

Ghana

Art as a Celebration of Life

Ashanti – Golden Stool

The **Golden Stool** ([Ashanti-Twi](#): *Sika dwa*; full title, **Sika Dwa Kofi** "the Golden Stool born on a Friday") is the royal and divine throne of kings of the [Ashanti people](#) and the ultimate symbol of power in [Asante](#).^[1] According to legend, [Okomfo Anokye](#), High Priest and one of the two chief founders of the [Asante Confederacy](#), caused the stool to descend from the sky and land on the lap of the first Asante king, [Osei Tutu](#).^[2] Such seats were traditionally symbolic of a chieftain's leadership, but the Golden Stool is believed to house the spirit^[3] of the [Asante](#) nation—living, dead and yet to be dead.

- <https://smarthistory.org/sika-dwa-kofi-golden-stool/>



Asafo Flags

Curator Gus Casely-Hayford looks at the origins and history of the Asafo flags, made by the Fante people of the Gold Coast of Africa, now known as Ghana. Charting, mapping and surveying oceans, coasts, land and resources were essential tools of Empire. Part of a wider gathering of information by the West about the world, they defined sea and trade routes, and identified territory to be claimed and colonised. Following earlier Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch navigators, buccaneering Elizabethan mariners and the 'discovery voyages' of James Cook and Matthew Flinders accompanied by 'scientific gentlemen' laid the foundations of a British Empire focused on maritime trade and the exploitation of regional resources. Trading 'factories' and forts built by the East India Company grew into great cities, their surroundings and hinterland surveyed by military engineers. Maps were made for settlers, builders of roads and railways, defence and warfare. Using their own skills and technical inventiveness, British cartographers and surveyors also learned from colonial rivals and regional expertise. Their work sometimes involved collaboration, but was often suspect, resented or opposed. By erasing indigenous ownership and imposing new names and borders, Empire maps were always provocative and ultimately redundant.

<https://smarthistory.org/gus-casely-hayford-on-fante-asafo-flags/>

<https://smarthistory.org/asafo-flags-stitches-through-time/> Use this





Fantasy Coffins

To the people of Ghana, West Africa, death is not an end, but a transition to the spiritual realm of their ancestors. In fact, ancestors are forever considered members of the family. It is believed that if the deceased is properly honored, such actions secure spiritual favor for the family left on earth. This unique exhibit displays 12 artfully sculpted coffins, each uniquely created to capture the essence of the departed—whether a character trait, an occupation, a symbol of one's standing in the community or what they hope to achieve in the afterlife.

These remarkable coffins vividly depict a KLM airliner, a Mercedes Benz, a fish, a canoe, a leopard, a chicken, a bull, a crab, an eagle, a lobster, a shallot and a Yamaha outboard motor. Brightly colored and intricately designed, these wooden coffins were crafted by Ghanaian sculptor Kane Quaye (also known as Seth Kane Kwe) in his homeland of Accra, Ghana, West Africa.

The National Museum of Funeral History has the largest collection of fantasy coffins outside of Ghana, West Africa.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqBnoETB5EA>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Z_qYYH6XOM
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exTuISKj98s>



Paa Joe

Paa Joe is a Ghanaian figurative palanquin and fantasy coffin artist born 1947 at Akwapim in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Paa Joe is considered one of the most important Ghanaian coffin or abebuu adekai artists of his generation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-de14RqLO8>

<https://high.org/exhibition/paa-joe-gates-of-no-return/>

<https://smarthistory.org/paa-joe-coffin-the-shape-of-a-nike-sneaker/>



PAA JOE COFFIN WORKS

Tel. 0244648623-0249191004











Ibrahim Mahama

Ibrahim Mahama is a Ghanaian author and an artist of monumental installations. He lives and works in Tamale, Ghana.

<https://umma.umich.edu/content/artist-ibrahim-mahama-who-cloaked-umma-jute-sacks-awarded-international-art-prize>















Ablade Glover

Ablade Glover FGA FRSA CV is a Ghanaian artist and educator. He has exhibited widely, building an international reputation over several decades, as well as being regarded as a seminal figure on the West African art scene.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=23fp8dnfV8w>









El Anatsui

El Anatsui is a Ghanaian sculptor active for much of his career in Nigeria. He has drawn particular international attention for his "bottle-top installations".

<https://smarthistory.org/el-anatsui-untitled/>

<https://artbasel.com/news/meet-the-artists-el-anatsui>

<https://art21.org/artist/el-anatsui/>











Amoako Boafo

Amoako Boafo (b.1984 Accra, Ghana; based in Vienna, Austria and Accra, Ghana) has built a practice synthesizing the ways that art both reflects and perpetuates the power of representation. Exclusively portraying individuals from the Diaspora and beyond, Boafo invites a reflection on Black subjectivity, diversity and complexity. His portraits are notable for their bold colors and patterns, which celebrate his subjects, as a means to challenge representation that objectifies and dehumanizes Blackness. Able to capture critical subtleties and nuanced emotion in a manner that grabs and engages the viewer, it is however Boafo's tenderness in how he renders his subjects that is the most striking quality of his work. His powerful, concise style expresses the vibrancy of daily life with an easy familiarity, touching on topics such as community, social and political struggles, and the intimacy between like-minded friends.

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysMd51_yg58
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XC7oDKjpx3o>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SZpxa5JwRE> (interview with Idris Elba)







Kwame Akoto-Bamfo

Kwame Akoto-Bamfo is a Ghanaian sculptor. His outdoor sculpture dedicated to the memory of the victims of the Transatlantic slave trade is on display at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice that opened in 2018 in Montgomery, Alabama.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JC0ZPCJveO4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qpd9j-J8YFI>







Betty Acquah

Betty Acquah is a Ghanaian feminist painter. She uses the techniques of pointillism, oil painting and acrylic.

While many painters choose to recreate the stationary people or objects around them, artist [Betty Acquah](#) captures life in action. She utilizes swatches of vibrant color and mesmerizing patterns to illustrate the rhythm and beauty of dances in her native Ghana.

Acquah's distinct style resembles both the expressive dabs of paint from [Van Gogh](#) and the precise [pointillism](#) of Seurat. Her carefully curated color palette is applied onto the canvas with thick rectangular brushstrokes, traveling around the figures and towards the edges of the canvas. As a result, these vivid vortexes communicate the energy of the figures in mid-motion. "The background echoes the movement of figures and therefore create(s) a pulsating surface that brings the composition alive," she [says](#). "By extending dabs of color in the subject matter into the background and vice-versa, an illusion of movement is created."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9F-CEC5Oag>















Zohra Opoku

Zohra Opoku (German/Ghanaian; based in Accra) examines the politics of personal identity formation through historical, cultural, and socio-economic influences, particularly in the context of contemporary Ghana.

Opoku's explorations have been mostly through the lens of her camera; Her photography is expressed through screen-printing and alternative photo processing on varieties of natural fabrics. She repeatedly integrates family heirlooms and her own self-image into her visual observations of Ghana's cultural memory. Her practice centers around textiles and traditional Ghanaian dress codes, which have been an inherent part of the country's identity and industry throughout West Africa's complex history.

<https://www.culturalencyclopaedia.org/zohra-opoku-artist>













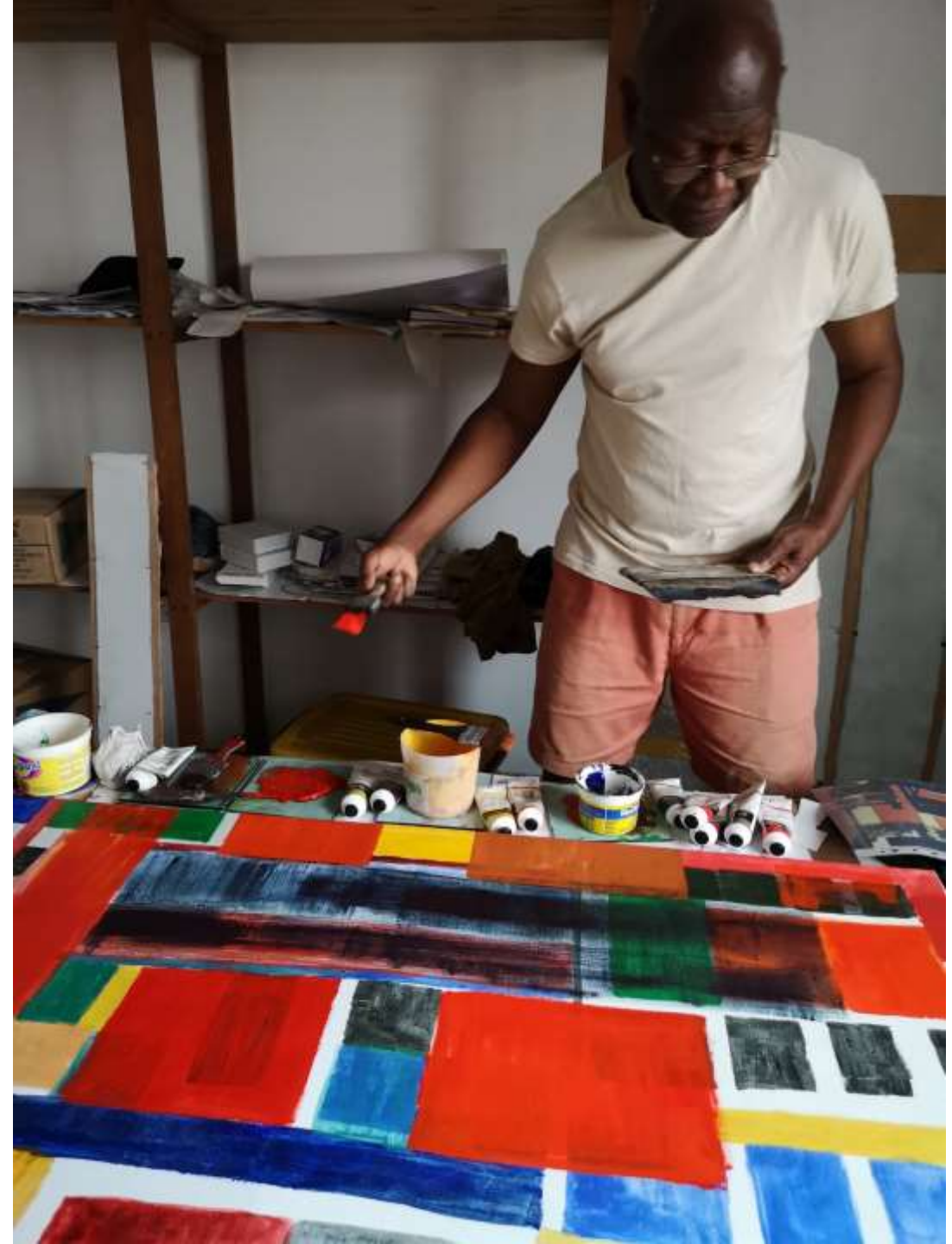
Atta Kwami

Atta Kwami was a Ghanaian painter, printmaker, independent art historian and curator. He was educated and taught at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana, and in the United Kingdom.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXnj_sxytvg











Bright Tetteh Ackwerh

Bright Tetteh Ackwerh is a Ghanaian satirical artist who employs the domains of popular art, street art, painting, and illustration to voice and document his persuasions. He has exhibited widely in Ghana and West Africa, building a niche as an emerging contemporary Ghanaian artist on the West African art scene.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elu7hY7eLBc>









Ama 'Poetra' Diaka

Ama Diaka is a poet, performer, illustrator, and designer. She is truly the epitome of a multifaceted artist. Ama Diaka is mainly known for using her voice to discuss topics surrounding inequality, feminism, and mental health. As an artist she leads educational programs for the youth with the non profit LoveRocks to help them comprehend these topics.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUYpKxawiM0>



Target Segment Audience

Artists from Ghana & Africa



Writers, painters, musicians, producers, visual artists, hand artisans etc
Have individual sense of fashion particular about physical appearance, i
nterested in current affairs, what's hot and new in the art scene
Value art in and around Ghana, does not rely on their art to eat
but invests fully in their art,
lives in big city, commutes to work via public transport daily

Am





Serge Attukwei Clottey

Serge Attukwei Clottey is a Ghanaian artist who is best known for his plastic patchwork installations, performance, charcoal portraits, photography and sculpture. Due to his concern for the environment he created the concept "Afrogallonism" where he repurposes waste. With his project "Afrogallonism" Serge discusses mass consumption and the environmental effects of global trade.

<https://desertx.org/dx/desert-x-21/serge-attukwei-clottey>









Adjo Kisser



Adjo Kisser uses her artwork to create conversations surrounding gender roles in her environment. She uses a lot of intricate details in her work which makes it visually appealing to the public. Adjo Kisser has participated in many exhibitions including the Voyage of (Re)Discovery at Nubuke Foundation at the Ussher Fort at James Town in Accra where her work titled "The Portrait Series" was being showcased.

<https://vimeo.com/175415268>





Prince Gyasi Nyantakyi

Prince Gyasi Nyantakyi also known by the artist name Prince Gyasi is a Ghanaian international visual artist. He is the co-founder of Boxedkids, a non-profit organization helping kids from Accra get an education.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UG5XHG56nkk>











Ato Delaquis

Ato Delaquis is **one of Ghana's foremost artists**. Well known for his iconic paintings of horsemen, as well landscapes and more abstract work, he is also a prolific draughtsman, and has worked in a wide variety of media including printmaking.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIjjDBXkfGQ>









Assignment Suggestions...

- Try your hand at a palette knife painting
- Finger paint
- Use pointillism to create a sense of movement
- Design your own fantasy coffin
- Experiment with blocks of color
- Use gold in an artwork
- Use recycled plastic in an artwork