



20 x 26 cm, 320 pp.
132 colour and b/n illustrations
hardcover
English edition
ISBN 978-88-7439-670-2
€ 55.00

Book signing

Librairie Fischbacher, Paris
September, 11 2014

THE SILENCE OF THE WOMEN: BAMANA MUD CLOTHES

Sarah C. Brett-Smith

The Silence of the Women: Bamana Mud Cloths is the first full-length scholarly book entirely devoted to an African art form created by women of the Bamana people in Mali, West Africa. These traditional mud-dyed textiles have typically been treated as craft but, here, they are presented as a complex art form. Sarah Brett-Smith sensibly explores the hidden cultural testimony written into the mud-cloth patterns, documenting women's silent visual commentary on the events that dominate their lives – excision, arranged marriage, childbirth and death.

This book explores both art historical and anthropological considerations of technique, style, symbolism and function in Bamana textiles. This book is a decisive contribution to our understanding of female artisans/artists in Africa and it explores hitherto untouched areas of African art and culture and leads us into an emotional understanding of the shadowy world and silences of female knowledge.

Sarah C. Brett-Smith is a professor at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. She specializes in the study of Bamana ritual art and medicine with a focus on the mud-dyed cloths painted by Bamana women.