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↑ 一批承载着非洲人民智慧和艺术才华的艺术品首次在本埠展览。

# 本地首个非洲艺术展 每件作品都是一个故事

“奥金卡-非洲艺术展”共展出超过50件珍贵的非洲艺术品，包括铜雕、木雕和20件罕见又精美的作品，这是非洲艺术品首次在本埠展出。

莫美颜 / 文 主办方提供照片

非洲被认为是人类祖先的摇篮。大部分科学家都同意，人类的进化和现代人类都出现在非洲大陆。从新发现的文物可追溯到7万年前来看，最早的视觉表达形式可能就出现在非洲大陆。多少年来非洲人以惊人的创造力创造出令世人惊叹的艺术品。一批承载着非洲人民智慧和艺术才华的艺术品首次在本埠展览。这个名为奥金卡-非洲艺术展 (Okinka African Art Exhibition) 的展览目前正在新加坡举行。

奥金卡指的是非洲几内亚比绍最后一位女王奥金卡·潘帕·卡伊帕，她受委保护比热戈斯群岛 (Bijagos Islands) 的神明，是女权的代表。展览以这位女王的名字命名，别具意义。

“非洲艺术一般都具有一定的道德与宗教价值。一件漂亮的作品通常都被认为是美好的化身。”这次展览的主要主办者保罗·戈麦斯说：“希望把非洲漂亮和美好的东西呈现在我们新加坡访客面前，让新加坡访客通过这些艺术品对非洲有更多的了解。”保罗·戈麦斯是南洋理工大学和新加坡工商联合总会成立的非洲研究中心的杰出访问学者。

← 几内亚比绍的巴加族人相信，Ma-Tshol有避邪保护家人的功用。

这次展览共展出超过50件珍贵的非洲艺术品，包括铜雕、木雕和20件罕见又精美的精品。这些艺术品分别来自几内亚比绍、象牙海岸、加蓬等非洲国家的土著部落，每一件作品都述说着本身奇妙的文化故事，代表着护卫、繁荣昌盛、肥沃与多产等不同主题，它们往往也是宗教、社会稳定和统治的象征。

## 庇佑族人的巨鸟

“Ma-Tshol”是神明的称谓。几内亚比绍的巴加 (Baga) 族人相信，“Ma-Tshol”有避邪保护家人的功用，其造型犹如巨鸟或鳄鱼，尖长的部分是水鸟的长喙或鳄鱼的颚，鸟身或鳄鱼身是一张人脸，上面还有大鼻子和凸起的额头及拉长了的头壳。整个头由一条细幼的颈项支撑着。族人坚信，当“Ma-Tshol”腾空飞翔时，便能发挥庇佑族人的作用。

## 难得一见的贝宁艺术

尼日利亚的贝宁王国以制作精美牙雕、木刻、铜和赤陶雕塑等艺术品闻名，世称贝宁文化。1897年英国军队攻占贝宁城后，奥巴王宫珍藏的艺术品被劫掠一空，大量的贝宁艺术品流落海外，这次能观赏到贝宁艺术相当难得。贝宁人会在王室祖先的神龛上摆放铜雕头像，供奉这些人头是每年一度王室祭祀典礼必不可少的活动之一。这类铜雕头像就在这次的展览之列。加蓬至少有40个族群并且各自

拥有自己独立的语言和文化，芳族 (Fang) 是其中一个较大的民族。芳族以木雕圣人遗骨或遗物容器著称，族人舞蹈时戴的典礼木雕面具也非常独特。相信万物有灵的比热戈斯人，也有戴面具举行宗教仪式或舞蹈的传统。

## 影响毕加索的展品

这次展览主要是非洲传统艺术的呈现，但这些非洲艺术对现代艺术却有着相当深远的影响。法国画家，野兽派的创始人及主要代表人物亨利·马蒂斯，现代艺术的创始人，西方现代派绘画的主要代表毕加索，这两位大师的作品都深受Senufo部落人形雕塑的启发。比如毕加索一幅《立着的裸女》画作里就有Senufo部落雕塑的影子。Senufo是象牙海岸的一个部落，其人像雕塑以大乳和腹部隆起的妇女为特色，象征妇女的健康多产。

保罗·戈麦斯说，当代非洲艺术仍植根于传统非洲艺术。展览期间，将有非洲当代艺术家到访，提供访客一个与非洲艺术家交流的机会。

这次展览作品的部分销售所得将捐作非洲文化与环境事业及新加坡儿童会。

奥金卡-非洲艺术展  
日期：即日起至8月30日  
时间：每天上午10时至晚上10时  
地点：The Art Space @ Suntec City  
入场免费



Senufo部落人形雕塑。

**Newspaper article on OKINKA African Art Exhibition published on 30 July 2015 in Lianhe Zaobao, a Mandarin-based daily newspaper in Singapore**

**English translation**

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## **African art premiering in Singapore Every piece tells its own unique story**

*The OKINKA African Art Exhibition displays more than 50 precious African art pieces, including bronze and wooden sculptures. With over 20 rare and exquisite masterpieces, the exhibition is premiering in Singapore.*

Mok Mei Ngan/ text, photos provided by the organizer

Africa is sometimes acclaimed as the cradle of human civilisation. Majority of scientists have also agreed that the progress of mankind and modern civilisation have originated from the African continent. Moreover, newly discovered artefacts dating back to 70,000 years ago reveal that the earliest forms of visual expression could have originated from the continent itself. Over the years, Africans have always produced impressive art creations replete with remarkable creativity and ingenuity. For the first time, a collection of African art pieces, is exhibited in Asia, at Suntec City Mall in Singapore. Named as the OKINKA African Art Exhibition, it is truly testament to African wisdom and its diverse artistic styles.

The name “Okinka” refers to the famed last queen of Guinea-Bissau, Okinka Pampa Kanyimpa. Venerated as the sovereign protector of the Bijagos Islands, Queen Okinka epitomises the empowerment of women. The exhibition, in taking its name after the queen, bears additional significance.

“African art typically embraces ethical and religious values. An artwork considered “beautiful” is often also believed to be “good,” said Mr. Paulo Gomes, the main organizer of the exhibition. “I hope to present to Singapore Africa’s “good” and “beautiful” pieces, and enable Singapore to develop a deeper understanding and knowledge of Africa.” Mr. Paulo Gomes is a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Centre of African

Studies jointly established by the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and Singapore Business Federation (SBF).

The exhibition displays over 50 pieces of precious African art pieces, including bronze and wooden sculptures. There are also 20 rare and exquisite masterpieces. Gathered from indigenous communities of various African countries such as Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast and Gabon, each art piece tells of its own intriguing cultural story. The sculptures reveal thematic background stories ranging from war, prosperity to fertility. They are symbolic of religious beliefs, societal stability and governance.

### ***A bird-like creature which invokes blessing***

In the Baga tribe in Guinea Bissau, the “Ma-Tshol” is believed to be the name of a god. According to traditions, the object can protect the family from malevolent forces. Its figure combines the long beak of a wading bird or the jaws of a crocodile, with a human face of a broad nose and convex forehead, and an elongated skull. A slender neck supports the whole head. Legend has it that when the “Ma-Tshol” soars in the sky, it invokes blessings and protection upon its people.

### ***The exclusive Benin Kingdom***

The Benin Kingdom of Nigeria is originally home to many exquisite ivory and wooden carvings, bronze and Terracotta heads and other artworks. All of these are known as the famed Benin art. After the British Punitive Expedition invaded the city of Benin in 1897, most of the precious art pieces of the Kingdom were also plundered, resulting in a large outflow of Benin art from Nigeria. Hence, the opportunity to see real Benin art is rare and thus, not to be missed. Additionally, the people of Benin also have an annual tradition of presenting the bronze and Terracotta heads on altars of their paternal ancestors, in memory of the previous Oba kings. Memorial heads as such are one of the highlights of the exhibition.

There are at least forty tribes in Gabon and each has its own individual language and culture. The Fang tribe is one of the larger ethnic groups and its traditional religion is centered around ancestors who were believed to wield divine power in the afterlife. Their skulls and long bones are thus prominent features among its tribal artefacts. Furthermore, the ceremonial wooden masks worn by the tribal members during tribal dances are outstanding. As believers of animism, the Bijagos Islanders also practise the tradition of wearing masks during religious ceremonies or dances.

### *Traditional African art influencing modern art masters*

Even though the OKINKA African Art Exhibition presents primarily traditional African art pieces, the aesthetics of these traditional African sculptures has however profoundly influenced Modern Art.

In particular, the abstraction of the human figure displayed in the Senufo sculptures have once been the source of inspiration behind the works of Henri Matisse, French Fauve artist, and Pablo Picasso, pioneer of Western modern art. Visitors may discover the striking similarities between Picasso's *Standing Female Nude* and the Senufo statue exhibited in OKINKA. Senufo is an ethnic group from Cote d'Ivoire and their sculptures are known for the exaggerated chests and bulging abdomen, which symbolize health and fertility.

Mr. Paulo Gomes believes that contemporary African art is often rooted in the traditional African art. During the exhibition period, visitors may have the opportunity to interact with visiting African artists.

A portion of the proceeds from this exhibition will be donated to culture and environment-related causes in Africa, as well as to the Singapore Children's Society.

**Okinka African Art Exhibition**

Date: Now until August 30, 2015

Time: 10am to 10pm daily, Monday-Sunday

Venue: The Art Space @ Suntec City

*Free Admission*