



# **The Art of Daily Life**

## **Portable Objects from Southeast Africa**

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**Karel Nel**

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- Features 78 exceptional works - many never published before - drawn from the Cleveland Museum of Art, the National Museum of African Art in Washington, D.C., and a large number of American private collections

The arts of southeast Africa embrace astounding diversity and limitless inventiveness in materials, forms, and styles. Small and portable in nature – snuff containers, pipes, headrests, staffs, clubs, beer vessels, beaded garments – they were created by semi-nomadic pastoral peoples and primarily intended for daily use. Whether figurative or abstract, carved out of wood, ivory, or horn, or made of cloth, glass beads, or clay, most of these works were much more than exquisitely designed functional objects. Some signalled status, gender, or age; others served as symbolic intermediaries between the world of humans and the realm of the ancestors.

After a tenure of more than fourteen years at the Cleveland Museum of Art, **Constantine (Costa) Petridis** joined the Art Institute of Chicago on November 1, 2016, as Curator of African art and Chair of the Department of the Arts of Africa and the Americas. A prolific editor and writer specialising in the arts of Central Africa, Petridis most recently also contributed various essays to Frank Herreman's *Mumuye Sculpture from Nigeria: The Human Figure Reinvented*, which was published by 5 Continents Editions in 2016.