



Horse Rider in African Art

George Chemeche

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- This visually stunning book presents a wealth of African art depicting the horse and its rider
- Detailed in a variety of guises from Epa masks and Yoruba divination cups to Dogon sculptures and Senufo carvings

"This book builds and expands the scholarship covering this central motif in African art and culture and serves as an authoritative contribution to the field." – **Nicole Beatty, ARLIS**

"This volume is outsized and lavishly illustrated, befitting the art objects...represented." – **CHOICE**

Horses are very rare in Africa. The few to be found west of Sudan, from the lands of the Sahara and Sahel down to the fringes of the tropical forests, belong to the king, the chief warrior and to notable persons. Due to the dense humidity of the tropical rainforest and the deadly tsetse fly, only restricted numbers of horses survive. And yet rider and mount sculptures are common among the Dogon, Djenne, Bamana, Senufo and the Yoruba people. The Akan-Asante people of Ghana and the Kotoko of Chad produced a good deal of small casting brass and bronze sculptures. Some of the artists could barely even have caught a glimpse of a horse. This visually stunning book presents a wealth of African art depicting the horse and its rider in a variety of guises, from Epa masks and Yoruba divination cups to Dogon sculptures and Senufo carvings. In Mali, the Bamana, Boso and Somono ethnic groups still celebrate the festivals of the puppet masquerade. The final chapter of this book is dedicated to the art and cult of these festivals, which are still alive and well. It is not the habit of the African artist to provide intellectual statements for his work, yet his unique creative dynamic and far-reaching vision does not conflict with that of his Western counterpart. It is fair to state that the African, who though not educated in Western art history, contributed his fair share to the shaping of modern art. Features works from museums in both Africa and Europe, including the Musée Royal de L'Afrique Central, Tervuren in Belgium; Afrika Museum, Berg en Dal, Netherlands; Musée du quai Branly, Paris; Museum Rietberg, Zurich; The British Museum, London; Museu Nacional de Antologia, Lisbon and National Museum, Lagos, Nigeria.

George Chemeche is an artist whose work is in many museums, including the Guggenheim Museum, the Denver Art Museum, the Virginia Museum of Fine Art, and the Birmingham Museum of Art. He lives in New York City. He is co-author and curator of *Ibeji. The Cult of Yoruba Twins*. Kate Ezra is currently Nolen Curator of Academic Affairs at the Yale University Art Gallery. Previously she has been Associate Curator of African Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and professor of Art History at Columbia College, Chicago. She has curated more than a dozen exhibitions on African Art and she is the author of *Royal Art of Benin: The Perls Collection* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Mary Jo Arnoldi is Curator of African Ethnology and Arts the Department of Anthropology at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. She has curated several exhibitions and is the author of *Bamana: The Art of Existence in Mali*. John Pemberton III, now retired, was Crosby Professor of Religion at Amherst College, Massachusetts. He is the coauthor of *Yoruba: Nine Centuries of African Art and Thought*, *Yoruba Art and Aesthetics*, *Yoruba Sacred Kingship*, and *Insight and Artistry in African Divination*. He lives in Pelham, Massachusetts. Bernard de Grunne has been an antiques dealer since 1996. He has a PhD in History of Art, Yale University, 1987. He was Director at Sotheby's, New-York and London from 1987 to 1992. He has written extensively on African Art and curated several exhibitions; amongst them *Mains de Maitres. A la découverte des sculpteurs d'Afrique*.