**African Masks and Masquerades**

- African Masks
  - Are not sculpture, they are part of a performance
  - The masks are spiritual beings from the otherworld
  - The masker is subsumed into the otherworld being who is now truly present.
  - Spirits are of ancestors or from nature and each has their own gestures and movements
  - Spirits command, manipulate and represent powerful spiritual, natural or social forces

Source: A History of Art in Africa, By Visona, Poynor, Cole, Harris, Pearson/Prentice Hall, Inc. 2001

- African Masquerades
  - A masquerade is played for an audience, activated by music, dance and dramatic action, sometimes with singing
  - Masquerades are part of a larger ritual, especially rituals of human passage - planting, harvest, initiation, weddings, funerals
  - Masquerades are danced to effect change in the community
    - Children into adults
    - Seedlings into productive crops
    - Sickness into health
    - Crime into judicial resolution
    - Elders into ancestors

Source: A History of Art in Africa, By Visona, Poynor, Cole, Harris, Pearson/Prentice Hall, Inc. 2001

---

**Two Bwa Masks in Performance, 1984, H: 7 feet, Unknown Bwa Artist, Scan: Art History by Marilyn Stokstad**

**Bwa Mask, 1960, H: 8 feet, Unknown Bwa Artist, Minneapolis Institute of Art**
Female Dance Headdress,
Early 20th century, H: 45 inches,
Unknown Baga Artist, Cincinnati Art Museum

Senufo Funeral Masquerade, 1984,
Unknown Senufo Artists,
Photo by Anita J. Glaze,
Scan: The History of Art in Africa, by Visona, Poynor, etc.

Basijum Mask and Gown,
1972, H: 85 inches,
Unknown Ejagham Artist, Nigeria
Scan: African Art by P. McCluskey

Four Egungun Masqueraders, 1992, Unknown Yoruba Artists,
Nigeria, Photo by Marilyn Houlberg,
Scan: The History of Art in Africa by Visona, Poynor, etc.

Pair of Gelede Masqueraders Dancing 1970,
Ibmek, Nigeria, Photo: Eliot Elisofon,
Scan: African Art by P. McCluskey

Gelede Mask, 1992, Unknown Yoruba Artist, Photo by Elise Elisofon,
Scan: Art Beyond The West by O’Riley
African Mask and Masquerades

Gelede Mask: Male Wearing Glasses, 20th century, H: 9.5 inches, Unknown Yoruba Artist, Scan: African Art by P. McCluskey

Click here for a video of a Gelede Masquerade:

Dogon Maskers Wearing Kanaga Masks, 1999, Unknown Sanga Artists, Mali Scan: A History of Art in Africa, Visons, Peyron, etc.

Dogon Mask Ceremony, No Date, Unknown Photographer, Scan: randafricanart.com

Click here for a video of Dogon Maskers:

Two Dogon Kanaga Masks, 2005, Joan and Lou Rose, Web: ramblingrose.com

Click here for a video of Yacouba stilt walkers, Ivory Coast, 1993:

This is the end of our presentation on African masks and masquerades.