FACE TO FACE
The Helinä Rautavaara Museum
Collection Exhibition

HELINÄ
RAUTAVAARAN
MUSEO

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**"I always needed to be part of the group, to belong.
To me that was absolutely necessary. That sets me apart from other researchers.
I don't study, I live their lives."**

Helinä Rautavaara (1928–1998), travelled first in Europe, then further afield into more distant cultures. Her desire was to see, experience and to understand. Curiosity and the wish to let her passionate interest take the lead link her to other earlier female explorers. They too travelled light and alone to see the world. Rautavaara taped, photographed and wrote. From her travels she brought home artefacts, little by little building a collection worthy of a museum. Armed with these artefacts, the stories behind them, and the international Sunday Salons she held at her home in Ruusulankatu in Helsinki, she fought the greyness of the post-war years.

The artefacts that Helinä Rautavaara brought home from her travels have now become part of the ever-changing heritage of Finland. The Helinä Rautavaara Collection Exhibition continues to live and grow with new stories and interpretations.

"True peace can only be reached in people's hearts. In the history of humanity, the communities that have managed to understand others and their emotions deeply are those that have experienced profound peace. Lack of comprehension causes fear, prejudice and can lead to conflict." (Alioune Diop, Senegalese write and editor, 1966. Helinä Rautavaara's private library).

HELINÄ RAUTAVAARA

Researcher, experiencer, journalist, teacher, collector

"I travelled to learn and to show respect. I think it showed in my earlier writing that I may have had a somewhat ambivalent attitude, but when I got in there, into Ceylon [now Sri Lanka], then the tone changed completely. I was of course a child of the 50s, but I soon developed a wider, clearer focus."
Helinä Rautavaara, recollection, 1997.

Helinä Rautavaara (1928–1998) was born into an academic family in Helsinki. She attended the Helsingin suomalainen yhteiskoulu school and took piano lessons. Rautavaara read psychology and pedagogy at the University of Helsinki and attended drawing classes at the University Drawing School. She also took a course in journalism with the University's Ylioppilaslehti magazine. In 1954 she embarked on her first trip outside Europe when she travelled to North Africa. Rautavaara had already been married, divorced, and undergone difficult surgery.

On her second long-distance journey she went to India by way of the Middle East. Rautavaara wrote about her travels for Seura magazine under the heading 'Thumbelina's Travels' (Peukaloliisan matkakertomuksia in Finnish). In 1958 she received a two-year scholarship to the United States. After completing her studies in the US, she went on a long bicycle tour of Central and South America. She travelled about as a researcher and journalist, taping, photographing and writing about her experiences. Six years later, she returned to Finland.

During her travels, Rautavaara got to know people, joined in with the life of communities and strove to learn about and understand them. In 1966 she took part in a festival of African culture (Premier festival des Arts Négres) in Senegal and a Unesco conference in Benin. Soon afterwards she continued her studies at the University of Saõ Paulo in Brazil. However, a severe worsening of her eyesight meant that she could not finish the work on her thesis.

In the 1970s and 80s Helinä Rautavaara travelled in Uganda, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal. In the 1990s she made several shorter trips to places she knew from her earlier travels. Her last trip was made five years before her death. She ran away from the hospital to spend a week in Morocco and returned with Berber wedding jewellery and carpets.

Little by little, Helinä Rautavaara became a collector. Her way of travelling and her finances did not allow for any large purchases before the 1980s. It was not until she inherited from her parents that she was able to systematically expand her collection. The Rautavaara Collection comprises some 3,000 objects, tens of thousands of photographs, hundreds of hours of sound recordings and dozens of hours of cinematographic film.

Objects and notes from Helinä Rautavaara's personal history collection.

1. Poster, Nigeria

Festac-77 poster from travels to Nigeria 1977, where Rautavaara participated in African culture festivals. (Rhi3)

2. Poster

Poster from a Reggae event in the 1980's. Helinä was an avid Reggae enthusiast. She lived in Jamaica in 1981 and attended Bob Marley's funeral.

3.-4. Recorder and large tape recorder

Rautavaara also borrowed recorders from radio stations.

5.-6. Camera

The Super8 film recorder and the Panasonic video camera were heavily used. (Rhi4)

7. Passports, visas and textbooks

8. Notes, drawings and brochures

Rautavaara recorded what she saw and experienced in an ethnographic way already before she became acquainted with the field. The pictures show a skillful drawing.

9. Rautavaara's personal costume, Guatemala

Many Guatemalan women still wear traditional costumes. History and the Mayan calendar have inspired the patterns and colors of the costumes. The most commonly used colors are red, blue and yellow. The costume always includes a shirt, skirt and belt. A headband, hat, shawl or apron is often added to the outfit. The fabrics are woven with both foot and hand-operated looms. The details and embroidery of the costumes show the social status of the wearer.

Today the costumes from different areas can be mixed and combined. The costume worn by Helinä Rautavaara comes from the Xela area. The shirt features embroidered flowers in a style typical for the area. Other popular designs feature bird and star embroidery. The skirt is made of wool and woven on a foot-operated loom.

10. Mbulu ngulu Kota-people, Gabon

Mbulu ngulu is a guardian of a basket that contains bones of the ancestors. The containers are often a bundle of cloth or a basket. Mbulu Ngulu is placed on top of the basket. Caring for a basket is considered an honor for living relatives. With the help of a sculpture the power and strength of past generations are preserved. The respected, deceased ancestor is believed to contribute to the success of the relatives caring for the remains. The wooden sculpture is covered with metal, which reflects light into the dark storage space of the basket. The metal surface is believed to ward off witchcraft and bad thoughts. With the introduction of Christianity during the colonial area, new burial methods were introduced, and this tradition disappeared. (HRE1102)

A LIFE CROSSING BOUNDARIES

Heart in Somalia, rooted in Finland

"People have their own preconceived ideas of what I can be. I have to fit into the idea of what it is like to be an African, a refugee, an immigrant or a Muslim. From experience I know that all these definitions and their negative connotations are found in the word Somali. If you are Somali, you are assumed to be marginalized and subjugated, a thief, a rapist, a burden, you are thought to be exploiting the social services system and to be an Islamist pirate.

In 1988, Civil war broke out in Somalia and by 1991 had caused the collapse of the State. Today, more than one million Somalis live elsewhere, including in Ethiopia, Kenya, the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, the United Kingdom, North America and the Nordic countries.

Somalis residing outside their home country make up the community of Somalian people living in the Somali diaspora. Adapting to what is new around them and preserving their own culture are important elements of their life in the diaspora. They are aware of their roots and keep in touch with their country of origin, but they are also building new lives. Family members are often a network of relatives dispersed around the world.

The first Somalis arrived in Finland through the Soviet Union in 1990. Today, there are more than 20,000 people in Finland whose first language is Somali. Half of them are citizens of Somalia while the other half are Finnish citizens. Those who flee from war can take only what they absolutely need, which is why this part of the exhibition is lacking in objects. Photographs tell the story of Somalia, of the first Somalis to come to Finland and of the young people who have grown up in Finland.

But I am proud to be Somali, despite all the unwarranted definitions people put on me. I do not accept the hypocrisy of people telling me that I am "a good Somali". They want to see me as a victim who has bravely turned my back on my own group in order to be something else. Sorry guys, but I am Somali – and a lot of other things besides."
Warda Ahmed, teacher and activist, 2016.

Photos

1. Hamar weyne, “Old city”, Mogadishu 1984. Photo: Pirkko Tanttu

2. Afar irdoor, “Four doors”, Mogadishu 1984. Photo: Pirkko Tanttu

3. “Camel market”, Baidoa 1985. Photo: Pirkko Tanttu

4. “Refugee camp”, Mogadishu 1984. Photo: Pirkko Tanttu

5. “Celebration at the stadium”, Mogadishu 1984. Photo: Nur Nasib Abdullahi Ali

6. “Demonstration”, Helsinki 1991. Photo: Nur Nasib Abdullahi Ali

7. “Funerals”, Helsinki 1991. Photo: Nur Nasib Abdullahi Ali

8. “Football game”, Helsinki 1992. Photo: Nur Nasib Abdullahi Ali

9. “Cutting hay”, Espoo 2013. Photo: Nina-Maria Oförsagd

10. “Wedding”, Espoo 2013. Photo: Nina-Maria Oförsagd

Video: “Mogadishu then and now - photos and poems from the city”.

Length: 15 minutes.

Production: Helinä Rautavaara Museum

Funding: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

The materials in this part of the exhibition have been put together by people of Somalian background who are living in the capital region, the Communication and Development Foundation and the Finland-Somalia Society in 2011-2018.

PROTECTION AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

The significance of jewellery in the Islamic world

"Ahead of us we had the famous journey across the desert of nearly a thousand kilometres. The barrenness of the environment was so palpable that you would start and think you had seen a ghost when, occasionally, a herd of goats or camels with their herders appeared in this unfathomably rocky landscape. The driver said these people can live for months on goat's milk alone, even going without bread." Helinä Rautavaara, 'Thumbelina's Travels', Seura magazine, 1956.

The Middle East is home to some of humanity's oldest civilizations, with a history stretching back more than 7,000 years. The great rivers and the water systems built around them formed the basis of the agriculture that developed in the region. The desert was home to nomadic cattle herders. Growing trade evolved between the towns and cities that were already growing up 5,000 years ago and, little by little, trade routes came to connect the Middle Eastwith Asia, Africa and Europe. The great monotheistic religions of the world – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – were all born in the Middle East. The first known writing system, astronomy and mathematics also began there.

Jewellery and amulets have had a special place in the Middle and Near East and are still given as wedding gifts to the bride. Today, gold is the most popular metal, but earlier it was silver. Jewellery has been about more than personal adornment. It was an insurance and a property that a woman could take with her and trade for money in a time of need. Many stories tell of jewellery that has united families. People have also believed that jewellery possesses protective or lucky powers. For instance, among the Berber in North Africa, a blue gemstone was thought to protect its bearer, while a red stone brought good luck.

Beads too were popular in North Africa. Women crushed seeds with cloves and added water spiced with saffron and fragrant herbs, such as masterwort (Peucedanum ostruthium). After forming the mixture into round or pyramid-shaped beads, they pierced a hole in each one, then threaded them on to a string.

In 2016, Denmark established a law that stated that property can be seized from asylum seekers if it is worth more than EUR 1,300. Jewellery, with the exception of wedding rings, is also in the purview of the law. However, not a single item of jewellery has been seized.

Objects

1. Necklace, Morocco

Amulets stem from the belief that people can influence supernatural powers. Jewelry and amulets have been worn because of the protective powers they possess. Jewelry is worn by women, men and children alike and is kept close to the wearer's body. Women often wear amulets hidden under their clothing. In addition to an amulet, triangular tiles with Fatima's hand and a crescent are worn on the ribbon. (Rai 116)

2. Necklace, Morocco

These are glass and handmade scented beads. The coin has a depiction of the six-pointed Solomon star. According to Helinä Rautavaara the jewelry belonged to the women of the North African Gnawa people. (HRE840)

3. Necklace, Morocco

In the center of the jewelry is a silver amulet container. The beads are made from glass or hand made. Inside the beads fragrant herbs or spices could be placed. (HRE842)

4. Necklace, Yemen

The colors of the enamel decoration indicate an Algerian manufacturer. The coins are reproductions. (Rai138)

5. Necklace, Morocco

The Indigenous peoples of Northern Africa are known as the Berbers. They got their name from the Romans, who considered them 'primitive barbarians'. The Berbers were skilled silversmiths. Berber women wore jewelry both on weekdays and at parties, the jewelry was believed to have good qualities. In the Atlas Mountains, and egg-shaped, often enameled silver bead, called taguemout, was a common pendant. It was believed to increase fertility. (Rai136)

6. Jambiya-dagger, Yemen

The Jambiya-dagger with its belts was still part of everyday dress of the Yemini man ion the 1970's. These days, their use has declined. The men still dance the Yambiya dance at weddings. The same tradition is known throughout the Arabic world. In the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq, daggers are worn on the front of the body, at the navel. Daggers tell of the social status and wealth of the wearer and are used for decoration only. Weapons for use are separate. The blade part of the dagger is usually made of steel. Wealth is expressed by the choice of material for the handle, sheath and belt. The most valuable are the silver sheaths skillfully decorated by Jewish silversmiths and the handles made from ivory or water buffalo horn, decorated with silver and velvet, as well as silk belts decorated with silver and gold threads.

Decorations have different meanings. Diamonds were believed to protect the wearer from the 'evil eye'. The handle is made of bone to which two brass discs are attached. The leather belt is decorated with silver and copper wires and the sheath has a silver decorated tip. The red stones are stained glass. (HRE674)

7. Necklace, Egypt

The necklace is made from silver beads and amber-like glass beads. (Rai56)

8. Amulet jewelry, Egypt

Amulet case. Rectangular amulet cases were worn around the neck. The case is decorated with zigzag lines, which were believed to protect against the 'evil eye'. (Rai97)

9. Necklace, Afghanistan

This necklace came from Pashtu people living on the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Enamel decorations and the use of silver bells were characteristic for the silversmiths of the nomads. This piece is an example of how old amulet cases have been combined with a new bead necklace. This necklace is one of Helinä Rautavaara's first purchases. She bought it in Afghanistan in 1957. (Rai238)

10. Wedding jewelry, Yemen

In Yemen, brides are covered in jewelry on their wedding day. On their head a diadem was worn, around the neck, on the temples and under the chin was jewelry made from hollow silver beads, several amulet straps were worn on the chest, bracelets and rings on the hands and anklets on the ankles. There are three amulet cases hanging from the necklace, which sometimes contained a text from the Qur'an written on a piece of paper. In most cases, however, the cases are empty, and the jewelry cases function as the protective amulet. The jewelry is made from silver and weighs over a pound. The jewelry is made by Jewish silversmiths. (Rai182)

11. Forehead jewelry, Afghanistan

Instead of corals and other semi-precious stones, it was often sufficient to use a piece of glass with a piece of colored paper. (Rai236)

12. Silver jewelry, Afghanistan

Silver jewelry that could be attached to clothing. (Rai237, Rai240)

13. Necklace, Yemen

The middle medallion of the jewelry is the thaler of Maria Theresa, or Levant. They were used by the Jewish silversmiths of Yemen as pendants or jewelry. Small pomegranate patterns symbolize fertility. (Rai183)

14. Necklace, Yemen

The red stone on the amulet ribbon mimics a desert rose or coral. (Rai186)

15. Necklace, Yemen

Coral was a popular semi-precious stone whose color reflected beauty and was believed to suppress heavy bleeding. Sometimes replicas were used, instead of corals, such as this desert rose crystal. One of the stones is engraved with the initials of the Prophet Mohammed. In addition to coral beads, glass beads were procured mainly from Mediterranean countries. (Rai185)

16. Dagger belts, Yemen

The front jambiya is made of steel, the handle is made of cowhide or ivory imitation plastic, the belt and the sheath of leather are surrounded by a layer of colorful strips of fabric. Often, the items were improved over time, and parts were replaced with more valuable ones when the owner's economic situation allowed. Attached to this belt is a silver amulet case for the verses from the Qur'an and a silver kohl case and applicator. (Rai 175, Rai176)

DURGA PUJA – RETURN OF THE GODDESS

Diaspora festivities

"That's the beauty of it, that even though people's lives all around are modern, these ceremonies survive." Helinä Rautavaara, interview, 1997.

The Durga Puja Festival celebrates the victory of the goddess Durga over the devious, shape-shifting buffalo demon Mahishasura. The feast is an expression of the victory of good over evil, but it is also a harvest festival celebrating the goddess of all living things. Durga Puja is one of the biggest annual religious festivities in India. It is particularly celebrated in the state of Bengal in eastern India. During the festival, statues and images of the goddess Durga are venerated in many ways – families visit temples and children receive gifts.

In India old statues of gods and their altars are often dunked in water after use. The Bengal community in the Helsinki area used a festive altar in Finland from 2007–2012. When they got a new one, they donated their old altar to the Helinä Rautavaara Museum.

In 2019 nearly 16 million Indian nationals were living outside their native country. They are the largest known diaspora in the world. The IT boom of the twenty-first century sped up the arrival of Indian experts in Finland. At the end of 2018 there were some 6,000 Indian citizens living in Finland, many of them in Espoo.

Durga Puja is also a symbol of homecoming. According to tradition, the goddess Durga lives in the Himalaya mountains with her husband Shiva. During Durga Puja she is thought to visit her childhood home with her daughters Lakshmi and Saraswati and her sons Kartikeya and Ganesha.

Video: Durga Puja ceremony

The Durga Puja celebration is organized by the members of Bengali community in the capital area of Finland.

In India, the actual Durga festival lasts 10 days. The celebrations begin with remembering the ancestors. The sixth day is the most important day, when the community welcomes Durga and the Puja celebrations begin. Puja includes a recitation of legends about Durga and visits to decorated and illuminated temples. Families get together and Durga altars are built in their homes. The festivities culminate in the immersion of the Durga statue in water. The immersion symbolizes Durga's returning home to the Himalayas.

In Finland Durga Purja is celebrated from Friday to Sunday in a jointly rented party room. The party include dining and a program. Decorating the party space is important. Centrally located on the room is the altar of the goddess Durga, with fragrant incense, flowers, food and drink in front of it.

Please have a look!

Objects

1. Altar, India

In the center of the altar is a figure of the goddess Durga. Durga is the largest of the altar figures, and to her right is a slightly smaller figure of Saraswat facing a small swan. In front of her, beside her is Kartikeya, sitting on a peacock. On the left is Laksmi with a little owl. On the lower level is the elephant-headed Ganesha. On the same level, in front of Durga is a lion who encounters the Mahishasura demon with raised paws. Durga has 10 hands, each with a different weapon or instrument. (ETN57)

2. Altar objects, India

The Durga-Purja festival also celebrates other important Hindu gods who are considered Durga's children. Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth and success, Saraswati the goddess of knowledge and music, Ganesha, the elephant, god of good beginnings and Kartekeya, the god of war. In front of the altar are the items needed for the ceremony. A metal tray, an incense holder, lights, bowls for incense, flowers and drinks. (ETN64:1-11)

This showcase is co-curated with people of Bengali background living in the capital region.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE AMAZON

Survival stories from conflicts over natural resources

"On the Amazon river I caught malaria. I got it in a canoe like this, it was night and pitch black. It was a sort of ague. I was in really bad shape and said that I have to get ashore." Helinä Rautavaara, interview, 1997.

It is said that the Amazon river was named for Yagua men. When the first Europeans saw men with long hair, dressed in skirts of palm fronds, they thought they were strong women and named the river the Amazon, after the warrior women of Greek mythology.

To the Yagua people, who live in an area bordering Peru and Colombia, the palm tree is an important plant. They use it to keep in touch with their forefathers and the spirit world. The Yagua grow palms near their dwellings and use them to make blowpipes, flutes, jewellery and clothes. Jewellery and clothes made of palm leaves are thought to protect their wearers against evil. Blowpipes made of palm trees are still an important part of the Yagua way of life. They are used to catch monkeys and birds. Each man usually has his own blowpipe, which is not generally lent or borrowed. The dead are buried with their blowpipes.

Helinä Rautavaara travelled in the Amazon area of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Brazil during 1961–1964 and in 1971. In the 2000s, the Shuar, the Pilagá, the Hixkaryana, the Yagua and other Indigenous peoples of the Amazon region have risen up to defend their rights to the natural resources, the land, their language and culture. The results of the trials have been promising. For instance, ancestral lands of the Hixkaryana have been returned to them and they have established new villages on their ancient lands. However, the time of politicians who exploit Indigenous peoples is not yet over.

Photos

1–2. The Pilagá are an Indigenous people living in the Chaco Plains between Argentina and Paraguay.

Photos: 1962, Helinä Rautavaara Museum Photograph Collection

3–4. The Shuar live in the Amazonian rainforest in Ecuador and Peru. The man's face is traditionally painted using a pigment that comes from the Genipa americana tree, a species that is significant to the Indigenous peoples of the area. Tradition has it that the Genipa americana tree was originally a beautiful girl called Huituc. When Huituc grew up she and her sister Manduru became trees, spreading beauty and a pleasant scent. In order to become similarly attractive, local women sing a song dedicated to the tree spirit.

Photos: 1962, Helinä Rautavaara Museum Photograph Collection

5. A traditional Shuar dwelling is made of palm leaves and built on stilts to keep out dangerous animals. For the same reason, sleeping in the rainforest is usually done in hammocks.

Photo: 1961, Helinä Rautavaara Museum Photograph Collection

Objects

1. Bow and arrow, Hixkaryana people

Hixkaryana bow and arrow. The bow and arrow are a hunting weapon for the Hiskaryana. Indigenous peoples in the Amazon continue to hunt, fish and gather. The use of bow and arrow has decreased, but blowpipes are still in use. (Rla32)

2. Yagua blowpipe, arrowhead and arrows. Yagua people

The hollow shape of the blowpipe is believed to convert uncontrolled energy to controlled energy. The air blown through the blow pipe gives the arrow a crippling force. Spears were used to hunt large game. A deadly blow was delivered with a mallet. Today the spear and mallet have been replaced by firearms, but the blowpipe is still used. Blowpipes usually are 1,5-3 meters long. Children's blowpipes can be smaller. The boys receive their first blowpipe when they turn 6-8 years old. (ETN54:4, RLA35)

The blowpipe has two layers and a range of up to 30 meters when used by a skilled hunter. The mouthpiece is made of a different wood bark. Attached is a bag containing the poison from the curare bush and piranha teeth to sharpen the arrows before shooting. The different materials from the blowpipe are not in the blowpipe by chance, they all have their own important meaning, and their powers are used by the hunter. Each blowpipe is believed to have a 'mother', or a spirit that has entered the palm and other materials used.

The blowpipe displayed is either a children's blow pipe or made for tourists. Blowpipes made for tourists are traditionally made and may not be used before sale. They are believed to have the same power as any other blowpipe. The arrowhead is made by skillfully folding palm leaves. The arrows are dipped in poison (Rla35)

3. Breast Plate, Shuar people

The Shuar use colorful birds and bird's feathers to decorate. They were used to make various straps and headgear, necklaces, earrings and chest plates. These days, clothing has Westernized, but traditional costumes are still used at parties and performances for tourists. Helinä Rautavaara visited the mission in 1960 and was given these items belonging to the chief. (HRE406 and Rla46)

4. Tinderbox

A tinderbox was used to make fire. The fire was made by striking to stones together, using wool as in incendiary. (Rla40)

5. Medicine horn

The horn reveals knowledge of plants. Indigenous peoples are familiar with the medicinal effects of plants, and many medicines sold in pharmacies contain substances found in medicinal plants known to Indigenous people. (Rla41)

6. Sandals, Pilagá people

Plaid sandals made from leather for summer use. Moccasin type footwear was worn in winter. (Rla43)

7. Bag made of plant fibers (Rla38)

BRAZILIAN CAPOEIRA

From slave revolt to national sport

"The capoeira begins with an introductory hymn, the dancers sitting on their haunches at the feet of those who play the music. When the choir joins in, the dancers bless themselves and begin the dance or duel. The movements are only training for actual battle." Helinä Rautavaara, notes, 1972.

Brazilian capoeira is a form of martial art in which dance-like movements are performed together with music and song. Combat takes place within a ring, or roda, of capoeirista, as practitioners of capoeira are called. The fight is accompanied by the bateria, which usually consists of eight people playing instruments and singing. The instruments are the berimbau, a musical bow, the vaqueta stick, the caxixi shaker, the bandeira drum and agogô bell.

The roots of capoeira are found in south-west Africa. It crossed the Atlantic with the Bantu slaves brought into Brazil by Portuguese colonisers during the sixteenth century. A similar tradition still exists in present-day Angola. There are many theories about the origin of the word 'capoeira'. For instance, ka´a e pûer or ko´pwera in the language of the Tupi people of Brazil denotes plants growing in the past tense. This is understood to be a reference to the shrubland in which escaped slaves often hid. In the nineteenth century, former slaves used capoeira for self-defence and set up settlements called quilombo from which they opposed the Brazilian authorities. The violent sport was associated with criminal behaviour and was banned by law in 1889. In 1932 the Mestre Bimba, a master capoeirista, convinced the Brazilian authorities that capoeira was important and founded the first school that taught the capoeira regional style in Salvador, Bahia.

The history of capoeira has been recorded in stories, songs and poetry, and in written sources which have survived. The state of Bahia in north-eastern Brazil is known as the cradle of capoeira as a sport.

In 1972 capoeira was made the official national sport of Brazil, and in 2014 UNESCO granted it a special protected status as an intangible cultural heritage. The sport reached Finland in the late 1980s. Helinä Rautavaara had become acquainted with capoeira during her first trip to Brazil in the 1960s.

Objects

1. Berimbau-music bow, Brazil

The berimbaus are made of wood, a hollow calabash and wire. The instrument in the middle is painted by Mestre Waldemar, Brazil, 1971. (HRE439, HRE436, HRE441)

2. Instruments, Brazil

Caxixí-rattle and vaqueta-stick. When a round hole is cut in the calabash that makes up the sound box for the berimbou, the remaining piece is used as the base of a caxixí rattle. Inside can be seashells or seeds. Brazil 1971. (Rla28, HRE436, HRE74)

3. Materials about Brazil, belonging to Helinä Rautavaara.

Capoeira school textbooks, croquis sketches, watercolor painting and field notes from Brazil, belonging to Helinä Rautavaara, from the years 1963-64 and 1971.

4. T-shirt, Brazil

Mestre João Grande donated t-shirts to the museum. The shirts feature a picture of his teacher, Mestre Pastinha. Capoeira Angola Center New York, 2007.

The museum has continued the collaboration started by Rautavaara and has organized several archival research visits to Brazilian-born capoeira experts since 2005.

RELIGIOUS ART IN AFRICA

Ancestors and nature spirits beside you in life

"I'm interested in rituals, dances and music. I record sound, I make movies, I don't seek individual objects, they're not what I'm studying. They are all part of a whole." Helinä Rautavaara, interview, 1997.

There has long been considerable give and take between Africa and Europe in trade, religion, ideas and art. When Europeans began collecting African objects, they focused their attention on sculptures that resembled Western art. Textiles and ceramics were mostly ignored, as were the paintings on people's skin, the walls of houses and on rocks. Collectors also neglected to document the names of the artists.

As in Western art, there is great diversity in African art in terms of its shape, technique and meaning. Regardless of where it is created, art can have political or ideological aims, it can be entertaining or contribute to religious expression. Often, art combines more than one of those meanings. Characteristic of African art is its combination of several elements together with performance. Music, dance, clothing, body emphasis, sculptures and masks are all interconnected and individual objects derive meaning from being part of a larger whole. A common misconception has been that the importance of pre-colonial African art resided only in its use or function. But, in addition to its use, it has always had an aesthetic value in and of itself.

Most of the objects in the display case represent West African religious art. The objects are connected to universal life questions and needs, such as being a member of a community, social order and power, growing up, gender, the birth of children, making a living, safety and death. In many parts of West Africa, ancestors and nature spirits are believed to remain present throughout the various stages of life. Many of the objects displayed have to do with the connection between human beings and the spiritual world. When we consider the use of Christian crucifixes and icons, it seems they too can be seen as belonging to a similar group of objects.

The objects have been grouped according to a theme within each display case. The themes are based on the meaning and uses of the objects. However, many objects often have several concurrent meanings and could be used in a variety of situations. The division used here is only one of several possibilities.

Helinä Rautavaara collected her first West African objects in Benin in 1966. Most of the objects on display were acquired in the 1990s through personal contacts directly in Africa or at auctions in Europe.

Display I Community membership and the transition to adulthood

The transition from childhood to adulthood and becoming a full member of the community is one of the most significant stages in human life. In many places, young people are told about their future roles as women and men and are taught the history and religion of the community. This transition often involves rituals called initiations. Sometimes the girls' and boys' initiations are separate, sometimes a special initiation camp is organized. Among the Salampasu and Senufo peoples in West Africa, initiation includes various ceremonies in which certain types of masks are used. They are thought to protect young people from evil forces. There can also be "guard masks" that correct misbehaving young people.

1. Drums, Baga people, Guinea

The Baga people of Guinea have different drums for men and women. The drums reflect the power of the different sexes. The women's drum is only allowed to be used by women who belong to the A-teko society. Only women who have given birth may join. The drum will be played at funerals and weddings of society members. The men of the Baga people have used drums in initiation ceremonies and at funerals. Drums are believed to bring the voices of dead ancestors into rituals. (Raf205, Raf343)

2. Mufuampo-mask, Salampasu-people, Kongo

Mufuampo masks were associated with the male Idangani warrior society of the Salampasu people. There were several different societies to which men were initiated at different stages of life. Access to a secret society and successive initiations were related to social advancement and prestige. The use and inheritance of Mufuampo masks was limited to certain families and was expensive to acquire. The right to buy a mask was passed down from father to son. These masks appeared in war dances and at funerals of secret society members. The costume also included a suit made of fabric fibers. (Raf209)

3. Sejen Bird statue, Senufo people, Ivory Coast

The Sejen bird is associated with the men's Poro secret society of the Senufo people. Birds are carried over the heads of dancers at initiation ceremonies and at funerals of society members. There are several different levels of ceremonies, and initiates progress from one level to another every six or seven years. The Sejen bird does not represent a single bird species, but is associated with a crow, an eagle, a vulture or a hawk. The bird's large belly symbolizes pregnancy, and its embellishments refer to other animals, such as lizards or snakes. These characteristics of birds and animals symbolize the wisdom of the elders of the secret society, which they pass on to the younger ones in a ceremony. The Sejen bird symbolizes Kasinge, the mythical progenitor of the Senufo, who is believed to reside in the sculpture. In many Senufo villages, bird sculptures used to be kept in a sacred grove where they protected the members of the secret society. The Poro secret society is still important in the social life of the Senufo, although bird sculptures have become rare. (Raf60, Raf194)

Livelihood, starting a family and gender

All over the world, people have sought to influence fertility. Various objects, herbs, processes and rituals have been thought to improve fertility. Pregnant women have been believed to need special protection, and attempts have been made to influence the health and characteristics of the unborn child favorably already during pregnancy. Motherhood and a large family have been many women's biggest wish and insurance for old age. Infertility is often a great tragedy, when faced with it you can still resort to the help of the spiritual world and natural medicine. Gender is a social construct that art also embodies. In different cultures and at different times, different bodies, aesthetic ideals and gender-related restrictions have also been seen in art. Female depictions often embody the ideal female image in a certain community, at a certain time. (See also the Gelede masks in the Yoruba display) (Raf95)

4. Nimba headdresses, Baga people, Guinea

Nimbas are the costume's headgear. They are believed to protect pregnant women and their children and increase the fertility of fields. Nimba represent the ideal Baga woman who has given birth to several children and nursed them to adulthood. The ideal Baga woman is beautiful, intelligent and powerful. Nimba's mane and beak symbolize strength and virility, and large breasts symbolize fertility. Different manes, hairstyles, facial scars and breast shapes represent different tribes, which the Baga use to identify to whom any Nimba belongs. Nimbas perform publicly at weddings and funerals, as well at sowing and harvest time. The dancer carries the Nimba on her shoulders and holds onto its front legs. The dancer's body is completely covered by a costume made of vegetable fibers. Nimbas are a living cultural heritage among the Baga people. (Raf63, Raf168, Raf334)

5. Ngidie-dolls and 6. Ikoku-dolls, Turkana-people, Kenia

Among the Turkana people, the fertility doll embodies the relationship between a woman and her husband or lover. The woman's mother has traditionally made a Ngidie doll for her daughter from palm nuts and beads. The palm nuts symbolize the male genitalia, which are covered with small skirts, beads and hanging strings of beads with bottle caps on the ends. The woman receives the beads as a gift from her husband's best friend, the husband's name was also given to the Ngidie doll. The doll was thought to be the son of the woman and her husband or lover, and the woman carried it around her neck. The doll was believed to increase fertility. (Raf308, Raf309, Raf301, Raf302)

Human-shaped Ikoku dolls made of wood function as "practice children" for young women in the same way as the Akua´bat of the Ashanti. The dolls wear traditional Turkana aprons decorated with beads and cowrie shells. Fathers carve a doll for their daughters and mothers decorate the dolls with the girls' own beads and a piece of leather cut from the girl's skirt.

7. Akua´ba-dolls Ashante-People, Ghana

The Akua´ba dolls in the museum are a stylized type. Another type of Akua´ba is a more natural human figure. They are carved from a single piece of wood. Akua´ba dolls are usually female characters. They are characterized by a large, round and flat head. According to the tradition of the Ashante people, a woman named Akua could not have a child. The diviner asked her to get a flat doll and carry and care for it like a real child. After nine months, Akua gave birth to a baby girl. Akua´ba means "Akua's child" in Ashanti. Dolls are still used to increase fertility and teach young girls how to be good mothers. Pregnant women also use dolls to bring health and beauty to the future child. Women and girls carry dolls on their backs under their clothes. In the matrilineal Ashante community, it is important that women give birth to girls, so that the family line. (HRE318, Raf201)

8. Loincloth e.g., Lamang-people, Ba-na-people, Guduf-people and Fali-people, Cameroon, Nigeria and Chad.

Small farming communities in the northern parts of Cameroon, eastern Nigeria and southwestern Chad were called Kirdi peoples, which is a derogatory term. For their Muslim neighbors, the Fulani, "kirdi" meant heretics and heathens. Until the "nudity ban" that came into effect in 1961, the young women of these nations wore loincloths made of glass beads. Even today you can find one under other clothes. Although loincloths are abundant in museums around the world, little information has been collected about their meanings. The common thing is shape and geometric patterning, as well as glass beads as material.
Until the 20th century, Venetian beads were used, then a mixture of Czech and Venetian beads, and from the 1980s, small, round glass beads. The beads of the loincloth on display are large glass beads that were commonly used in loincloths from the end of the 19th century to the 1930s. The purpose of use has varied in different communities. Young, unmarried Fali, Laman and Bana women, and sometimes also young boys, wore loincloths decorated with beads in funeral dances and various celebrations related to the cycle of the year. Apparently, loincloths have also been used in girls' initiations, at weddings, when presenting a newborn, to protect against evil spirits and to express social relationships. Today, loincloths made of small beads are widely available for sale on the internet. They are produced directly for international sales. (HRE936)

9. Apron Turkana-people, Kenia

In the past, among the Turkana people, such aprons showed the wearer's social status and marital status. They were valuable objects because of their glass bead and gourd shell decorations. This apron was probably the garment of a married woman. The girls' aprons are smaller and V-shaped. Mothers made small aprons for their daughters, which were replaced with new ones as their daughters grew. Both the mother's and daughter's aprons were worn so that they would cover the genital area. (Raf303)

10. Wedding beads, Fulbe-people, e.g., Mali, Senegal and Gambia

Malian wedding beads were especially popular among the Fulbe people, who

gave them to their daughters on the evening of their wedding day. The beads are made in the Czech Republic, where glass beads have been produced since the 9th century. In their production, pressure is used, which gives them their characteristic shape. The beads are often monochromatic, although color combinations are also used, and they are produced in different sizes.

11. Vinyl beads, West Africa

Vinyl beads are used as necklaces and on hips. They are believed to increase a woman's attractiveness and virility. In the past, they were made from ostrich eggshells and were thick. Today, they are made from vinyl records. They are thin and can easily be worn under jeans, for example. (HRE909, HRE910, HRE192, HRE916, HRE918, HRE919)

Display 2. Nature spirits and safety.

One of people's basic needs is a sense of security, which is sought to be increased in many different ways. The modern human takes insurance and avoids unhealthy foods. In traditional African religions, spirits are believed to help, protect, defend and teach people. Spirits and their powers can manifest in disguises or as other objects.

Animals often play an important role in creation stories and stories around the world and are believed to have taught humans important skills such as farming or building houses. Nature spirits can be human-like or animal-like in appearance, they can also consist of several different animals, or a mix of human and animal characteristics. The characteristics of animals are, for example, strength, speed, fearlessness, intelligence or stupidity. They are believed to have powers that are intended to help people, but they can also be dangerous for women and children. Therefore, these objects are often kept outside the villages in sacred forests, where it is forbidden to enter.

12. Chi wara-mask, Bamana-people, Mali

The Bamana people of Mali use Chi wara masks in rituals that teach community values and farming skills. Chi waras are nature spirits. The headdresses are a mix of three earth-digging animals: antelope, groundhog and pangolin. According to legend, they are believed to have taught people the art of farming. Chi waras always appear in pairs, one female and one male Chi wara. A female Chi wara often has a child on her back and straight, upright horns. The horns of Chi wara, representing a man, are horizontal or vertical, but always slightly curved. Masks are part of the costume worn by the dancer, and they are worn on the head. The body is covered by a costume made of vegetable fiber or fabric. (Raf21, Raf90, Raf107, Raf108, Raf109, Raf196)

13. Nwantantay-mask, Bwa-people, Burkina Faso

Nwantantay masks are nature spirits believed to protect members of the Bwa-people. They appear in connection with initiations, funerals and year-end celebrations. A large, winged mask represents a flying spirit that is associated with water. The geometric patterns represent scar decorations on the skins of Bwa men and women. The Nwantantay masks appear together and represent different animals such as tapir, hyena, owl, antelope, crocodile and butterfly.

Their colors are black, white and red, the meanings of which are taught to young men being initiated during the annual maintenance painting of the masks. The dancers are young men who imitate the movements of animals and may also behave intimidatingly. The masquerade includes a fringed costume that covers the whole body. Masks are still part of the life of the Bwa people. (Raf8, Raf20, Raf61, Raf81)

14. Gle/Ga-masks, Dan-people, Ivory Coast and Liberia

All the masks of the Dan people are related to the spirits of the forest or the household. Nature spirits have no form, but when they want to use their powers to help people, they manifest themselves into strong objects, such as large ritual spoons or masks. Spirits choose a person to represent themselves by appearing in their dream. Only men can function as representatives of the masks. Spirits explain through dreams what kind of mask it needs, its name, the necessary music and dance moves. It is believed that the spirit has an erratic, strong will, that must be respected and pleased. In general, masks with round eyes represent men and masks with narrow eyes represent women. They can also represent male animals or therianthropes (part human, part animal). Masculine masks help to prevent fires, run fast, see clearly, etc. Feminine masks are often associated with entertaining and taking care of the initiated. They can also be the masks of a court judge. The same mask can play different roles at different times. Older masks are the most valued and are used as long as possible. Today, the feminine bird mask in our museum is primarily an entertainer, but according to tradition, it was an important teacher in the past. Gle and Ga masks and costumes appear in situations related to social control, political or legal affairs, peace work, education, competitions and entertainment. (Raf382)

15. Kponiugo-mask, Senufo-people, Ivory Coast

The Kponiugo mask represents a mythical nature spirit that protects the community from witchcraft and other evil. Kponiugos appear in times of crisis, bringing order and protection. The mask covers the whole head, and you don't need to wear a costume with it. Kponiugo is a combination of many different animals and is meant to be scary. It has the horns of an antelope on top of its head, the ears of a hyena, the jaws and teeth of a crocodile, the nose of a warthog, and several pairs of warthog tusks. Each Kponiugo is a unique artist's combination of these animals, and parts of buffalo, chameleon, bird and snake can also be part of the mask. Kponiugo is the mask of the Senufo male Poro secret society (see also Sejen birds) and it literally eats fire during the ritual. Secret society members also wear masks at funerals of secret society members to honor the deceased and to scare away evil spirits. The Senufos believe that contact with a dancer can be dangerous for women, even deadly. Kponiugo masks are found in a wide area and have evolved into many different forms over time. (Raf381)

16. Nkisis, Yombe-people, Songye-people and Kakongo-people, Congo

Nkisis are known among several different peoples in the Congo. They come in many different styles and have many different meanings. The word Nkisi means the physical hull of a deceased or

supernatural spirit. When the spiritual healer (known as Nganga) activates the hull by chanting, praying and sometimes also sprinkling gunpowder in front of it, the Nkisi has the power to heal, protect or punish. Nkisis can be a human-shaped wooden sculpture with a resin case in its belly, which held empowering objects such as animal and medicinal plant parts, sand, or beads. Nkisis can also be ordinary jars, bags or baskets, which were considered just as powerful as the sculptures. Small-sized Nkisis were mass-produced in the Congo as portable protective objects, in the same way as Madonna statues in Europe. (Raf55, Raf97, Raf164, Raf165)

Nkondi Nkisi can be recognized by the aggressive posture and often also by the raised hand. It may have large eyes which, made from mirrors, symbolize seeing. Nkonde means hunter, and this type of Nkisi is said to have caught witches, thieves, abusers and other evildoers. Its mission was to protect and increase the well-being of the community against diseases. Nkondi Nkisi also functioned as oath objects in settling disputes. The nails in the body of the Nkondi Nkisi demonstrate its use, the healer has driven a nail into the Nkisi at the end of the ritual. If the nail stayed in place, it meant that the "customer's" wish was accepted. The Nkisi in our museum are of the Nkonde type. Mangaaga-nkisis are also of the same type, which were a reaction to the brutal colonialism practiced by the Europeans in the Congo. Mangaaga-nkisis helped people deal with this trauma. Along with the slaves, the Nkisi also came to the Americas and the Caribbean where they mixed with other African religions, such as Vodun, Palo Monte and Macumba. The roots of New Orleans voodoo dolls appearing in American films go back to Nkonde Nkisi.

17. Kifwebe-masks, Songue- and Luba-people, Congo

The Kifwebe mask is the mask of members of a secret society of men of the Songue and Luba peoples. The members of this secret society were believed to have magical powers. They were a community police who supported and protected the political elite to stay in power, but also intervened in possible abuses by the chiefs. Masks appeared on many important occasions, such as the funeral of a chief or members of a secret society, and initiations of members of a secret society. Among the Luba people, they had an important task of ridding the community of evil spirits and witchcraft. The mask has elements of different animals such as the striped porcupine, the forest antelope and the Ngulungu snake. There are male and female forms of Kifwebe. The Kifwebes in our museum are male-shaped, the female Kifwebes are completely white. (Raf32, Raf33, Raf34)

Display 3. Yoruba-culture, kings and power.

This part of the exhibit is partly curated with the Beninese artist Felix Adje. Texts in italics come from interviews with Felix Adje.

Yoruba-people

The Yoruba people live in the territories of the countries of Nigeria, Benin and Togo. Today there are about 30 million Yorubas, and they have their own language. The Yorubas are Christians and Muslims by religion, but traditional religious practices are of great importance alongside Christianity and Islam. Numerous spirits/gods are relied upon in different phases of life and with everyday problems.

The Yorubas have both mythological and historical traditions. According to mythological tradition, an ancestor named Oduduwa created the world in Ile-Ife (city), which later became the land of the Yoruba. According to historical tradition, Oduduwa founded the kingdom of Ile-Ife in the first millennium, and by the 12th century, Ile-Ife developed into a major city that was the center of religious, political and social life. In Ile-Ife, significant archeological finds dating back to the 12th-16th centuries have been found, which fit in with the historical tradition. Gradually, the Kingdoms spread, and urban centers were established in what is now Nigeria, Benin and Togo. In the 17th-19th centuries, there were several rich and powerful kingdoms in the region of Nigeria and Benin. The Portuguese traded with the Yoruba in the 16th century. Later, France, Britain and Germany took over the territories and divided the Yoruba region into the states of Nigeria, Benin and Togo. Kings still have a prominent place in Yoruba social life, although during colonial times their power was greatly reduced.

Symbols of power

Symbols of power can be found in different parts of the world. They include, for example, crowns, scepters, thrones, medals and ribbons that outsiders are not allowed to touch. This display displays the Yoruba traditional kingdom system and religion, in which artefacts play a significant role.
Yoruba kings have their own soldiers and bodyguards. In the city, you can see men wearing a suit, a red necklace around their neck. The bodyguards have clothes that are two different colors, black and red. Red symbolizes the two spirits, Ogu and Shango, both dangerous. Black symbolizes death. (Raf175)

A royal title is inherited within a family. When the king passed, a new king is found with the help of an ifa-diviner. The king's most important characteristic is the ability to resolve disputes between people and he must be calm and diplomatic. The king must also know how to create jobs and support the village. Women can be kings too.

18. Yoruba royal artifacts. Yoruba-people, Benin, Nigeria and Togo

The signs of the Yoruba king's power are a tassel made of animal tail in the king's hand, a crown on their head and lantana beads around their neck. The king has seven different headdresses, a different one for each day. The king also wears jewelry at night. The king's beads are red in color. If the king has committed a serious crime, they can be deposed. First, the king's headdress and other signs of power, including jewelry, are taken from the king. The sword (ebony) has been used in the king's ceremonies. (Raf177, Raf216, HRE702, Raf128b, c, Raf298)

19. Ile Orit, Yoruba-people, Benin, Nigeria and Togo

Ile Ori are objects of kings or priests that are stored in a secret place. Ile means 'house' and Ori 'head'. Ile Ori translates to 'the house of the head'. The top half is the head, and the bottom half is the house. They are still in use today in Yoruba areas, especially in the countryside, but also in the cities. Ile Ori is the headdress of the first king of a region. When the king has the Ile Ori in their hand, everything they says is sacred. Ile Ori are often sent to two people if there is a dispute or if taxes have not been paid. The king's assistants bring the hat to both sides of the dispute. When the attendants walk down the street with an Ile Ori in their hand, everyone bows. Ile Oris inspire great respect (Raf178, Raf179)

20. Lantana beads Yoruba-people, Benin, Nigeria and Togo

Lantana beads were originally made from various stones, such as jasper, agate, carnelian and chalcedony, which were mined in the area of present-day Nigeria. The process of making beads required skill and was mainly men's work. After the 1950s, there is no more information about the original production of Lantana beads, and nowadays copies made of ceramics, glass and plastic are also widely used. The red beads are the beads of Yoruba kings and their ministers. (Raf126, Raf128b, c, HRE863)

21. 'Talking' Drum, Senegal

Talking drums have been used in various parts of West Africa. Drums used to have their own complicated language that took years to learn. Drumming was used to communicate rituals and enemy attacks from village to village. Drummed messages traveled faster "than a horse could ride." The talking drum is held under the armpit and beaten with a bent stick. The drum is made by stretching the strings next to the sides to produce sounds of different pitches, which resemble speech. In many African languages, the pitch of the sounds is especially important, so the drumming was able to imitate real speech. (HRE278 a, b)

22. Beaded bottle, Cameroon

Yoruba kings own bead-decorated objects. They were believed to bring good luck. (Raf217)

Spirits and Gods

23. Gelede-sculpture, Yoruba-people, Benin, Nigeria and Togo

According to legend, Gelede is the daughter of the goddess Yemoja. Yemoja is said to be the mother of all Yoruba gods. Yemoja suffered from infertility and went to an Ifa diviner for advice. The diviner advised her to participate in the sacrificial ceremony by balancing the wooden objects on her head. As a result of the ritual, Yemoja became pregnant and gave birth to a son, who was named Efe and later a daughter who became Gelede. The Gelede ceremony is an important annual celebration among the Yoruba people. The festival lasts 3-7 days. The word Gelede means "treat with gentleness" and is related to women's power and motherhood. The wooden sculpture depicts and praises women's ability to create life, as well as qualities associated with ideal motherhood, such as calmness, patience and justice. The lower part of the mask usually has the upper part of a human face or part of an animal's head. The subject world of the upper part of the mask is not limited. Topics can vary from honoring ancestors to satirical portrayals of habits in a woman.

In the Gelede ceremony, the male dancers are dressed in Gelede masks, which are worn over the head. The ceremony includes dancing, singing and drumming. The audience dances and claps along. The Gelede ceremony contains more theater than many other masked dances, and the costume can be taken off in front of others, for example during a break. The previous night before the Gelede ceremony, the Efe ceremony is held, during which the women sing. The ritual is a living tradition among the Yoruba. (Raf95)

24. Shango axes, Yoruba-people, Benin, Nigeria and Togo

A Yoruba priest uses these as staffs of power. They are the "axes" of Shango, the god of thunder, and can be used equally by male and female priests. With a power staff, you can do good things or cause something bad to people. Before, the priests of Shango and Ogun, the god of metal, fought with staffs. Legend has it that when Ogu was not around, Shango took his wife. This resulted in a conflict between Shango and Ogu, and Ogu remained in the forest in shame. That's why priests still sometimes fight with staffs. (Raf86, Raf87, Raf231) Shango axes are also kept on Shango altars. Two axes in our museum depict a kneeling female figure, which suggests respect and worship. Shango is considered both a harsh punisher of wrongdoers while at the same time a generous child-giver and protector of twins.

25. Oni-King statue, Yoruba-people, Benin, Nigeria and Togo

In 1938, 18 copper sculptures were found underground in the city of Ife in Nigeria. The sculptures were naturalistic in style, and Western scholars initially did not believe they were of African origin, because until then African art not been considered presentative, and Africans were not believed to know how to create elaborate sculptures. Peculiar theories were invented to explain the origin of the statues. Leo Frobenius suggested that a colony of ancient Greeks must have left the statues behind. Even the inhabitants of the mythical, lost Atlantis were credited to have taught the art of carving in West Africa. (Raf174)

Later, terracotta statues were also found, which were made just as skillfully. The original statues date back to the 12th-15th centuries. Ife is located in the area of the ancient city of Ile Ife, which was a strong kingdom and religious center at the time. The statues depict ancient kings, and many copies of the statues were made later on. This statue is a copy of the sculpture of the Oni king. Scar tattoos and dot scars referring to the god Lajomi are visible on the face. The head has a crown with a spiral medallion, from which rises a decoration resembling a flower bud at the end of the stem.

26. Metal sculpture, depicting a king, Yoruba-People, Benin, Nigeria and Togo

The king is holding a chief's sword. The king's jewelry is around their neck and a special crown/headdress is on their head. (Raf175)

27. Lajomi-sculpture, Yoruba-people, Benin, Nigeria and Togo

When a child is small and gets chicken pox, it is said that "the chicken pox has come to visit" to clean the child. Sometimes chicken pox leaves its own mark on the skin. If it comes to an adult, it is considered good. The sculpture is a "chicken pox god" and a river god that affects fertility, farming and the success of market sales. The chicken pox and the river are connected to each other because the chicken pox often comes in the spring when the river floods. Before the farming season starts, or before going to the market to sell wares, Lajomi is given food, such as plantain, palm wine and palm oil. The sculpture is in its own little house, painted white and dotted with red or blue dots. The house has an altar with these same dots. Only the priest is allowed inside the

house. Small houses are not demolished, even if new roads are built in the city that passes by the small house. The cars just go around the house. In the past, the followers of this god were given small dot scars all over their faces, chest and shoulders. In the 90s, it was forbidden to scar children's skin. Usually, the god's followers are women and girls. (Raf74)

28. Ibeji twins, Yoruba-people, Benin, Nigeria and Togo

I am from a family of twins. It is lucky for a family if twins are born. If twins are born in my place, even here in Finland, I buy them something sweet before the end of the year, because the Ibeji gods like candy. For us, Ibeji is a particularly important god, for whom we cook red beans and red oil every Friday, which is their food. The food is taken to the intersection of three roads, in the middle of the intersection. Someone from the family takes the food; the twins themselves, or mother or father.

When twins are born, the parents immediately take the twins to an Ifa-diviner who tells them what the Ibeji want. They may want their mother to take them to the market for a tour and the mother might have to beg for money, even if she doesn't need it. After this, the mother has a bath, and her entire past life and all the bad things are washed away. After that, the fortune teller tells what the Ibejis want to eat. Ibeji are the spirits of twins, which means that the real babies eat milk, but their Ibeji spirits want to eat things like beans and oil.

The Ibeji spirits are a girl and a boy. If one of the twins dies, a wooden doll like this is made for the dead twin, and the other twin always carries it with them, even when they go to school. When the living twin gets new clothes, the other has to get the same ones. If both die, the child of the next born keeps two such dolls with him. I know one guy who has eight of these. He gives them food. I love these dolls, but since my father is a priest, I can't keep anything like this in my house, but when I go to my grandmother's, there are these. My grandma is not a twin, but she is from an Ibeji family, that's why she has these in her house. (Raf14a,b, Raf15, Raf16a,b)

Vodun-religion

The polytheistic vodun religion still lives strong in Benin. The Beninese believe that every person is under the influence of several different spirits who can be asked for help in crisis situations. It is important to take care of the spirits' well-being even in good times, and they are regularly served food, drink and other gifts, and various ceremonies are performed. Fortune tellers and priests, Bokonos, help in communication between people and the spirit world with the help of the fa-oracle. Today's Bokonos also search for and maintain literature and information they need to heal patients. For common diseases, help is sought from herbal healers who are familiar with various medicinal plants. Medicinal plants can be bought at markets, often in ready-made mixtures.

29. Bokono Ifa-plate and divination tools, Yoruba-people Benin

The Fa-oracle includes divination instruments, from which the Bokono receives information from the spirits, by rolling the items. Rollable objects can be cowrie shells and nuts. Objects are rolled many times and the results are marked on a blackboard.

30. Dish, known as Agere Ifa, Yoruba-people, Benin

Kola nuts needed for divination have been stored in the Agere Ifa (Raf70)

31. Bokono beaded purse

A beaded bag is not just a bag. There may be protective materials inside it. The protective power of the bag can prevent, for example, a bullet wound. Nowadays, a bag can also just be an ordinary bag.

Beads have had many different uses and meanings around the world. They are used for adornment, to show status and dignity, and to display marital status, age and position in the community. Beads are believed to protect or bring good luck. They have also been used as money. In Africa beads are made for example, from seeds, nuts, seashells, clay, glass, stone, metals, and nowadays also often from plastic and recycled materials.

The cowrie shell was the first money of the West Africans. Coastal people had cowrie farms, which they exchanged for corn and animals. The kings expressed their wealth to the people with cowrie shells. They are still important today. Fortune tellers use cowrie shells in fortune telling. In Brazil, for example, cowrie shells are also used. They have come to Brazil together with African slaves. In the Yoruba language, this shell is called money. The first coin produced in China was in the shape of a cowrie shell.

32. Mami Watan jewelry, Yoruba-people, Benin, Nigeria and Togo

Mami Wata is a water goddess who has many followers, especially among women. Mami Wata jewelry was originally made from fish bone and shells. White and blue are the colors of Mami Wata. Nowadays, they are mostly made of plastic because fish bone is harder find.

33. Bodom-beads, Ghana (also used by the Yoruba-people)

Bodom beads are made from old glass beads by remelting ground up glass. They are reserved for kings, queens and members of the royal family. They are also believed to have magical and healing powers. They are most often yellow and often have a black or dark gray core. Bodom beads are valued for their large size and showiness, but also for their size. Among the Yorubas, especially female ministers, the Jauzas, use these.

34. Millefiori-beads, Senegal

Millefiori beads are glass beads made using the mosaic technique, which were produced in Venice. Europeans used these glass beads to buy gold, incense, ivory, tortoise shell, rhinoceros horn, palm and coconut oil, wood and crude iron from West Africa. Later they were used as a means of payment in the slave trade. Europeans brought millions of Venetian and Bohemian glass beads to Africa, what happened to them has remained unclear. Apparently, in addition to their actual use, large quantities of them, may have been used as sacrifices by throwing them into rivers, lakes and seas.

35. Chevron-beads, Ghana and Cameroon

Chevron beads are a type of rod-shaped bead developed in Venice, which is made using a complex stretching technique. They are made in different colors and

decorated in different ways. The oldest Chevrons date from the 16th century. They are especially popular in Ghana and Cameroon, where they are part of the chiefs' decorations.

Display 4 and 5. Social order and Death

This part of the exhibit is partly curated with the Beninese artist Felix Adje. Texts in italics come from interviews with Felix Adje.

Social order in this case means hierarchy and the functioning of relations between people. The social order determines what is morally right, what are the laws of society and who has power. When community members know their position and tasks in the community, everyday life runs smoothly, and conflicts decrease. Social order is usually maintained through laws and through legal systems. Religion also often plays a part in securing social peace. In many cultures, the position of the elderly is special. The elderly are believed to have the wisdom brought by life, and they have been consulted in problematic situations. After death, the deceased are believed to go to their ancestors in the spirit world, who can be contacted with the help of fortune tellers or rituals. Egungun masks represent the spirits of ancestors to the Yoruba and are still present in many important events in life.

In the past, people rarely died of old age. Various diseases, accidents, childbirth and regularly recurring famines caused most of the deaths. For this reason, death was not considered a natural, long-lived end, but an explanation was sought in the supernatural, such as witchcraft or the hostility of spirits. Violations of social rules or conflicts could also be found behind the accident. The most important function of funeral ceremonies is to escort the deceased safely to the afterlife and restore the community's sense of security. The role of costumes in funerals is to lead and control the process. They also help to grieve and return to normal life after the funeral. Funerals often have two stages: the actual funeral and the ceremony that follows, for example, a month later, which ends the mourning period.

36. Egungun costume, Yoruba-people, Benin, Nigeria and Togo

Egunguns come out in the spring when it's planting time. The planting festival last 7-21 days. The Egungun goes out and blesses the land, whereas the king blesses the farmers. When the harvest has come, they come again and bless the harvest and the king. Likewise, when someone gets married, Egunguns come and bless the marriage. At the chief's funeral, Egunguns are really important. One piece of cloth is taken from the dead chief's clothes and added to Egungun's costume. From these, more fabrics with the dead chief's power accumulate in the costume. The strength of the costume increases as more fabrics are added. That's why fabrics are important. The stripes on the pants of the suit are called asho oge: asho means cloth and oge is lining. It is woven on looms. The names on the costumes are powerful, for example Egu means a dangerous, wolf-like animal. The identity of the dancer is not known, and it is important that it is kept a secret. The dancers are young men from the Egungun family.

In the Egungun ritual, it is believed that the spirit of an ancestor is transferred to the dancer in a trance. The body acts like a vessel that the spirit uses during the ritual, so the body is also part of the disguise. In this way, the ancestors appear to their descendants, bringing with them instructions and advice from the afterlife. The dance has a spinning movement, in which case the fabric strips swing around the dancer. The Egunguns speak in a raspy or nasal voice. They have guardians around them who make sure no one touches them. The guardians don't have a special costume, but they have a stick in their hand, which they use to correct those who come too close. From time to time the ancestors may request a new costume, in which case the old costume is discarded and replaced with a new one. Egungun suits can only be made by a trained tailor who knows the rituals and the rules. Herbal healers also help in the making of the suit, they make herbal sachets for the inside of the suit. Against the dancer's skin is the same striped fabric that is also used when burying the dead. Egunguns are a living tradition, and today the costume's fabrics are really colorful.

The Egungun costumes in our museum come from Abeokuta, Nigeria. Helinä Rautavaara received them as a trade for new fabrics in September 1988. The suits underwent a purification ceremony and Rautavaara received instructions on how to handle and store them. Rautavaara was initiated to the god Shango, who is the deity of thunder, dance and drumming.

37. Mmuo-mask and costume, Ibo-people, Nigeria

The Ekpe ritual involves four figures who appear mostly in farming dances and funerals of old men. In the funerals of the Ibo people, the bride figure leads the deceased to the afterlife. There are four characters, and they depict Ibo siblings. The bridal mask and gown depict the strength, beauty, fertility, gentleness and generosity of young women. The embroidery on the suit is reminiscent of the skin paintings of young Ibo women, and the hairstyle of the face mask depicts wealth and success. However, the dancers in the costume are men.

38. Plant fiber mask, Ibo-people and Igala-people, Nigeria and also the Pende-people, Congo

In central Nigeria, vegetable fiber masks are known by different names. The Ibo people call the aggressive and unpredictable spirit Okpaa, and the Igala people Iga. A similar figure is also known among the Pende-people in Congo as Minganji. The task of these spirits is to maintain order. Big eyes symbolize the ability to see everything that happens. There are several characters, one of which represents goodness, the others evil.

They appear at the yam harvest to give permission to eat new yams, at the time of circumcision of young men, and at the chief's inauguration and funeral. The fiber knitted masks have an opening in the front for entry. The opening is covered with a decoration. The service life of the suits is short, from a few weeks to a few months. That is why they are very rarely found in museums. You can still see vegetable fiber masks as part of festival processions and also during duels.

39. Kanaga-masks and Kanaga dance costume, Dogon-people, Mali

The shape of Kanaga masks simultaneously symbolizes a bird with white wings and a black forehead, but also at the same time the hands and feet of Amma, the creator deity of the Dogon people, and the building of the universe: the upper horizontal column is the sky and the lower, vertical one is the earth. The Kanaga mask in our museum symbolizes the feminine spirit. There are many different types of Kanaga masks, from short to meters high. Some represent people, some animals, some are dangerous, some are not. They are related to the funeral ritual of the Awa secret society of Dogon men, as well as the Dama ritual, which is a celebration of the end of mourning. Every 60 years, Sigui is celebrated, which is the celebration of the change of generation. In the funeral ceremony, more than seventy different Kanaga masks carry the soul to the afterlife and honor the family of the deceased. The dancers move the headdress back and forth in the dance, as well as up and down in a figure eight, touching the ground with the top of the mask in four different directions. The tallest Kanaga masks refer to the journey between earth and sky and represent the stars, galaxies and their movement in space, as well as the creation of the world. Today, Kanaga masked dances are performed on tours around Mali. The dance costumes have a chest cover and decorations typical for women, but it is not intended for use by women at all, because the dancers in Kanaga masks are always men. The skirt and leg decorations are made of plant fiber.

SUFISM IN SENEGAL

On Amadou Bamba's peaceful road

"I am a Muslim and a creature of God and a servant of the Prophet Muhammad Saw." Sheik Amadou Bamba.

Suwer stained-glass art depicts Senegal's colonial history and the life of its people. Many themes common to both Islam and Christianity, such as Noah's Ark, are also depicted in the stained-glass works.

Some 90 per cent of the population of Senegal are Muslim. Arab traders introduced Islam to Senegal in the eleventh century. By the late nineteenth century, Sheik (teacher) Amadou Bamba (1850–1927) had founded the Mouride, a Sufi brotherhood. About one third of the inhabitants of Senegal are members of the brotherhood, which emphasises the peaceful coexistence of Islam and Christianity. Sheik Amadou Bamba is a popular figure depicted in Senegalese stained-glass art. He is always shown with his face partly covered by a scarf.

The aim of Sufi religiosity is to become a friend of God (wali Allah), to find the way back to the original home of the soul and reach a connection with God. A Sufi always strives to be working on their spiritual side. In the end, everything that a mystic is, their circulation, their breathing and their words are offered in praise of God and they live in a constant state of prayer.

The name of the Suwer stained-glass paintings comes from the French sous verre (under glass). Suwers are painted on a pane of glass in reverse order. First the contours and surface details are painted, such as faces and eyes with eyelashes, after which colours are added one layer at a time. Large areas such as the sea or the sky are painted last.

Photos

1. The Mosque of Touba. In 1888, Amadou Bamba founded the holy city of Touba, which with its mosque became the most important place of pilgrimage in Mouridism.

Photo: Matlaboul Fawzeyni Touba Helsinki

2. Darou Mousty, a Mouride religious village some 28 kilometres from Touba.

Photo: Helinä Rautavaara Museum Photograph Collection

3. Magal Kazu Rajab, Helsinki, 2019. A party celebrates the birth of Serigne Fallou, second son of Sheik Amadou Bamba. The party also marks Isra Wal Miraj, the evening when Allah gave Muhammad Saw the five daily prayers.

Photo: Matlaboul Fawzeyni Touba Helsinki

Objects

1. Printed image of Amadou Bamba

There is only one known photograph of Amadou Bamba. In the picture he stands in front of a wooden mosque after an afternoon prayer. He is wearing long white clothes and a scarf that covers most of his face. The picture was taken by a French government employee.

The picture has inspired and served as an inspiration for many different art forms in Senegal. A picture of Bamba can be found in the homes of many Mourides and on the N'dombos (amulets) from the members of the Baye Fall Brotherhood.

2. Xassida (khassida, qasida)

A Xassida, written by Sheikh Amadou, contains the prayers and teachings of the prophet Muhammad Sawn, based on the Holy Quran. A Xassida contains everything a Muslim needs to know about his faith. Amadou Bamba left behind hundreds of writings.

3. Suwer-glass-paintings, Senegal

(From left to right, from top to bottom)

Amadou Bamba. The only existing photograph of Bamba has been used as a model. (HRE714)

Soldiers from the French colonne arrive to capture Bamba in Djewal. In the middle is Ibra Fall, carrying in his hand the kettle of Amadou Bamba, a vessel with water for religious washing. Always wash before praying. (HRE717)
A ship with three figures on its deck: a woman, a civil servant/and a Christian priest. In the forefront of the painting is Bamba praying on the sea, watching the fish next to him. Next to Bamba is the Archangel Gabriel. This is one of the most popular stories from Bamba's life, which is depicted on numerous painted glass paintings. According to the story, when Bamba was deported to Gabon, the captain of the ship forbade him to pray on the ship and told him: 'if you pray on the ship, you will offend me, if you do not pray, you will offend your God.' Bamba did not want to offend either, so he was told to lay his prayer mat over the waves of the sea and pray there.

Bamba was known for his pacifism and demonstrated the importance of peace in this miracle. Instead of force and violence, he faced an intolerant enemy by praying peacefully and calmly on the waves of the sea. (HRE719)

Serigne Abdoul Ahad Mack, the third Khalif of the Mouridi Brotherhood. He is wearing green clothing, a green head scarf (scarf/turban) and black sunglasses. (HRE720)

A group of children at a Quran school, with on the right an adult holding a Quran and a prayer ribbon. The children are sitting around a campfire and holding blackboards in their hands. The teacher and the students light a fire early in the morning and late in the evening to be able to read and study the Quran. (HRE746)

A griot, who sings and plays the drums. Griots are traditional singers, poets and storytellers who, through oral tradition, are able to keep memories alive, by singing about events that go back a long time in history. (HRE739)

Baye Fall-figure (HRE741)

Baye Fall-figure, wearing traditional Baye Fall clothing, dreadlocks, a Xiin (mallet) and Këll (collecting bowl) in their hands. (HRE742)

Baye Fall-figure with a head scarf and a drum on their belt. The figure drums, mouth open, perhaps for reciting. (HRE743)

A man plays the Kora. (HRE745)

A man and a woman, wearing traditional Senegalese clothing. The woman is also wearing jewelry. (HRE748)

Mame Limamou Laye (Seydina Mouhammadou Limamou Laye 1843-1909) was the Marabou (holy man) of the Brotherhood. He was the second Khalif of the Brotherhood. Sufism is a religion of peace and the relationships between the different Brotherhoods as well as other religions was good. On his shoulder is a white-tailed tropicbird (Phaethon lepturus), which is considered the 'Heavenly Chariot,' it is a species living in tropical oceanic habitats and the bird is the symbol for peace. Mame Limamou began to lead the Brotherhood after the death of his brother. According to the story, one of these birds landed on his shoulder while reciting the last prayer of the fasting month Ramadan. Since then, the white-tailed tropicbird has survived as a symbol of the Brotherhood, and the black-and-white turban they wear is reminiscent of the bird's feathers. Limamou Laye had a famous photograph of one of these birds sitting on his knee. This photo is inspiration for many suwer-paintings. HRE712)

The glass painting depicts two Senegalese wrestlers and a griot singer with a drum. Three men are sitting in the background as an audience. Senegalese wrestling is called Laamb (Wolofin), Lutte (French, Lutte avec frappe). Wrestling has a religious and mystical dimension. In addition to physical wrestling, the Marabous (holy men) exercise their spiritual powers though their wrestlers. Because of this, wrestlers may often wear amulets (Gris-Gris), which combine an animistic element with Islam. (HRE728)

4. Amulets, gris-gris, Senegal / Nigeria

Protective amulets, which, for example, can be used by Senegalese wrestlers during matches. (HRE793) (HRE259)

The showcase is co-curated with the Finnish Muridi association, Matlaboul Fawzeyni Touba.

THE BAYE FALL BROTHERHOOD

From Senegal to Finland

"The blue beauty of the mosaics in the mosques of Iran and the grandeur of Moghul architecture deepened my respect for Islam, which had never faded over the years, and then it came to fruition in Senegal in the brotherhood of Baye Fall, which was founded by Sheik Amadou Bamba among the Sufi Mouride."
Helinä Rautavaara, recollection, 1997.

The Baye Fall brotherhood was named after Sheik Ibrahima Fall (1855–1930). Ibrahima Fall was the most well-known follower of Sheik Amadou Bamba. He emphasised the importance of work and a complete dedication to one's teacher. Ibrahima Fall's dedication to Bamba was achieved through constant work. Work was an important expression of prayer and the life of the faith. Ibrahima Fall did not follow the traditional Islamic prayer rhythm and he was said to have worked so diligently that he did not have time to fast, wash his hair, nor to think about what clothes he wore. Wearing their hair in long dreadlocks and clothes sewn together from patches of fabric became a characteristic of Ibrahima Fall and his followers. They also typically wore amulets or n`dombos [OR n'dombos] around their neck, a kuur club hanging from their belt and the begging bowl Këll.

Helinä Rautavaara first travelled to Senegal in 1966. From 1984 onwards she visited the country regularly. On her final trip in 1991 she made a pilgrimage to the holy sites of the Baye Fall.

This section of the exhibition has been realised in cooperation with the Mouride association Matlaboul Fawzeyni Touba Helsinki. Some 250 people belong to the Senegalese community in Finland and about one fifth of them are members of the Baye Fall brotherhood. People who knew Helinä Rautavaara are part of that community.

Photos

1. Helinä Rautavaara by a mural of Sheik Amadou Bamba. Daroy Mousty, Sedina Ousmane Noreyni House exterior. Mid-1980s.

Photo: Helinä Rautavaara Museum Photograph Collection

2. The Serigne Sangue group. Dakar, 1980s.

Photo: Helinä Rautavaara Museum Photograph Collection

3. Serigne Amadou Bamba's family collage, held by Khadim Goeye. Medina, mid-1980s.

Photo: Helinä Rautavaara Museum Photograph Collection

4. Rautavaara and a Baye Fall group inside Sedina Ousmane Noreyni House. Daroy Mousty, mid-1980s.

Photo: Helinä Rautavaara Museum Photograph Collection

5. MBacke Fall, Karim Samba Mbaye and Koursi Wou. During Thiant, zikr (prayer to God). Daroy Mousty, mid-1980s.

Photo: Helinä Rautavaara Museum Photograph Collection

5. Helinä Rautavaara's Baye Fall-outfit, Senegal

Outfit together with amulet (HRE791) and maxtuma (HRE798)

6. Amulet, n´dombo, Senegal
(Together with the dress)

N´dombos are protective, lucky amulets with small, framed pictures. The pictures show a Khalif, Sheikh, Marabou or a teacher, who are followed by the wearer. In this N´dombo is the picture of Sheikh Mawdoum Bé. While visiting Senegal, Helinä Rautavaara lived with him. (HRE791)

7. Amulet box, maxtuma, Senegal
(Together with the dress)

The amulet box contains an image of Ibra Fall. Bamba gave instructions for after his death, and when Bamba passed, his eldest son carried the instructions with him in a small case. The third Khalif made its use a more common sight. These days they can carry anything. (HRE798)

8. Amulet, n´dombo, Senegal
(Together with the costume)

In the picture is Sheikh Mawdoum Bé. While visiting Senegal, Helinä Rautavaara stayed with him. (HRE797)

9. Mallet, küür

The mallet that the Baye Fall use to compete, also symbolizes the ability to reproduce. (Raf267)

10. Alms bowl, Këll

The Baye Fall use these as they move through the crowd, while beating drums and reciting prayers. (Raf270)

11. Prayer beads (Raf272)

12. Amulets

Good luck amulets. (HRE790, HRE796, Raf268, Raf269)

13. Traditional costume, Senegal

Mbubb (boubou -kaftan and tubay-trousers. The clothes were donated by Meissa N'iang, a musician and griot, an old friend of Helinä Rautavaara. (See also the interview on the monitor)

14. Drum, Tama, Senegal

Tama drum. Before the telephone, tama drums were used to communicate. Their sound carried far. (See also the Talking Drum HRE278 in the Africa display) (Raf274 a-b)

15. Drum, goroŋ, Senegal

A heavy bass drum with a closed base. (Raf202)

16. Instrument, xalam

In its standard form, the Xalam is a simple lute-like instrument with 1-5 strings. (Raf310)

17. Instrument, kora, Senegal

This traditional instrument is common in West Africa. Its echo chamber is made from a large calabash. (HRE184)

18. Instrument, baliñe/balafon, Senegal

The balafon is usually made of about 17-21 rectangular wooden slats, arranged from low to high. Small gourds attached under the wooden slats act as natural amplifiers. (HRE314 a-c)