roger

Abdoukarim Fall (Senegalese, born 1982)

2007

Paint and mixed media on canvas

Hope College Collection, 2023

Baron Jacques-François Roger (1787-1849) was a French politician and writer who in 1821 was appointed as the first civilian governor of the French colony of Senegal in West Africa. In 1822, Baron Roger constructed a European-style residence in the Senegalese city of Saint Louis that served as a weekend retreat for himself and his Senegalese wife, Yacine Yérin Diaw. After Roger returned to France in 1826, the building was used for many years as a convent by an order of Roman Catholic nuns. In 1960, following Senegal's independence from France, the building was converted into a school and later into an office building. Today, the "Folly of Baron Roger," as the building is known, is recognized by the government of Senegal as a National Historic Monument, but little is done to maintain the structure which is gradually falling into a state of ruin. Contemporary Senegalese artist Abdoukarim Fall painted this image of Baron Roger's decaying residence using ochre pigments that recall the look of 19th-century sepia-toned photographs. Fall has also mixed sand and other materials into his paint to convey the physical crumbling of the building and the fading memory of the colonial period it represents.



Portrait of Leopold Sédar Senghor

Lois Mailou Jones (American, 1905-1998)

1996

Screen print

Purchased with funds donated by Judith Kingma Hazelton '56, 2019.81.3

Leopold Sédar Senghor (1906-2001) was a Senegalese politician, poet and cultural theorist. He was elected as the first president of Senegal after it gained independence from France in 1960 and served in that position until 1980. In the 1930s and 40s, Senghor played a leading role in developing the cultural theory of *Négritude*, which affirmed the intrinsic value and global importance of African and African-diaspora cultures around the world. The ideas advanced by *Négritude* theorists like Senghor helped fuel numerous anti-colonial independence movements within Africa during the 1950s and 60s, and were also influential in the American Civil Rights movement at the same time. This portrait of Senghor was created by Lois Mailou Jones, an African American artist from Boston who taught at Howard University in Washington, DC from 1930 to 1977. During the 1930s, Jones spent many summer and holiday vacations in New York City's Harlem neighborhood, where she became a fixture in the cultural world

of the Harlem Renaissance. Jones was a longtime admirer of Senghor and created this print to celebrate a special edition of his poetry that was published in 1996.