

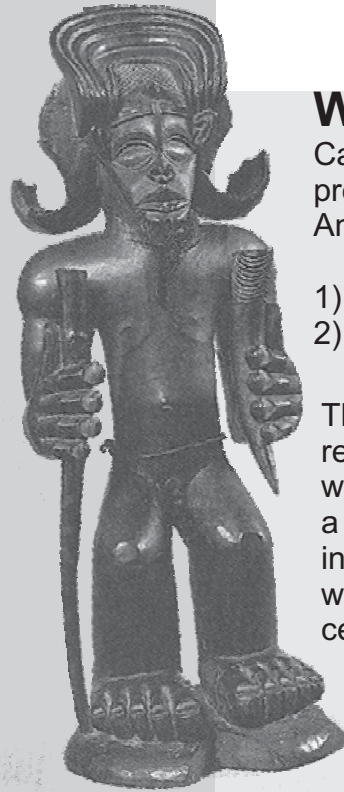
Art Of Africa

Many nations, kingdoms and cultural groups occupy the African continent and the arts was interwoven into all aspects of everyday life. African art usually emphasizes the important events of life and the forces in nature that influence the lives of individuals and communities.



Metal Sculpture

The Benin kingdom situated in Southern Nigeria produced some of the most ambitious **copper alloy castings** sculpture that once covered the walls and royal pillars of the Royal palace.



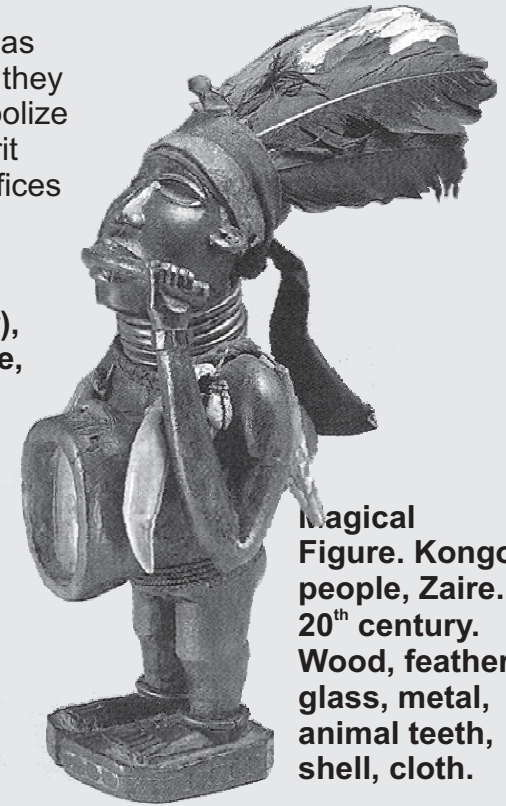
Wood Sculpture: Ancestral Figures

Carved sculpture represents a link between the past and present as well as between the living and the dead. Ancestral figures were made for 2 reasons:

- 1) Respect for the deceased.
- 2) Fear of angry spirits of the dead.

The figures were created as resting places for spirits - they were **not** created to symbolize a spirit. To assure the spirit inhabited the figure, sacrifices were offered in a ritual ceremony.

Chibinda (The Hunter), Ilunga Katele. Chokwe, Northeastern Angola. Mid-19th century. Wood.



Magical Figure. Kongo people, Zaire. 20th century. Wood, feathers, glass, metal, animal teeth, shell, cloth.

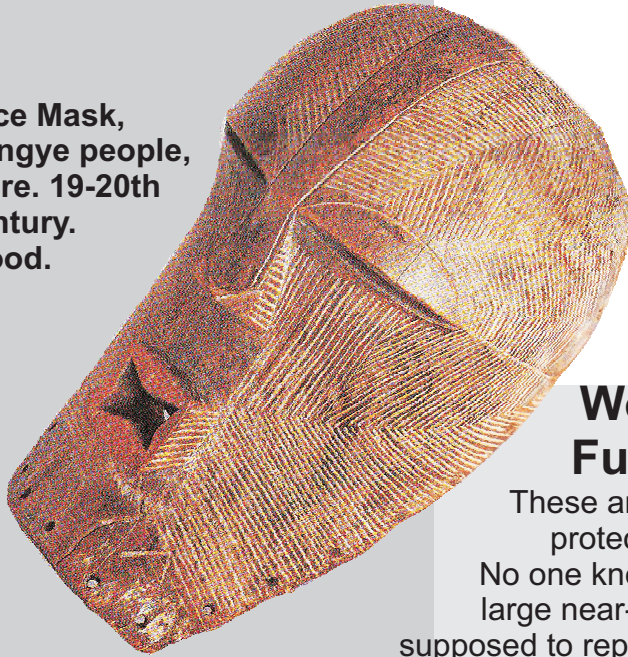


Nkonde Nail Figure. 1875-1900. Wood with screws, nails, blades.

Wood Sculpture: Power Figures

These figures were used as a kind of magical charm with positive/negative purposes. The figure is activated by a spiritualist who seals secret, magical substances somewhere in the figure. Once activated the power figure draws upon forces for good or evil to assist the person purchasing it from the spiritualist.

Face Mask, Songye people, Zaire. 19-20th century. Wood.



Wood Sculpture: Funerary Figures

These are thought to be used to protect the relics of the dead. No one knows for certain what the large near-rectangular shapes are supposed to represent, some think wigs or hairstyles.

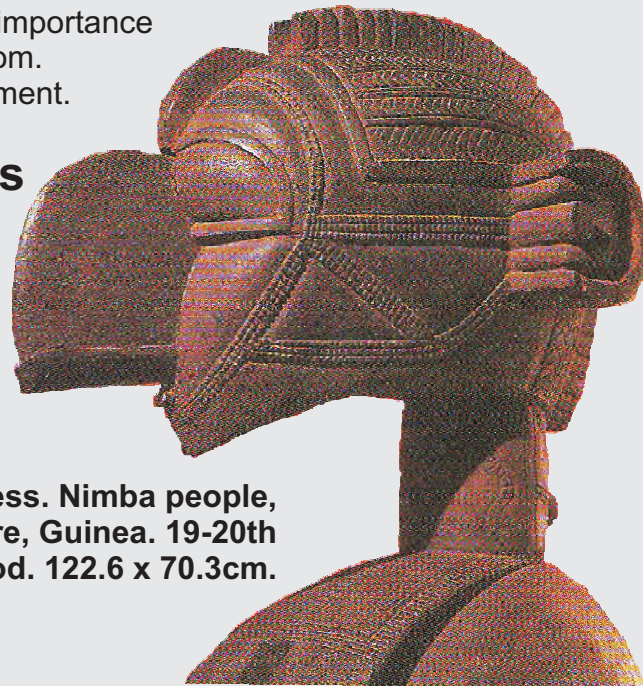
Wood Figure Sculpture:

Most figures share 4 similar characteristics:
1) Proportions that reflect cultural concepts rather than human proportions.

- 2) Frontal Pose.
- 3) An Enlarged head to signify its importance as the center of reason and wisdom.
- 4) Static poses; or a lack of movement.

Headdresses & Masks

They were made to be seen in motion at important ceremonies and rituals.



Headdress. Nimba people, Baga culture, Guinea. 19-20th century. Wood. 122.6 x 70.3cm.

Name: _____

1. Look at the Benin Oba and Two Attendants copper alloy sculpture from the 16th century and describe what you find most interesting about this piece? (1)

2. What are the 3 kinds of figurative wood sculptures? (3)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3. What are the 2 main reasons why **Ancestral Figures** like the Chibinda, were carved?(2)

- 1.
- 2.

4. What was the purpose of **Power figures** like the the Nkonde Nail figure ? (1)

5. What 4 common characteristics do all carved figures share? (4)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.