

major institutions and movements: the U.N., the Peace Corps, the Black Arts/Black Power movement, the Smithsonian Museum of African Art. He claims to have invented the High Life beat.

This montage is ultimately tiresome—as even Robert Atkinson admits in his afterword—and it somehow cheapens the presentation of a life that was clearly a prominent force in world music. But the book is delightful when Olatunji expresses wonder at the world and its possibilities. I smiled at his testimony about the transformative power of Peoples Express airline, whose low prices allowed him to get his whole drum company to the American West Coast. This sweet reflection on the democratic nature of the airline exemplifies the way in which the book manages to transcend all the name-dropping. We see here the humility that is characteristic of the few people with access to the resources that enable them to travel outside of Africa. His is the glee of one who is launched from a sea of deprivation onto a world tour, however shaky and disorienting the journey is. Olatunji's smiling face in the photos seems to say: How can I complain when all of life is *lagnappe*?

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Sam Hilu and Irwin Hersey. *Bogolanfini Mud Cloth*. Atglen, Pa.: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2005. 160 pp. Photographs. Bibliography. \$49.95. Cloth.

This beautifully produced, large-format volume presents one of the most comprehensive visual documentations published to date of modern *bogolan* mud cloth from Mali. In addition, its very well-written text provides a comprehensive history of this textile that draws upon the field research of several scholars. As the authors explain, modern *bogolan* evolved in Mali from traditional *bogolanfini*. The latter textile is characterized by intricate white or yellow geometric designs and patterns created by rural female artists for a variety of ritual and utilitarian purposes. These designs and patterns emerge on a cloth previously dyed in a yellow-colored tannic acid solution after the backgrounds have been meticulously filled in with black mud. The mud binds to the acid-treated cloth, thus filling the voids between the designs and patterns. On traditional *bogolanfini* cloths these images symbolize historical events, mythological subjects, social issues, objects, and folk wisdom. Modern *bogolan* emerged in the 1980s in Mali and represents, as the authors explain, a modern urban derivative of traditional rural *bogolanfini*. A variety of social, economic, artistic, cultural, and political forces converged at that time, along with the leadership of several male artists, notably the late Chris Seydou (Seydou Nourou Doumbia), a major fashion designer who internationalized *bogolanfini* designs and patterns in Western attire.

After discussing traditional bogolanfini, the authors cover modern tourist market bogolan and fine art cloths, emphasizing the role of men and modified production methods in the creation of the latter two. They then provide readers with an insightful discussion of the place of mud cloth designs and patterns in the Western fashion world and the role of Chris Seydou in catalyzing their adoption into highly tailored garments. Finally, the authors discuss mud cloth on the international scene and predict a vibrant future for it. The authors also note the existence of the *dabu* mud cloth tradition in India, which Sam Hilu has studied during several field trips to Rajasthan. Dabu is essentially a resist printing process that uses pastes made from mud and other substances and sculpted wooden blocks to create designs and patterns. Although the processes used to create dabu and bogolan are somewhat different, they do share a common use of mud and other ingredients.

This volume is greatly enriched by more than two hundred photographs, most of which are in color, and by several field photographs depicting the creation of bogolan. The comprehensiveness of the photographs provides for a unique understanding of the range of bogolan designs and patterns and of the various shades of russet used to create unique artistic cloths. All of the photographs are also available on a CD that accompanies the book.

The complementary expertise of the two authors has greatly contributed to the uniqueness of this book. Sam Hilu, who has his own line of apparel, is internationally known for his efforts to adapt ethnographic textile designs to the popular Western clothing market. In addition to traveling all over the world collecting hand-crafted textiles and studying how they are created, he has also worked closely with leading Western designers to promote their use in a variety of clothing items. Irwin Hersey is an internationally renowned authority on ethnographic arts and a former editor and publisher of the *Primitive Art Newsletter*. He brings to this volume a vast knowledge of the arts of Africa and a special expertise on African textiles.

Bogolanfini Mud Cloth is an exceptionally important volume that greatly enhances our knowledge of a unique Malian textile and visually documents the rich range of creative artistry expressed through it. It is a pleasure to read and will be a valuable resource both now and in the future for those with an interest in African textiles.

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