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INSCRIBING MEANING

WRITING AND GRAPHIC SYSTEMS IN AFRICAN ART

Christine Mullen Kreamer, Mary Nooter Roberts, Elizabeth Harney and Allyson Purpura

A groundbreaking volume that brings together both tradition-based and contemporary African arts to explore the interface between African art and the communicative powers of graphic systems, language and the written word.

Exploring the multiple messages and aesthetic intent of works that creatively incorporate script, both for its literal content as well as the beauty of its form, the book includes 90 exceptional works of art dating from ancient to contemporary times.

Inscribing Meaning celebrates the ingenuity and creativity of African artists from around the continent who bring script and graphic forms of communication into a wide range of art-works. The spectacular works of art will illustrate a range of indigenous African writing systems that have received little attention outside of Africa as both visually compelling and historically significant forms of art.

These include everyday and ritual objects, religious painting and manuscripts, protective talismans, commemorative cloth, public and popular arts, and contemporary painting, sculpture, prints, installation art, photography and video.

The volume aims to challenge popular misperceptions that do not recognize Africa's contributions to the global history of writing, and to foster dialogue with and expand the readers' ideas about what it means to be knowledgeable, educated, and literate. This book will be particularly valuable to scholars and students of art history, history, fine arts, African and African American studies, linguistics and anthropology.

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