

MEET THE MUSEUM Discovery Theater & African Art!

Body of Evidence Gallery

Directions

- Come out of the lecture hall and face the circular railing. Go to your right around the railing and out through the short corridor (toward the elevators).
- Before you get to the elevators, go right, then right again up the stairs.
- At the top of the stairs, turn left to enter the Body of Evidence gallery.
- Turn immediately to your left and go to the far end of the gallery. Look at the wood sculpture on the wall.



Discussion

- This sculpture tells a story about the Ancestors. Who are the Ancestors? (*In Africa, the Ancestors are the grandmothers and the grandfathers—all the people who came before us. They are the voices of the land, and the voices of all the people of Africa who loved and learned from the land.*)
- What is this sculpture made of? (*Pieces of wood.*) What kind of wood? (*Rough branches.*) What did the artist do to the wood? (*He carved heads, shaped necks and added paint to turn bumps, knobs, and cracks in the wood into faces.*)
- Why do you think he left the wood rough and mostly untouched? (*El Anatsui has an artistic imagination and saw figures and faces in these pieces of wood.*)
- Why do you think the artists used different colors and patterns of paint? (*The colors are very similar to colors used by weavers in weaving Kente cloth.*)

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Directions

Move to the other side of the wall that the wooden sculpture is hanging on. Stop at the tall, colorful, free-standing sculpture.

Discussion

- What are the first things you notice about this sculpture? (*Faces, colors.*) How many different kinds of faces can you find? (*Large, small, some flat, some 3-dimensional heads, some with bodies, etc.*) Do some of those faces seem to belong to certain kinds of people? (*E.g., king with crown, children, etc.*)
- What do you notice about their mouths? (*Most are open. Some are even hollowed out.*) Why might that be? (*Maybe the faces are telling us something, maybe they're shouting, etc.*)
- Can you guess what this sculpture is made of? (*Papier-mâché.*)
- The artist called this sculpture *Megalith*. A megalith is a tall stone standing up from the ground. Thousands of years ago, people put up megaliths for very special ceremonies. However, it was so long ago, the reason why is often a mystery.
- Is there a mystery about this sculpture, too? Make up a story about it!

