PAN
AMSTERDAM

GALLERY ILÉ



Gèlèdésque ! The Stiletto

Requiring more than 120 hours of work, this superbe Gèlèdé fine art sculpture, is hand carved from a singular block of Merina wood, sustainably sourced in the forest of Dassa-Zoumé, a neighbouring village of Cové, located in the southern-eastern part of Benin.

Due to the handcrafted nature, shades may vary slightly over time.

Height: 50 cm
Width: 20 cm
Depth: 15 cm
Weight: 4 Kg
Year: 2022
Cové, Benin, West Africa

This work of art is unique, authentic and certified.

Heir to an illustrious family of sculptors, Wabi grew up in the company of a virtuoso. His late father, Amidou Dossou, received the art world's critical acclaim in 1989, at the legendary exhibition 'Magicians of The Earth' which took place at Le Centre Pompidou, in Paris.

The creed of The Dossou Family is rooted in the cultural ideologies of Fon & Yorùbá, linked through history and tradition to the Kingdom of Dahomey. Dating back to the mid-18th century, in the sovereign state of Kétou, the Gèlèdé sacred rites are lavish multimedia operas, performed to this day, in the popular genre of the ‘Masquerade’, honouring "Ìyá Nlá", the primordial Orisha spirit and Mother of all creations in Yorùbá cosmology. The oral tradition of Gèlèdé, one of West Africa’s crown jewels, is inscribed by UNESCO on the List of Humanity’s Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Now leading his own practice, Wabi Dossou brings new meaning to the historical tradition of Gèlèdé. Bold, beautiful yet caustic in their wit and humour, his 'Diverted Objects' speak to a form of higher art. Through an ingenious neo expressionist subterfuge, these incomparable hybrid sculptures cross-pollinate the paragons of high fashion, music, pop culture and street art. Each interrogates us on notions of memory preservation, capitalism sustainability and mass-consumerism.