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Fang

Visions of Africa

Louis Perrois

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 Investigates various Fang artefacts, statue heads, masks, headdresses, jewellery, musical instruments, everyday utensils

Fang art is one of the most distinguished arts of Black Africa. Its masks, with their facial markings, abstract features and strong, elegant lines, were among the most influential in 20th century modern art. Fang figures, called Bieri, are renowned for their child-like proportions contrasted with a muscular, poised vigilance. Fang art also includes iron currency and other objects that exhibit the traditional African ability to making everyday functional objects things of artistic merit.

Fang reviews these artifacts and their social, ritual or symbolic characters. Statuettes related to ancestors, dance masks of the various rites, insignia of power, headdresses and jewellery, decorated music instruments and everyday utensils, all have an amazingly varied aesthetic creativity, in harmony with their profuse world of beliefs and myths.

Louis Perrois is an ethnologist and art historian; he received his training at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris. Having spent almost twenty years in Gabon and then in Cameroon (1965 ¿ 1984), where he was able to conduct a great deal of fieldwork on the tradition and the ritual arts of the different populations of the region (Fang, Kota, Punu, and then Bamileke), he has published some fifteen books and catalogues on the arts of Atlantic Equatorial Africa.