



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--OCTOBER 1, 2014

# GLOBAL AFRICA: Creativity, Continuity and Change in African Art

## Media Contact

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## About FAM

The Fitchburg Art Museum serves the cities of Fitchburg and Leominster and the surrounding communities in North Central Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire. FAM was founded in 1925, and its five-building complex, with over 20,000 square feet of exhibition space, features exhibitions from its art historical collections as well as special exhibitions focused on New England contemporary art. FAM plays a vital role in the cultural life of the region and the Museum maintains active educational partnerships with the local school systems, as well as Fitchburg State University. FAM is an engine for creativity, education, community building and fun!



IMAGE: THEOPHILUS NII ANUM SOWAH, '57 CHEVY (FANTASTIC AFTERLIFE VEHICLE/FAV), 1995.

The Fitchburg Art Museum is proud to present **GLOBAL AFRICA: Creativity, Continuity and Change in African Art**, an exhibition of classic, contemporary and commissioned art objects including masks, masquerades with videos, photographs, carved portraits, textiles, metal arts as currency, and an interactive Learning Lounge for all ages.

Traditional African art constitutes a visual language that has persisted over time and has been carried long distances. Never static, it has evolved and yet remains recognizable and continues to be relevant in today's global culture. From the 15th century onward, millions of Africans brought their cultures to other continents, making an impact wherever they settled. In the late 19th century, African sculpture shifted the direction of Western art from realism to abstraction.

Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, we can chart the creation of innovative versions of older forms by local artists working to serve their communities and the creation of new forms linked to changing lifestyles. University-trained artists in Africa and abroad continue to derive

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inspiration from their African artistic heritage, often marrying traditional form with contemporary social content.

GLOBAL AFRICA celebrates African creativity worldwide — whether it occurs in Africa, or England, or Cuba, or America. Traditional and contemporary works are shown side by side. Works by African artists whose names have been lost stand next to those of 20th and 21st century African artists whose names are known.

Three galleries focus on three themes. *Music, Masks, Masquerades* emphasizes the multi-media nature of African art and the difference between African and Western modes of display. *Beyond Indigo* looks at the African presence in America, evokes the diversity of cultures represented by individuals forcibly moved from Africa to the western hemisphere, and celebrates the inventiveness of African artists working in wood, metal, and cloth. *Life/Afterlife* focuses on memory, and the interrelationship of the natural and supernatural worlds.

This exhibition was organized by Jean Borgatti, FAM Consulting Curator for African and Oceanic Art, and designed by Catherine Hunter, Independent Museum Consultant.

GLOBAL AFRICA was made possible by a generous grant from the Geneviève McMillian-Reba Stewart Foundation.

## **GLOBAL AFRICA:**

***Creativity, Continuity and Change in African Art***

**Opening Reception: Sunday, November 2, 2014, 3-5 PM**

### **Museum Hours:**

Wednesday 12-4 PM  
Thursday 12-4 PM  
Friday 12-4 PM  
Saturday 11-5 PM  
Sunday 11-5 PM

### **FREE First Thursdays:**

On the First Thursday of every month, the Museum is free to the public from 3-7 PM.

### **Admission is free for:**

FAM Members, children under 12, Fitchburg State University and Fitchburg Public School students, faculty and staff, Fitchburg Residents of Ward 4B, AAM & NEMA Members +1, Active Military and their family, Corporate Members' and their employees & family.

### **General admission:**

\$9 for adults  
\$5 for seniors (62+)  
\$5 for students (13+)