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Face. Off. Faceoff: Mapping African Representations in Western Art Institutions

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FACE. OFF. FACEOFF:

MAPPING AFRICAN REPRESENTATIONS IN WESTERN ART INSTITUTIONS

by

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ABSTRACT

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by

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In this project, I analyze the influential perceptions of African art objects, cultures, and histories formed through audience interactions with museum representations of Africa. In the Western world, curiosity cabinets and natural history museums first presented African objects as cultural artifacts aimed to intrigue and educate viewers about distant, exotic lands. Later, art museums reclassified African objects as art and some displays highlighted this shift, but African art exhibitions largely conformed to the anthropological models previously established. Scholars have analyzed these distinct display techniques while considering the visual environment from which these works were historically significant. Despite this critical scholarship, institutional presentations of permanent African art collections remain stagnant and hierarchical.

Building on this research, I consider the various display techniques implemented Chazen Museum of Art - Madison, The Art Institute of Chicago, Yale University Art gallery, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and The Menil Collection to inform my own installation of African objects in a gallery setting. Through the catalogue and exhibition, I investigate how influential representations of African art objects, cultures, and histories within Western art museums impact contemporary museum audiences. African artworks, installed in two distinct types of displays, demonstrate the constructed and mediated nature of museum exhibits. This two-part exhibition highlights the need for transparency within

museum installations, encouraging visitors to question the selection of objects shown, how these objects are staged for viewing, and what type of information frames this viewing.

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Introduction

When one visits American art institutions, one observes noticeable differences between the treatment of Western art compared to Non-Western Art. Frequently, encyclopedic art museums that hold a broad range of collections representing most cultures spanning from ancient to contemporary feature Western art in the opening galleries while Non-Western art is commonly delegated to separate wings.[1] Depending on the institution, visitors can easily miss these Non-Western galleries unless specifically sought out. In other institutions these galleries are only reached after all else has been seen.[2] In essence a hierarchy is created within art institutions. Museums grant priority to Western collections, drawing visitors through galleries promoting a Western art lineage that stems from ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman cultures through the Medieval period, the Renaissance, the Early Modern era, and on to Modern, Post Modern and Contemporary arts. Audiences experience this progression of culture in galleries organized in chronological order. Then, in side galleries or wings this progression is disrupted by Non-Western art installations (fig. 1). Here, artworks call to past eras and cultures fixed in time with little progression towards the contemporary art realm. The depictions of these cultures stand in opposition to the advancements of Western cultures.

Even as one moves into the galleries containing works from Non-Western cultures a difference exists in *how* these objects are installed compared to their Western counterparts. Multiple objects inhabit protective cases and long explanatory labels accompany object groupings or featured artworks.[3] Lighting is softened, and wall colors bring to mind the natural world. Objects crowd singular galleries in an attempt to showcase work from large geographical regions representing centuries worth of creations.[4] Historically, scholars have explored the implications of installation techniques developed in art institutions. Though sometimes at odds with each other, many museum theorists, ranging from Friedrich Schiller to John Dana Cotton to Ivan Karp, explored the influences and purposes of art institutions.[5] In most cases these scholars came to the same conclusion that art institutions can affect

society, whether as a unifying agent, an institution of control and punishment or as a platform for community support.[6] This belief that art institutions can influence society by applying different installation methods prompted this two-part exhibition of African art.

To better understand *how* art museum installations can influence society and *what* these effects are I constructed an experiment of sorts. I curated an exhibition utilizing similar ancient, traditional and contemporary African objects with two separate types of display. Within these separate installations I employed distinct presentation tactics to develop two unique visitor experiences of the same object types. Beyond exploring questions of installation-audience influence, I intend to demonstrate the constructed and mediated nature of museum exhibits, encouraging visitors to question the selection of objects shown, how these objects are staged for viewing, and what type of information frames this viewing. In the case of *Face. Off. Faceoff* the two representations of African cultures are but two interpretations possible among many, fashioned by a singular curator. The representations draw on historic display methods as well as the current practices employed by major art institutions like the Chazen Museum of Art - Madison, The Art Institute of Chicago, Yale University Art gallery, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and The Menil Collection, Houston.

History of African Object Displays

In the Western world, curiosity cabinets and natural history museums first presented African objects as cultural artifacts aimed to intrigue and educate viewers about distant, exotic lands.[7] Here, the original context of the displayed objects was all but erased, as these collectors primarily organized displays which advertised their own wealth and power.[8] Eventually, these same private curiosity collections were incorporated into both public natural history museums and art museums.[9] The latter reclassifying certain African objects as art.[10] These divergent paths of African objects forced scholars to consider the differentiating elements of artifact versus art, thus exploring *how* each object, maker and

culture should appropriately be presented to audiences.[11] To this day particular art institutions with permanent African collections continue to conform to more anthropological models of display. Objects displayed represent a portion of larger sampling of objects that enable the formation of generalized information explaining the history, economy, political organization, and religious beliefs of particular communities and cultures.[12]

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and the Art Institute of Chicago both present their African collections in a manner more analogous to these anthropological modes of display. Cases line walls with objects grouped to encourage typological looking with a few more prominent objects isolated for more intimate viewing.[13] Gold objects of varying types, from the esteemed Alfred C. Glassell Jr. Collection, adorn the initial gallery spaces of the African, Oceanic, Pre-Columbian and Native American Arts wing in the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (fig. 2). Subsequent galleries house wood-based objects embellished with various beads, fabrics and pigments.[14] Again, these objects stand in as emissaries, whether a mask, headrest, pipe or ancestral figure, that represent a larger sample of similar objects. Little individuation is afforded any singular object; the connected galleries offer few delineations between any of the cultural objects displayed within the wing. To the untrained eye, one homogenous culture is represented rather than four distinctly different cultures spanning different temporal eras across diverse geographical regions.

As a whole, the Art Institute of Chicago organizes its African collection in much the same way. Objects fill cases with a few works featured more prominently. However, in this African art gallery contextual information frames the African collection within a global world. A large map illustrates from where these objects and cultures came. A world timeline beginning in 100,000 B.C. situates the African continent within a global history, though events described give African cultures little agency beyond their own borders while the rest of the world, particularly the United States, appear quite influential within African countries (fig. 3).[15] Above this full-wall timeline three video projections stream glimpses

of different African cultures, though no narration describes the happenings unfolding on the wall (fig. 4). A wall label on the opposite end of the gallery acknowledges the filmmaker and project backers, though still no context is provided for viewers as sounds, too often associated with "primitive" cultures, fill the gallery; drumming and chanting dominate the feed over other ambient sounds.[16]

Though the Chazen Museum of Art – Madison also utilizes anthropological modes of display, the African art gallery also incorporates presentation techniques commonly used for contemporary art; objects are individualized within the installation. Within the small gallery, towards the end of the museum, traditional African objects crowd the walls and central floor with a few contemporary artworks demonstrating the relevance of African art within the art continuum. Eric Adjetey Anang's fantasy coffin, *Abebuam Adeka (Box of Proverbs – Eagle)*, 2015 (fig. 4), ushers viewers into the gallery and develops a striking visual connection the traditional African works from the 19th and 20th centuries.[17] The integration of contemporary artworks displayed amongst the traditional pieces produces a promising African artistic lineage that projects into the future.

With more space to work with, the African art collection at the Yale Art Museum welcomes visitors on the first floor of a four level Non-Western wing (fig. 5). This installation of objects expertly combines anthropological and artistic display techniques in equal parts. It is the type of information, however, that is the key innovation in this gallery. The larger gallery is segmented into four major categories. Within these groupings, the accompanying text organizes objects chronologically by material then also thematically by cultural beliefs.[18] Perspectives of Western influences on African culture stand beside examples of African influences on the West.[19] Beyond that the gallery is ringed by windows, illuminating objects with a natural light while the carefully selected wall colors of magenta, pale yellow and blue complement the materials of the artworks (fig. 6). This type of installation encourages multi-layered viewing and interpretation by audiences, rather than the single-minded display techniques utilized by other institutions.

On the other end of the spectrum, the installation of African objects at the Menil Collection in Houston supports an aesthetic viewing experience, focusing on each object as a singular entity. Viewers must still navigate through arts of Western antiquity before reaching the African installations. Just as the Western objects have limited identifying information provided on the wall texts so do the African objects.[20] Between these galleries the only distinguishing factors between Western and Non-Western objects are their backdrops. In opposition to the windowless white walled gallery of the ancient Western art, the African art is presented in rooms lined with windows. These windows allow natural light into the gallery in much the same manner as the Yale Art Museum, but at the Menil, the windows reveal an interior green area.[21] Though the natural lighting clearly illuminates these objects, the green space suggests the idea of "wild" cultures, untouched by the progression of the rest of the world (fig. 7).

Objects and the Categories

Before any exhibition is installed it is necessary to select the objects to be displayed. For this project the majority of the objects chosen came from the 2012 Emile H. Mathis II donation that included over six hundred traditional African objects. To supplement these, a handful of objects gifted by Mark and Mary Jo Wentzel, Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk, and Eugene and Inez Gilbert also represent the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee Emile H. Mathis collection. Additionally, to fill in still more temporal and geographic gaps the Chazen Art Museum, Madison and the Wright Museum of Art, Beloit generously donated the three contemporary prints (fig. 8, 9, and 10) and the two shabti tomb figures (fig. 11 and fig. 12). All together these objects represent about twenty African countries and fifty different cultural groups.

In order to best categorize these objects into groups, I isolated various themes, forms, and functions to more accurately connect cultures together through their art. Figures, one of the most common motifs in African art,[22] stood out as an obvious division, though the many nuanced beliefs and

purposes behind these figural sculptures required more distinct groupings. The "Paired Figures" category stems from the creation of partnered figures meant to maintain the balance between worlds: the living civilized world, the wild spirit world or the world of the deceased. Further, the power of the deceased reoccurred across many cultures prompting the separation of various "Ancestral Intercessors," mainly shabti tomb figures and reliquaries, that exemplified the relationship between the living and the dead in particular cultures. The "Power Figures" displayed in this exhibition all take human form, securing their own figural grouping. This left a number of figural sculptures without such distinct characteristics, though the need to further underscore the importance of the human form in much of African art united this more general "Figures" grouping together.

The "Masks" category reveals a diversity in style and function similar to that of the figural objects. However, the general use of masks as social and political tools of control, guidance and education across many cultures unified this large group. The pronounced number of *ci wara* headdresses in the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee's art collection and the extensive recognition of these forms, in part due to their popularity among Western artists like Constantin Brancusi and Ferdinand Léger, justifies the creation of a separate "*Ci Wara* Headdress" category.[23] The isolation of this specific type of masquerade headwear acknowledges the propensity for Western collectors to amass these distinctive mask types.[24]

With fewer nuances to navigate, other categories seamlessly formed themselves. In particular I separated utilitarian objects like pipes, gold dust boxes, headrests, various vessels for daily and ritual use, weapons, and worn items into autonomous groups. These categories, like the *ci wara* headdresses, demonstrate the varied styles and constructions a certain object takes. These forms often develop within certain cultures as distinct aesthetic values and construction methods varying from region to region. The four pipes displayed come from three regions and take four different forms, though the objects were made for the same purpose – as smoking devices. The Cameroonian cast bronze *Elephant*

Pipe (fig. 13) and the Western African carved wood and cast bronze *Pipe* (fig. 14) both utilize animal motifs in their design while the Bamum cast bronze *Pipe* (fig. 15) and the Yaka carved wood *Pipe* (fig. 16) take figural form. Though these pipes share analogous motifs, their material, construction and stylization underline variances among the separate cultures. The shrine house doors, house doors and granary doors similarly function as their own category of utilitarian edifices. Displayed through the central axis of the gallery the doors also divide the two sides of the gallery separating the two different object presentations.

Side A: Wonder and Aesthetics

In order to further map these display techniques, how they influence viewers and in what way, this exhibition-as-experiment presents two distinct representations of African art and culture. A single object from each category appears in the first half of the gallery, "Side A," while the remaining objects of each group are displayed together in the second half of the gallery, "Side B." By dividing the objects into these groups before isolating objects for display on Side A, I hope to maintain a connection across the gallery division, highlighting the differences in the presentation of the same types of objects.

In the first part of the gallery on Side A, viewers encounter an installation encouraging them to engage with objects on a formal and aesthetic level in much the same manner that the Menil Collection presents its African art. This type of display emphasizes the individuality of objects with each work privileged to occupy its own pedestal, platform, glass case, or wall, conforming to a more Western aesthetic and viewing practice.[25] There is little reference to the cultural context from which these objects came, but rather these objects are transformed into art for the sake of art.

This notion of art for art's sake stems from ideas beginning with Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schiller that art should replenish individuals.[26] Through means of pleasurable calming entertainment, art has the power to unify society.[27] As art museums became public, those in power viewed them as tools of

social control and mollification, a practice mapped by Tony Bennet's writing on Foucault's theories of institutional articulations of power and knowledge relations.[28] In his essay, "The Exhibition Complex," Bennett evaluates the credence of the controlling power of museums, "– a power made manifest not in its ability to inflict pain but by its ability to organize and co-ordinate an order of things and to produce a place for the people in relation to that order." Therefore, those who view the displays of art museums could perceive themselves to be in control of society, though the true cultural power remains with the institution.[29] By making art exhibitions soothing, enjoyable and public, society could be lulled into a sense of authority and ownership of the objects on display and themselves, resulting in societal tranquility.[30]

Though Side A appears to cater to a docile experience, certain installation decisions counter this with aims to disrupt potential passivity with active interactions. The objects of Side A are evenly spaced, with plenty of room for audiences to contemplate each object individually. Clean white walls provide a blank background on which to observe these objects while the spotlight lighting promotes an aura of value and genius (fig. 17).[31] Together, all these display elements culminate with the potential to prompt an awe-inspiring reaction. Individual objects command the attention of viewers, encouraging them to stop in wonderment.[32] Ample space around each object provides the room needed to truly reflect on the artworks. Close contemplation as well as distant observation are accommodated. One can intimately familiarize themselves with individual objects, stimulating reverent consideration. Viewers are faced with unfamiliar objects though in such a way so as to assuage any possible unease in the unknown. Instead it is the novel and strange that is celebrated and prized, drawing one deeper into the exhibition to uncover the next exotic treasure.

Accompanying object labels provide little contextual information to further support this act of meditative looking. The label acts as the mediator between maker, exhibitor and viewer, a concept outlined by Michael Baxandall.[33] The lack of descriptive and explanatory background information

provided on the object labels diminishes the exhibitor's interpretive footprint. What little textual framing exists on Side A is carefully selected to divorce the objects from their social and cultural interpretations, thereby raising the esteem of the object and maker. If an artist is known, they become the focus, encapsulating the inherent genius of their practice. A concentration on construction techniques also advance this notion of creator as genius and object as unique artistic product. As a result, the viewer must rely on the object itself, how it is presented (spacing, lighting, placement in the gallery etc.), and on the knowledge and experience they bring into the exhibition space.[34] Ideally this will heighten the aesthetic and formal qualities of the objects to promote more emotive readings that are subject to viewers' interpretations.

The objects chosen to represent Side A do not all conform to what the West has historically labeled as African art. Traditionally, Western art institutions valued African objects with figural representations or objects formed through more advance processes of creation.[35] In other words, the West valued objects that looked familiar or that required technical expertise to make. Although the Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery has plenty of African objects that meet these requirements, many of the objects installed on Side A reject this framework. For example, the Malian Dogon *Figure* (fig. 18) is a large wooden sculpture is chosen to represent the "Figures" on Side A. This sculpture is made of general geometric shapes to construct a slender masculine figure, though the enlarged pectoral muscles hint at gender ambiguity.

The simplified and unadorned form of the Dogon figure raises questions pertaining to its privileged placement amongst other more intricate and embellished objects on Side A. The Malian Bamana *Male Ci Wara Headdress* (fig. 19) also displayed on Side A seems to satisfy a more Western aesthetic model. This example of a *ci wara* headdress is exceptional due to the feathers, fibers, leather, shell and metal embellishments on the wooden frame. The unexpected placement and juxtaposition of

objects such as these prompts a more critical engagement with the preferential object selection process every museum navigates.

Overall, the combination of individually displayed objects, spotlight lighting, the minimal use of explanatory labels set against white gallery walls aims to elevate the admiration and reverence of the objects and their makers. Seen as individual objects with pools of light to create an aura around them, these carefully selected objects become appreciated as vivid works fashioned by artists. The object and the maker become larger than life as the aesthetic and formal elements are regarded. Devoid of social and cultural context, audiences determine the meaning. As such, the unfamiliar objects transform into fantastical artworks worthy of the prestigious museum installation granted to them.

Side B: Resonance and Culture

In contrast to the aesthetically geared Side A, Side B offers social and cultural contexts for the groups of objects displayed. The multitude of cultures represented within these distinct object categories eliminate the differentiating boundaries of individual creators and cultures, speaking instead to the assumed universalism of the objects' cultural values and functions. The softened lighting reduces the spotlight effect experienced on Side A, in the hopes of creating equality among the grouped objects. No artwork outshines the greater group, rather the variation and diversity seen within each grouping adds layers to the understanding of Non-Western cultures. The assorted materials, construction techniques and aesthetic models utilized in the making of the objects reveal the differing resources, skills and ideals valued across the African continent.

Displayed in groups by object type, the objects of Side B rest compactly on pedestals and densely line the walls, painted green to reference nature just as the outdoor spaces seen through the gallery windows at the Menil frame objects within a purportedly wild environment (fig. 20 and 21). It becomes impossible to isolate singular objects forcing viewers to consider the groupings as a whole. For

instance, masks, the largest of the categories presented in this exhibition, overtake the east wall of the gallery. Although none of the masks are the same, the proximity to one another diminishes the individual characteristics of each. Instead similarities become evident; the bell shape of the helmet masks, the geometric shape of the eyes often interrupted with a slit, the fabric, hair and tactile materials manipulated to create depth and texture on surfaces. Or consider the patterning included on each of the worn objects: all the patterns are different, and yet a relationship is developed between the detailed elements of the blocked shapes, intersecting lines and repetitive color combinations on the individual pieces.

Just as the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and the Art Institute of Chicago organize their African collections, here, lengthy explicatory labels describe the social and cultural forces from within which the objects arose.[36] The foundation of this anthropological display is steeped with descriptions that foster an understanding of unfamiliar objects, utilities, makers and cultures. As a result, the objects and cultures displayed on Side B are marked as inherently different from objects displayed for their aesthetic value on Side A. Similar objects are assembled together, eliminating any individuation, instead developing typological examples. The act of classifying object types reveals the desire for explicit labeling and clarification that frequently accompanies unfamiliar Non-Western objects in museums.

The information present on Side B addresses the object categories as a whole, rather than focusing on singular objects. While the standard identifying information still distinguishes individual objects, longer descriptive texts for each object grouping elucidates generalized social and cultural functions of the whole category. Once again, I employ Baxandall's investigation of the influence explanatory object labels may have on audiences. The understanding of the exhibitor takes precedent as more information is offered for viewer consumption leaving less opportunity for their independent interpretations.[37] Instead viewers are subject to the constructed interpretations provided.

Questions pertaining to the makers' social standing, guidelines for object creation, and regulations for object utility are addressed within these texts. Makers, rather than individuals imbued with immense creative capabilities, are examined based on their role in society. For example, the sculptures represented in the "Paired Figures" group (fig. 22) are often made based on the recommendation of a diviner. A craftsperson was employed to make these figures according to the diviner's specifications.[38] In this case the creator of the figure(s) was a means to an end, rather than an individual of inherent genius. This type of information creates obstacles that interrupt modes of strictly aesthetic viewing and force viewers to contemplate how these objects function within an active society.

Furthermore, objects are linked to when and how they are used, deepening the understanding of the objects' cultural purposes. The "Gold Dust Boxes" group label elucidates the general function of the small cast bronze boxes (fig. 23) within Ghanaian society. These objects were used not only to store gold dust, a commodity used to pay for important events in society, but also as personal weights to standardize the value of gold traded.[39] No single gold dust box is highlighted, rather the grouping stands as a collective, allowing for a typological classification.

In order to accommodate the inevitable curiosity that accompanies the unfamiliar, Side B provides more specific descriptions that unveil the function of certain objects. This added information, however, ultimately reinforces the generalized classification of the entire group. The individual wooden Luba *Headrest* (fig. 24) description, for example, highlights the incorporation of the coiffured hairstyle, *mikada*, on the figure supporting the top of the headrest which points to an underlining function of headrests more generally; as tools to protect the owners' elaborate hairstyles, which often denoted the owners' status in the community.[40] The functions of these objects divulged through the explanatory text are indicative of larger African societal values and practices, essentially creating a homogenous African culture.

Even though Side B's wall texts frame the objects as tools utilized by societies, African cultures are often displayed as stagnant entities, never achieving the level of progress reached by Western cultures. In part, this is due to the lack of a developed artistic lineage. To counter this frequent practice particularly among anthropological representations of cultures, *Face. Off. Faceoff* integrates two small Ancient Egyptian *shabti* tomb figures from as early as the 10th century B.C. within the exhibition (fig. 11 and 12). These miniature figurines with delicately carved hieroglyphics and painted details reestablish the link between Egyptian art and the rest of the African continent in order to reclaim the African art lineage often hijacked by the Western world. Along with these two figurines, the addition of the three prints made by contemporary African artists validates a current, active art practice. Visual elements found within older objects in the exhibition can be discerned within the 2003 print by Thando Mama creating a pictorial link between the old and the new. The circular pattern emerging from a disc shape in the bottom of Mama's print, *When I Awake* (fig. 8), seems to reference the patterned manes of the *ci wara* headdresses (fig. 19), or the concentric designs of the Maasai collars (fig. 25 and 26) from the "Worn Objects" group. The stylized figure with elongated limbs recalls the impossibly long arms and legs of the Dogon *Male Figure* (fig. 18). Further still, newly created objects and the adaption of ritual practices to accommodate contemporary lifestyles destabilize the notion of inert societies and remove any musings of primitive African cultures trapped in the past.

On the surface, Side B appears to employ a display technique rooted in ethnographic and anthropologic schemes. The typological presentation paired with the low-key lighting allows viewers to contemplate these objects as a group. The information that accompanies these categories furthers this concept of the collectivizing impulse despite the inclusion of objects from multiple different peoples, countries and regions. Although the dynamism of variation and individuation is swallowed into the whole, an African art legacy is established. Beginning in ancient Egypt and continuing to a current

practice pungent with potential future creations. The universal African culture presented is capable of morphing, adapting and progressing in a contemporary world.

The Faceoff

The need to present an exhibition that utilizes two distinct display modes, clearly separated, becomes apparent when one considers how many scholars believe art institutions should function. Reaching back to the turn of the 20th century, Henry Cole and John Dana Cotton outlined the need for museums to serve their communities.[41] This can only occur with active community engagement, and exhibitions grounded in the needs of the community.[42] For this to happen, viewers require a better understanding of *how* exhibitions are constructed. By installing the same types of artwork with two distinct modes of interpretation and display, the constructed nature of any exhibition becomes more evident.

This transparency within the exhibition rewards audiences with the ability to critically engage with the objects and cultures presented to them. Though presenting two alternate interpretations of the same cultures, *Face. Off. Faceoff* is reliant on my singular aesthetic tastes and point of view. However, this side by side comparison of display modes offers viewers the opportunity to contemplate their own preferences, preexisting knowledge, and interpretations regarding what is represented in the gallery. Perhaps some would select a very different object to aesthetically represent an object group. Others might evaluate the Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery's African collection online and prefer objects omitted from the exhibition over the objects that made the final cut. It is vital for audiences to realize the power of critiquing exhibitions is one that can be applied to any museum. This particular experimental exhibition strives to make this power evident.

If viewers acknowledge the need for transparency and critically engage with exhibitions, this undercuts the false notion that a museum is a neutral authoritarian institution above questioning.[43] Just

as I have constructed representations of African cultures, so too do other art institutions mediate how cultures are presented to the public. As long as audiences allow these representations to go unquestioned, museums will hold a monopoly on our understandings of our own culture as well as others.[44] In order to counter the long-accepted hierarchies of the art world, viewers must actively and critically engage not only with what is and is not presented, but *how* these objects are presented as well.

Effects of this Experimental Exhibition

As this exhibition challenges viewers to critically engage with object presentations, various survey questions will further stimulate audience participation. At the gallery exit survey questions (Appendix C) await viewers to capture how they interacted with the two installations. This information will allow me to map *how* these modes of display influence audiences, and further, *what* these affects look like. Responses will be collected throughout the exhibition to better understand the impacts of the two types of displays presented. To mark the conclusion of the exhibition, a closing reception will function as a platform for myself, a guest speaker, and gallery visitors to further reflect on the experiences afforded by *Face. Off. Faceoff.* Following this event and the closing of the exhibition, I will formulate an afterword to quantify the influences I believe this installation of art have on those who attended. This in turn may open larger questions regarding the effects our cultural institutions have on our society. Through the exhibition, catalogue, and afterword I hope to continue the discussions surrounding art displays, cultural representations and interpretations, and the need to be critical museum goers.

Afterword

As with many experiments, the survey data I collected over the duration of this exhibition opened more possible avenues of exploration and raised additional questions. The questions I asked of the exhibition visitors called for personal reflections and preferences regarding museums, aspects of the exhibition installation, and their pre-existing knowledge of Africa. These same questions were ones I myself considered throughout the process of planning *Face. Off. Faceoff,* then revisited once the exhibition was installed.

One of the main factors I needed to consider in evaluating the survey responses was the visitor demographics of the UWM Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery. As a gallery imbedded within the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee campus, many gallery visitors were affiliated with the school. Further, the gallery hours of Monday through Thursday from 10am to 4pm inhibited those who worked typical business hours beyond the campus from visiting the exhibition. Although the opening and closing receptions for *Face. Off. Faceoff* extended gallery hours into the evening on two select nights, the majority of visitors remained students or university employees. As such, many explored the gallery in the 10 minutes they had in-between classes or meetings. Few individuals remained in the galleries longer than 15 minutes.

With the audience demographics established, I considered how they engaged with the exhibition. The first, and possibly most important questions on the survey – "Why do you go to art museums?" and "What do you hope to get out of a visit?" – informed my understanding of the gallery visitors and what they hoped to obtain from art exhibitions more broadly. Most visitors desired new knowledge to foster a better understanding of different cultures. Consequently, as prompted by question two, many expressed their preference for Side B. Here they could compare objects side-by-side and learn about the objects' creation, purpose, and function.

With question three I asked visitors to consider the textual information included in *Face. Off Faceoff* – "How did the information accompanying objects on both sides of the gallery influence/ not influence your viewing experience and understanding of African culture?" Visitors admitted to spending minimal time reading the installed texts, thus the written components of the exhibition held little influence. Alternatively, those who did read the accompanying object information expressed great intrigue and appreciation for the new knowledge they acquired. I could have easily misconstrued this lack of engagement with the text as indifference in learning about the creation, purpose and function of the objects, I believe this detachment was for reasons beyond disinterest in the text offered.

As I noted, visitors spent small increments of time in the gallery and thus optimized this by looking at the objects presented. If truly interested in a specific entity, a viewer might glance at the text for just long enough to identify its basic information. I saw this neither as a positive or negative interaction, but rather as another detail to be assessed. By observing viewers' engagement with the objects while also considering the survey responses, I came to the conclusion that many visitors had never encountered this many African art objects in person at one time. Viewers were awestruck by the objects. Digesting the textual information became secondary as the audience grappled with the physical objects in front of them first.

In the last two survey questions I prompted viewers to reflect on their prior knowledge of Africa and how it possibly shifted after experiencing *Face. Off. Faceoff.* The first of these questions – "How did the inclusion of the Ancient Egyptian Shabti tomb figurines and the three contemporary prints alter/not alter your notion of Africa?" – prompted unexpected, yet gratifying responses. Many more visitors seemingly scoffed at this question as they rightfully pointed out that Egypt was part of Africa, and as such, objects from Egypt should, of course, be included in an African art exhibition. A few responses from this pool also highlighted that Egyptian culture is often integrated into the Western cultural timeline, a practice I strove to destabilize in *Face. Off. Faceoff.* For those less familiar with the geography

of Egypt and Africa, the inclusion of the Shabti tomb figures unveiled the connection between the country and continent. Further, a number of visitors expressed surprise, then pleasure, in seeing contemporary prints included as they rarely had the occasion to engage with art by contemporary African artists. In this way, my exhibition decisions to extend the breadth of the show both geographically and temporally proved fruitful as I helped forge new understandings of African cultures.

The final question, though simple, was possibly the most revealing in regards to how the gallery visitors perceived Africa. A simple word association exercise – "What are three words you would use to describe Africa prior to experiencing this exhibition? What are three words you would now use to describe Africa?" While there were many visitors whose perceptions minimally altered, for the majority, their viewpoints shifted, often towards more positive perspectives. Frequent descriptions first included words like "primitive," "spiritual," "survival," and "similar." These insights altered after experiencing and engaging with the exhibition. As a result, visitors used words such as "nuanced," "contemporary," "depth," and "diverse" to describe Africa upon leaving the exhibition.

The responses to the five questions presented on the survey for *Face. Off. Faceoff* validated my endeavor to juxtapose art installation narratives. Audiences want to learn from museums, and many will only ever encounter cultures through these mediated exhibitions. This underscores the necessity for institutional transparency in art display practice. However, it is one thing to recognize the need for more transparency and another to put this into practice. As I found through the surveys, the question "what is the *correct* way to display African art?" lacks a straightforward answer. This vast grey area called for my own reflection on my process of thesis conception, planning, and installation to seek a possible answer.

In planning this exhibition, I had a clear opinion on how I believed African and Non-Western art should be displayed. At the beginning of this project, I supported the reinstallation of African art galleries to mimic the presentation of Western art galleries with object placement allowing for individuation, information focusing on artists and their techniques, and accessible gallery locations. But

then my outlook shifted in conjunction with visits to five art institutions with distinct African gallery installations, my own exhibition installation, and the survey responses.

A major turning point was my visit to the Yale University Art Gallery. With the African Art gallery directly off the main entrance, this art institution immediately set itself apart from others I visited. Once in the gallery, it appeared similar to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Art Institute of Chicago, or the Chazen Art Museum. However, upon closer investigation this gallery framed the African art in a very different way. The three sections of the gallery explored different themes while the entire installation followed a chronological organization. The first section set the tone with the focus on materials, with ivory, bronze, terracotta and clay objects arranged together. Within these different groups the accompanying information painted diverse narratives. The ivory carvings revealed the exchange of cultural influences between European and African makers. Metal works showed the diverse manipulation afforded this material to accommodate an assortment of religious belief systems. The terracotta works mapped the progression of cultures across the continent. The display of each object grouping was as distinctive as the materials presented resulting in a multilayered object installation that highlighted a diverse, multicultural, and complex continent.

The Yale University Art Gallery prompted me to reconsider what I previously thought was the best way to present African art to the public. Rather than relegating installations to one type of presentation style, galleries could, and I argue should, explore dynamic display tactics. A layered installation caters more fully to a diverse audience as each individual visitor engages and experiences art in different ways. For the sake of this exhibition-as-experiment, a clear distinction between display types was necessary to highlight the different possibilities curators navigate when planning an installation. As such, before installing *Face. Off. Faceoff,* I still aligned more fully with the Side A framing despite my experience in the Yale University Art Gallery. Perhaps this type of display could alleviate the distinctions made between Western and Non-Western art objects. Further, I believed this side would be more

engaging for audiences as each singular object allowed for undivided contemplation and room for interpretation.

Once both sides of the gallery were installed, I discovered my preference aligned more with the Side B installation rather than Side A. The grouped objects appeared dynamic with distinct works that also fostered comparisons within the greater categories. The diversity of African art rose to fore. The framing information, though generalized, helped to illustrate the lives these objects once occupied. Despite my previous inklings that this type of generalizing typological display further supported the hierarchies of the art world, I was forced to reckon with the notion that the "right" type of display was not necessarily as clear as I originally thought.

Although the surveys seem to support the methods of installation already in place at many Western art institutions, a more critical consideration needs to be made. With audiences seeking knowledge, it is the responsibility of art institutions to be critical of *how* this knowledge is offered to their viewers. This is where the transparency of installations, curators, and institutions is vital. This transparency can unveil the origins of objects, how they came into the collection, the history of the objects and cultures, then also their futures. By breaking down the authoritarian voice and structure of art displays, viewers can develop the skills needed to critically engage with the arts and cultures they encounter within these institutions. Art establishments should display art with authority while simultaneously offering layers of information for viewers to make their own connections and interpretations.

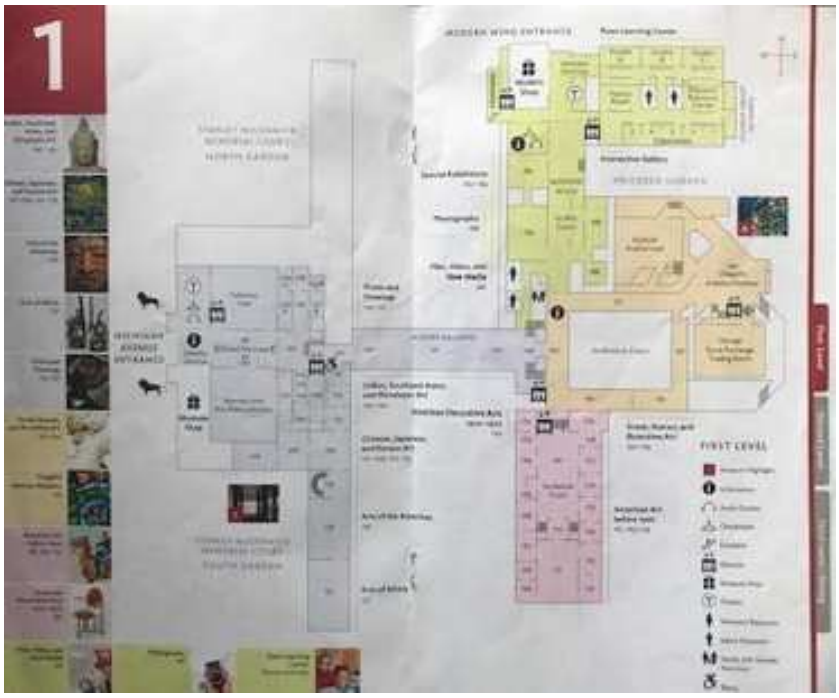

Figure 1. *Museum Map,* Art Institute of Chicago.

Figure 2. *Alfred C. Glassell Jr. Collection Gallery,* Fine Arts Museum, Houston. Photo by author.

1981–present

Cases of HIV/AIDS rapidly increase across the African continent, affecting from one to as much as fifteen percent of the population in areas where statistics are kept.

1983

The United States enacts the Cultural Property Implementation Act to realize parts of the 1970 UNESCO convention.

1989

Soviet-style Communism is brought to an end.

1990–94

Civil war in Rwanda leads to genocide.

1992

A new Ghanaian constitution establishes multiparty democracy. Subsequent successful transitions of power in 2000 and 2009 demonstrate the stability of Ghana's democratic system.

1993

At Mali's request, the United States imposes import restrictions on certain archaeological material. Mali, like many other African nations, also has internal laws protecting archaeologically or culturally significant material.

1994

Black nationalist leader Nelson Mandela is elected president of South Africa in the first democratic elections allowing people of all races to vote, marking the end of the Apartheid Era; the country also adopts a new constitution.

2001

September 11 terrorists attacks

Joel Meyerowitz (American, born 1938). New York City, 1988. Chromogenic print.

2001/03

In response to the September 11 attacks, the United States invades Afghanistan. This is followed in 2003 by the invasion of Iraq by a multinational force led by the United States.

2005

The Kyoto Protocol, which sets targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by industrialized nations, is implemented. As of 2010, 187 nations have ratified the protocol; the United States has signed but not ratified it.

2009

President Barack Obama visits Ghana in his first official trip to sub-Saharan Africa. Obama's visit to Ghana in the first year of his presidency has important symbolic significance for many Africans. Obama sees the trip as an opportunity to illustrate that "Africa is not separate from world affairs."

2010

As 17 African nations celebrate 50 years of independence from colonial rule, Africans still face serious challenges to economic growth, national unity, political stability, and public health. African artists continue to adapt to shifts in cultural, economic, religious, and social practices.

2011

Wireless technology connects growing numbers of people across the globe, improving lives by providing access to easy, low-cost, and reliable communication.

Designed by Yves Béhar (Swiss, born 1967), Bret Recor (American, born 1974), and fuseproject. Manufactured by Quanta Computer, Inc. (founded 1988). One Laptop per Child (OLPC) XO Laptop, 2007. Molded plastic, 9 1/2 x 7 1/2

Figure 3. *Portion African Art Gallery Timeline,* Art Institute of Chicago. Photo by author.

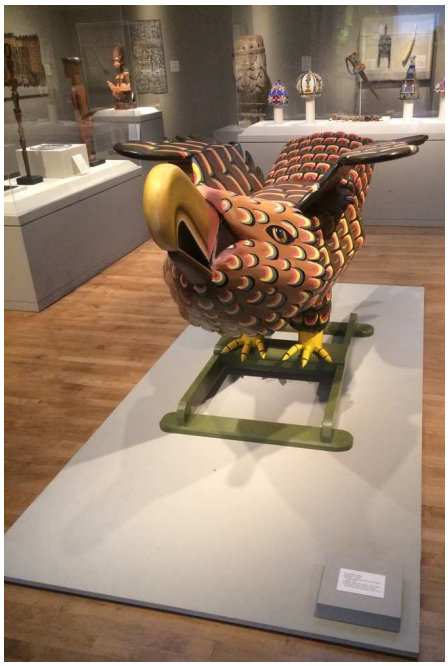

Figure 4. *Eric Adjetey Anang's fantasy coffin, Abebuam Adeka (Box of Proverbs – Eagle), 201,* Chazen Art Museum. Photo by author.

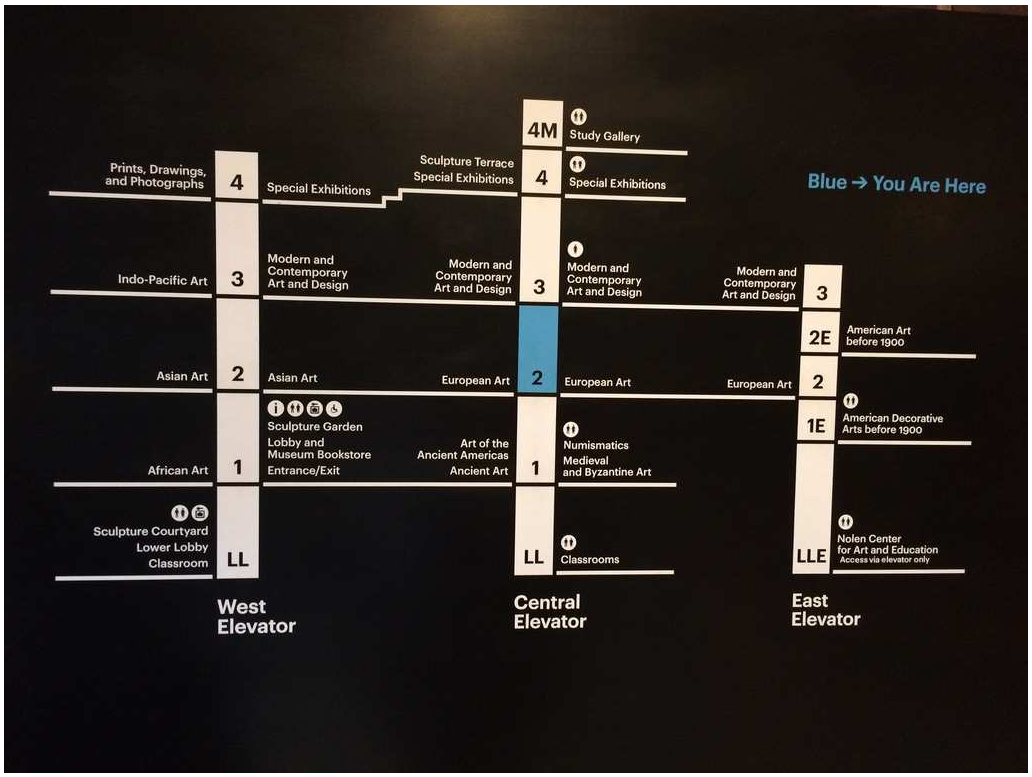

Figure 5. Floor plan, Yale University Art Gallery. *Photo by author.*

Figure 6. *Terra cotta forms framed by magenta wall,* Yale University Art Gallery. Photo by author.

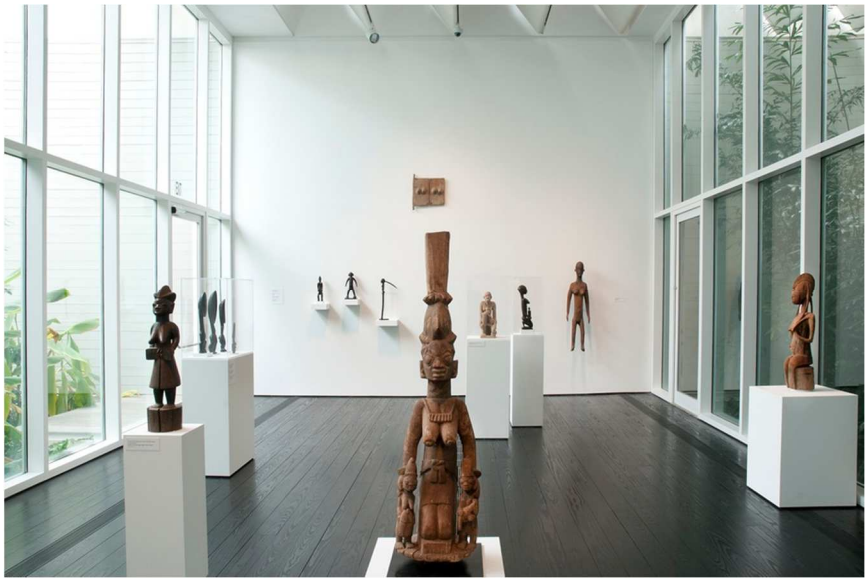

Figure 7. African Art Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston. Photo from https://www.menil.org/collection/5049-arts-of-africa

Figure 8. Thando Mama, *When I Awake*, from the portfolio "Cross Cultural Identities," 2003, Chazen Art Museum. Photo from http://embarkkiosk.chazen.wisc.edu/OBJ?sid=7416&rec=226&port=771&art=0&page=226

Figure 9. Yinka Adeyemi, *Music Makers,* 1971, Chazen Art Museum. Photo from http://embarkkiosk.chazen.wisc.edu/OBJ?sid=7416&rec=197&port=771&art=0&page=197

Figure 10. Roxandra Dardagan – Britz, *This Land is Mine*, from the portfolio "Cross Cultural Identities," 2003, Chazen Art Museum. Photo from http://embarkkiosk.chazen.wisc.edu/OBJ?sid=7416&rec=222&port=771&art=0&page=222

Figure 11. *Shabti Tomb Figure,* Wright Museum of Art, Beloit College. Photo by Paul Maloney.

Figure 12 *Shabti Tomb Figure*, Wright Museum of Art, Beloit College. Photo by Paul Maloney.

Figure 13. *Elephant Pipe,* UWM Art Collection. Photo by Paul Maloney.

Figure 14. *Pipe,* UWM Art Collection. Photo by Paul Maloney.

Figure 15. *Pipe*, UWM Art Collection. Photo by Paul Maloney.

Figure 16. *Pipe,* UWM Art Collection. Photo by Paul Maloney.

Figure 17. *Side A, Face. Off. Faceoff*, UWM Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery. Photo by author.

Figure 18. *Male Figure,* UWM Art Collection. Photo by Paul Maloney.

Figure 19. *Ci Wara Headdress, UWM* Art Collection. Photo by Paul Maloney.

Figure 20. *Side B, Face. Off. Faceoff,* UWM Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery. Photo by author.

Figure 21. *Side B, Face. Off. Faceoff,* UWM Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery. Photo by author.

Figure 22. *Paired Figures, Face. Off. Faceoff,* UWM Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery. Photo by author.

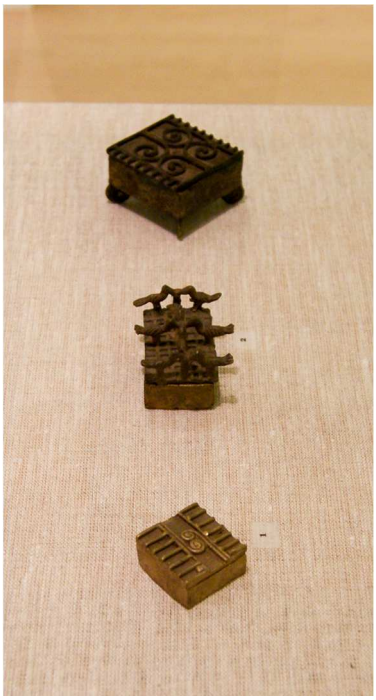

Figure 23. *Gold Dust Boxes, Face. Off. Faceoff,* UWM Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery. Photo by author.

Figure 24. Headrest, *UWM Art Collection. Photo by Paul Maloney.*

Figure 25. *Beaded Collar,* UWM Art Collection. Photo by Paul Maloney.

Figure 26. *Beaded Collar,* UWM Art Collection. Photo by Paul Maloney.

[1] The Art Institute of Chicago Museum, Chicago, Illinois, visited August 17, 2018.
[2] The Chazen Museum of Art, Madison, Wisconsin, visited August 1, 2018.
[3] The Art Institute of Chicago Museum; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, visited November 21, 2018.
[4] The Art Institute of Chicago Museum; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Chazen Museum of Art; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, visited September 29, 2018.
[5] Andrew McClellan, "Ideals and Mission," in *The Art Museum from Boullée to Bilboa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008) 13-52.
[6] McClellan, 13-52.
[7] Susan Vogel, "Introduction," in *Art/Artifact: African Art in Anthropology Collection,* 2nd ed., ed. Arthur C. Danto (New York: Center for African Art, 1988), 12-14.
[8] Victoria Newhouse, "Introduction," in *Art and the Power of Placement* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2005) 14-17.
[9] Vogel, 12.
[10] Vogel, 13-15.
[11] Vogel, 14-16.
[12] University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art, "Art and Life in Africa," Stanley Museum of Art, accessed January 13, 2019, https://africa.uima.uiowa.edu/.
[13] The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, visited November 21, 2018.
[14] The Museum of Fine Arts.
[15] "Visitor Guide," The Art Institute of Chicago Museum, Chicago, Illinois, visited August 17, 2018.
[16] Susan Vogel, "Video Installation," edited by Harry Kafka, The Art Institute of Chicago Museum, Chicago, Illinois, visited August 17, 2018.
[17] The Chazen Museum of Art, Madison, Wisconsin, visited August 1, 2018.
[18] Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, visited September 29, 2018.
[19] Yale University Art Gallery.
[20] The Menil Collection, Houston, Texas, visited November 21, 2018.
[21] The Menil Collection.
[22] Monica Blackmun Visonà, Robin Poynor and Herbert M. Cole, *A History of Art in Africa*, 2nd ed. (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2008) 133.
[23] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "Headdress: Male Antelope (Ci Wara)," accessed January 13, 2019, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/310864?searchField=ArtistCulture&sortBy=relevance&ft=bamana&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=19.
[24] Monica Blackmun Visonà, Robin Poynor and Herbert M. Cole, *A History of Art in Africa*, 2nd ed. (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2008) 118.
[25] Susan Vogel, "Introduction," in *Art/Artifact: African Art in Anthropology Collection,* 2nd ed., ed. Arthur C. Danto (New York: Center for African Art, 1988), 13-14.
[26] Andrew McClellan, "Ideals and Mission," in *The Art Museum from Boullée to Bilboa,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008, 21.
[27] McClellan, 21-28.
[28] Tony Bennet, "The Exhibition Complex," in *Thinking About Exhibitions*, ed. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Nairne, (New York: Routledge, 1996) 81-109.
[29] Bennett, 89.
[30] McClellan, 21-28, Bennett, 89.
[31] Stephen Greenblatt, "Resonance and Wonder," in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display,* ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991) 49-52.
[32] Greenblatt, 49-52.
[33] Michael Baxandall, "Exhibiting Intention: Some Preconditions of the Visual Display of Culturally Purposeful Objects," in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display,* ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991) 37-39.
[34] Greenblatt, 49-52; Baxandall, 37-39.
[35] Vogel, 13-14.

[36] The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, visited November 21, 2018; The Art Institute of Chicago Museum, Chicago, Illinois, visited August 17, 2018.
[37] Baxandall, 37-38.
[38] University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art, "*Ere Ibeji* (twin figures)," Stanley Museum of Art, accessed January 25, 2019, https://africa.uima.uiowa.edu/media/photos/show/162?back=media%2Findex%3FPeople%3D105%26MediaType%3DImage%26action_%3DUse%2BFilter
[39] Metropolitan Museum of Art, "Gold Dust Box (abamphruwa)," accessed January 25, 2019, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/310823?searchField=All&sortBy=relevance&ft=ghana&offset=0&rpp=80&pos=4
[40] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "Headrest: Female Caryatid Figure," accessed January 25, 2019, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/314378?searchField=All&sortBy=relevance&ft=luba&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=12
[41] McClellan, 28-32.
[42] McClellan, 28-32.
[43] Janet Marstine, "Introduction," in *New Museum Theory and Practice: An Introduction*, ed. Janet Marstine (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 2006) 2.
[44] Kim Levin, "Bring 'Em Back Alive," in *Art/Artifact: African Art in Anthropology Collection,* 2nd ed., ed. Arthur C. Danto (New York: Center for African Art, 1988), 204 -205.

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Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut. Visited September 29, 2018.

APPENDIX A: Exhibition Checklist Side A

1.		**Bamana** Mali **Ci Wara (Male Headdress)** Carved Wood, fiber, shell, metal, leather *UWM Art Collection* *Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.060
2.		**Thando Mama** South African ***When I Awake***, from the portfolio "Cross Cultural Identities" 2003 Relief *On loan from the Chazen Museum of Art* *Gift of John Hitchcock,* 2005.29.1m
3.		**Fang Artist** Gabonese ***Nlo Bieri* Reliquary Figure** Carved wood and metal *UWM Art Collection* *Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.243

4.		**Baule Artist** Ivorian **House Door** Wood and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.192
5.		**Senufo Artist** Ivorian **Shrine House Door** Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.190
6.		**Dogon Artist** Malian **Granary Door** Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.321

7.		**Bamana Peoples** Malian **Shrine House Door** Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.322
8.		**Baule Artist** Ivorian **House Door** Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.193
9.		**Hemba Artist** Congolese **Male Panel Figure** Carved wood, pigment, and wire *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.116

10.		**Dogon Artist** Malian **Figure** Carved wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.041
11.		**Asante Artist** Ghanaian **Gold Dust Box** Cast bronze with applied parts *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.236ab
12.		**Kambata Artist** Ethiopian **Headrest** Carved wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.427
13.		**Dan Artist** Burkinabé **Hornbill Mask** Carved wood, raffia, metal, fiber and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.081

14.		**Baule Artist** Ivorian ***Asie Usu* (Nature Spirit Figures)** Carved wood with patina *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.169ab
15.		**Yaka Artist** Congolese **Pipe** Carved wood and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.384
16.		**Makonde Artist** Tanzanian **Power Figure** Carved wood, fiber, and unknown encrusted materials *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.430

17.		Ethiopian **Liquid Container** Wicker, leather and cowrie shells *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.487
18.		Congolese **Spear** Pounded metal and copper wire *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.481
19.		**Massai Artist** Tanzanian **Beaded Collar** Wire, beads and cowrie shells *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II,* 2012.003.532

Ci Wara		
20.		**Antelope Headdress** ***(Ci Wara)*** Mali Wood and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.309
21.		**Stylized Antelope Headdress** ***(Ci Wara)*** Bamana Peoples, Mali Wood, fiber, and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.310
22.		**Horizontal Antelope Headdress** ***(Ci Wara)*** Bamana Peoples, Mali Wood and fiber *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.341

23.		**Antelope Headdress** ***(Ci Wara)*** Bamana Peoples, Mali Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.447
Contemporary		
24.		***Music Makers*** Yinka Adeyemi Born 1941 Yorùbá, Nigeria 1971 Woodcut *On loan from the Chazen Art Museum,* *University of Wisconsin - Madison* *Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John T. Medler* 1976.25
25.		***This Land is Mine*** From the portfolio "Cross – Cultural Identities" Roxandra Dardagan – Britz Zimbabwe born 1962 South Africa 2003 Intaglio *On loan from the Chazen Art Museum,* *University of Wisconsin - Madison* *Gift from John Hitchcock* 2005.29.1i

Ancestral Devotional Figures		
26.		**Tomb Figure** ***(Shabti)*** Thebes, Egypt 3rd Intermediate Period Ceramic or Stone *On loan from the Wright Museum of Art, Beloit College* *Gift of Mary Ripley Goodwin* 1912.1
27.		**Tomb Figure** ***(Ushabti)*** Thebes, Egypt 26th Dynasty Faience *On loan from the Wright Museum of Art, Beloit College* *Gift of Mary Ripley Goodwin* 1912.0002
28.		**Stone Monolith** **(*Akwanashi)*** Bakor – Ejagham Peoples, Nigeria Stone *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.263

29.		**Reliquary Statue** ***(Nlo Bieri)*** Fang Peoples, Gabon Wood and metal *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.477
31.		**Reliquary Figure** **(*Mbulu-ngulu)*** Possibly Kota or Hongwe Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood, metal, rope, and shells *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.363
Doors		
32.		**House Door** Senufo Peoples, Côte d'Ivoire Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.191

33.		**Shrine House Door** Possibly Senufo or Baule, Côte d'Ivoire Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.496
34.		**Granary Door with Lock** Dogon Peoples, Mali Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.342
35.		**Shrine House Door** Dogon Peoples, Mali Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.350

36.		**House Door** Bambara Peoples, Mali Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.323
Figures		
37.		**Figure** ***(Bateba)*** Lobi Peoples, Burkina Faso Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.027
38.		**Soapstone Figure** Kissi Peoples, Guinea Soapstone *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Mark and Mary Jo Wentzel* 2008.002.31

39.		**Healing Figure** Bassa Peoples, Liberia Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.607
40.		**Male Figure** Senufo Peoples, Côte d'Ivoire Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.074
41.		**Beaded Figure** Bamileke Peoples, Cameroon Wood, fiber, and glass beads *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.031

42.		**Female Divination Figure** Bamileke Peoples, Cameroon Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.261
43.		**Female Figure** Lega or Hemba Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.017
44.		**King Portrait Figure** ***(Ndop)*** Kuba Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood and metal *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.248
Gold Dust Boxes		

45.		**Gold Dust Box *(Amanphruwa)*** Asante Peoples, Ghana Bronze *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.237
46.		**Gold Dust Box *(Amanphruwa)*** Asante Peoples, Ghana Bronze *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.238
47.		**Gold Dust Box *(Amanphruwa)*** Asante Peoples, Ghana Bronze *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.240
Headrests		
48.		**Headrest** Tuareg Peoples, Mali or Niger Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.324

49.		**Headrest** Baule Peoples, Côte d'Ivoire Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.150
50.		**Headrest** Kaffa Peoples, Ethiopia Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.468
51.		**Headrest** Boni Peoples, Somalia Wood and leather *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.428
52.		**Headrest** Luba Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.139

53.		**Headrest** Tutsi People, Rwanda Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.425
Masks		
54.		**Mask** Marka Peoples, Mali Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Mark and Mary Jo Wentzel* 2008.002.38
55.		**Mask** ***(Satimbe)*** Dogon Peoples, Mali Wood, fiber, and dye *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.389

56.		**Mask** Dogon Peoples, Mali Wood, fiber, and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.271
57.		**Mask** ***(Keduneh)*** Winiama or Mossi Peoples, Burkina Faso Wood and antelope hide *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Mark and Mary Jo Wentzel* 2008.002.26
58.		**Ox Mask** Bidyogo Peoples, Bissagos Islands, Guinea-Bissau Wood, leather, hair, fiber, metal, horn, and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.036

59.		**Poro Society Mask** Gere or Wobe Peoples, Liberia Wood, metal, hair, and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.353
60.		**Mask** Bété Peoples, Côte d'Ivoire Wood, pigment, and metal *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.180
61.		**Contemporary Mask** ***(Gyela lu Zauli)*** Baule or Guro Peoples, Côte d'Ivoire Wood and polychrome *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.005

62.		**Antelope Mask** ***(Zamble)*** Guro Peoples, Côte d'Ivoire Wood and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Mark and Mary Jo Wentzel* 2008.002.21
63.		**Face Mask** Dan or Gere Peoples, Côte d'Ivoire Wood, hair, bronze, and fiber *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.037
64.		**Male Mask** Dan Peoples, Nigeria Wood, fiber, metal, and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.073

65.		**Mask** ***(Egungun)*** Yorùbá Peoples, Nigeria Fabric, wood, and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Mark and Mary Jo Wentzel* 2009.002.28
66.		**Body Mask** Yorùbá Peoples, Nigeria Wood and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.304
67.		**Gelede Mask** Yorùbá Peoples, Nigeria Wood and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.070

68.		**Female Mask** ***(Mukudj)*** Punu Peoples, Gabon Wood and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.242
69.		**Ancestral Mask** ***(Lukwakongo)*** Lega Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood, hair, shell, glass, burlap, and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.081
70.		**Mask** ***(Kifwebe)*** Luba Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.119

71.		**Helmet Mask** Luba Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood, metal, and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.352
72.		**Helmet Mask** ***(Hemba)*** Suku Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.246
73.		**Helmet Mask** ***(Hemba)*** Suku Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.120

74.		**Mask** ***(Mukinka)*** Salampasu Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood, copper, rope, and ratten *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Mark and Mary Jo Wentzel* 2008.002.03
75.		**Bird Mask** ***(Chikweke)*** Chokwe or Lunda Peoples, Angola Wood, cloth, and fiber *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.376
Paired Figures		

76.		**Nommo Figures** Dogon Peoples, Mali Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.347
77.		**Twin Figures** ***(Ere Ibeji)*** Yorùbá Peoples, Nigeria Wood, pigment, and beads *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Eugene and Inez Gilbert* 2011.024.18ab
78.		**Twin Figures** ***(Ere Ibeji)*** Yorùbá Peoples, Nigeria Wood, beads, and shells, and fiber *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.297

79.		**Twin Figure** ***(Ere Ibeji)*** Yorùbá Peoples, Nigeria Wood, shells, and fiber *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.195ab
80.		**Twin Figure** ***(Ere Ibeji)*** Yorùbá Peoples, Nigeria Wood, pigment, beads and glass *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.279ab
Pipes		
81.		**Pipe** Cameroon Brass *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.349
82.		**Pipe** Bamum Peoples, Cameroon Bronze and wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.354

83.		**Pipe** West Africa Wood, bronze, and snake skin *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.358
Power Figures		
84.		**Power Figure** ***(Ikenga)*** Igbo Peoples, Nigeria Wood, feathers, rope, pigment and empowered materials *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.360
85.		**Horse Skull Reliquary** Igbo Peoples, Nigeria Horse skull and woven cane *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.293

86.		**Power Figure** Chokwe Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood, cloth, pigment, and metal *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.362
87.		**Power Figure** ***(Minkisi)*** Kongo Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood, glass, resin, metal, fiber, and empowered material *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.112
88.		**Power Figure** ***(Pfembe)*** Kongo Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood, glass, teeth, and empowered material *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.028

89.		**Power Figure** Teke Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood, fiber, cloth, feathers, and empowered materials *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.379
90.		**Bound Female Power Figure** Zaramo or Pare Peoples, Tanzania Wood, fiber, and empowered material *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.019
Vessels		
91.		**Kola Nut Bowl** Yorùbá Peoples, Nigeria Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis* 2012.003.494

92.		**Food Serving Plate** Ethiopia Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.590
93.		**Liquid Container** Ethiopia Wicker and fiber *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.490
94.		**Tej Pot** Ethiopian Earthenware *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk* 1989.012.11

95.		**Meat Container** Turkana Peoples, Kenya or Ethiopia Wood, leather, and fiber *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis* 2012.003.493
96.		**Gourd Container** Kikuyu Peoples, Kenya Gourd, glass beads, leather, fiber, and mother of pearl *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.439
97.		**Cup** Kuba Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.046

98.		**Vessel** Possibly Mangbetu Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 20012.003.290
99.		**Cup** Tutsi Peoples, Rwanda Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.333
100.		**Bolgo Basket** Botswana Palm tree fiber and pigment *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.593
Weapons		

101.		**Sword** Ethiopia Brass, wood, and leather *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk* 1988.008.09
102.		**Decapitation Knife** Congo Area Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Metal, wood, cloth *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.476
103.		**Ceremonial Wooden Knife *(Ikul)*** Mongo Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Wood *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.125
104.		**Knife** Ngala Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Metal, wood and fiber *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.129

105.		**Knife** Ngala Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Metal and bone *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.127
Worn Objects		
106.		**Beaded Robe** Yorùbá Peoples, Nigeria Beads and fiber *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.281
107.		**Belt** Yorùbá Peoples, Nigeria Beads and fiber *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.537

108.		**Belt** Yorùbá Peoples, Nigeria Fabric, cowrie shells, and buttons *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.546
109.		**Belt** Kuba Peoples, Democratic Republic of the Congo Beads, cowrie shells, and leather *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.538
110.		**Cartridge Belt** Ethiopia Fabric, leather, and metal *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Dr. Quentin and Emmy Lou Schenk* 1989.012.04

111.		**Beaded Belt Piece** Maasai Peoples, Tanzania Beads and metal *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.543
112.		**Beaded Collar** Maasai Peoples, Tanzania Beads and wire *UWM Art Collection* *Gift of Emile H. Mathis II* 2012.003.535

Face. Off. Faceoff
Survey Questions

Please respond to questions and deposit in the tray. These questions will be used by the curator to better determine the effects of this exhibition-as-experiment.

1. **Why do you go to art museums?**
What do you hope to get out of a visit?

2. **What is more familiar to you, African art collections presented like Side A (fewer objects) or Side B (More objects)?**
Which gallery did you prefer?
Why?

3. **How did the information accompanying objects on both sides of the gallery influence/ not influence your viewing experience and understanding of African culture?**

4. **How did the inclusion of the Ancient Egyptian Shabti tomb figurines and the three contemporary prints alter/not alter your notion of Africa?**

5. **What are three words you would use to describe Africa prior to experiencing this exhibition?**
What are three words you would now use to describe Africa?