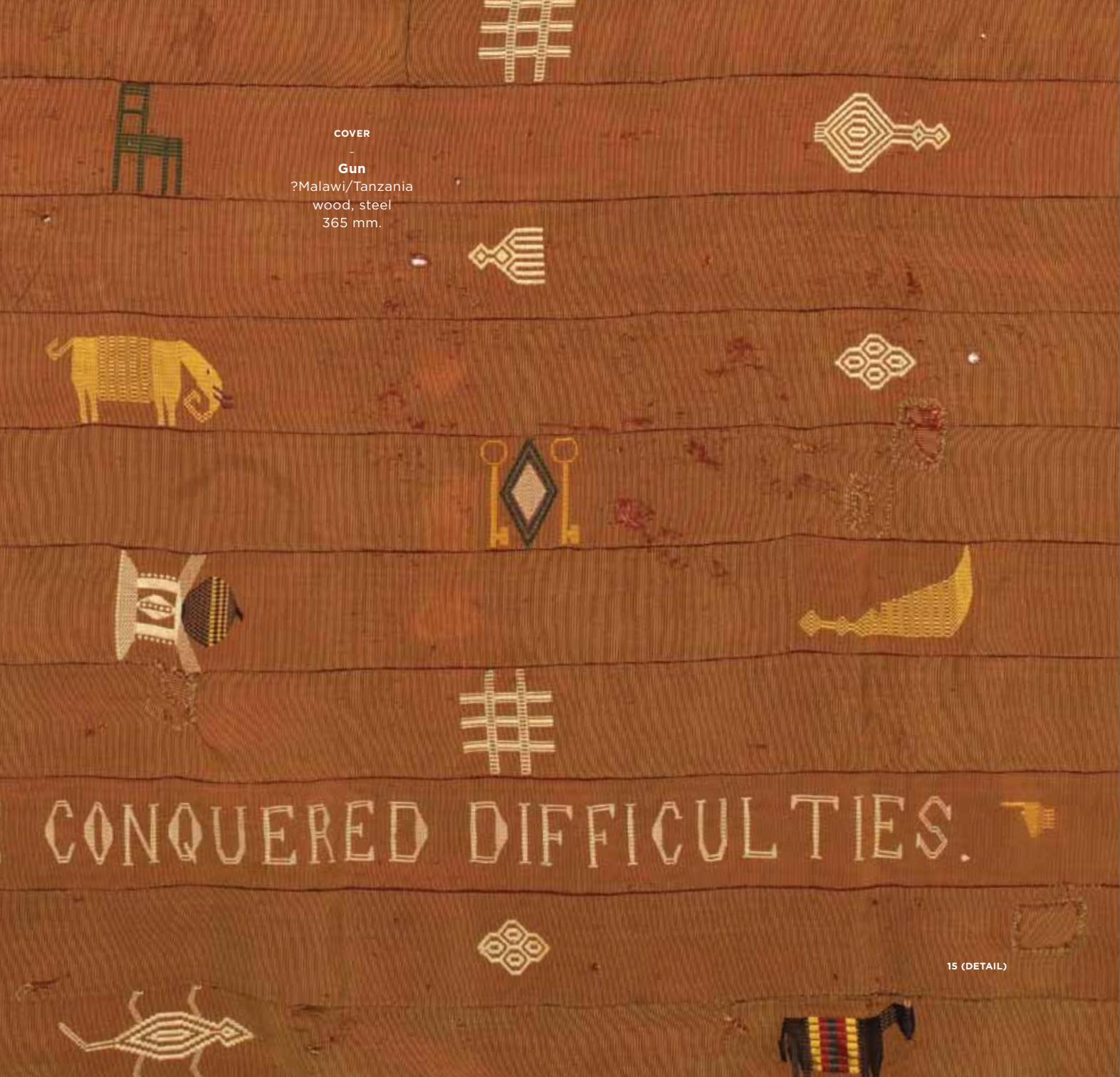


▼
A
FR
ICA
▲





COVER
-
Gun
?Malawi/Tanzania
wood, steel
365 mm.

15 (DETAIL)

▼
**A
FR
ICA**
▲

MICHAEL
GRAHAM-
STEWART
2012

1944

Inscribed with artist, date

Watercolour

500 by 710 mm.



Cyrene Mission

-

It was not unusual in the 20th century for indigenous peoples to be given art materials and encouraged to draw, paint or sculpt. Usually the facilitator was of European stock and one who saw art production as beneficial to those adjusting to the shifting realities of life under colonial incursion. One such was Canon Edward (Ned) Paterson. Born in Aberdeen, the family moved to South Africa when he was five. He saw action in WWI in the Namibian and East African campaigns then studied at London's Central School of Art and Craft. Here his influences ranged from John Ruskin and William Morris to Laurence Binyon and Eric Gill. He only converted to Christianity after returning to South Africa, and soon became an Anglican priest. He spent the next 15 years

serving as a railway missionary and in schools where he acquired a reputation for beautifying church buildings. The Bishop of Southern Rhodesia invited Paterson to found a skills oriented primary school at the Cyrene Mission situated in the Matopo Hills out of Bulawayo. As there was no age restriction as to when boys could undergo primary education many students were in their late teens or early 20s. Paterson believed that an academic education alienated students from their village life and that an art-heavy curriculum could ameliorate the problems caused by urbanisation and industrialization. Students should be enabled to connect with the *deep rhythms in nature* and also to break with the *cultural slavery* of Christianity in Africa. The chapel altarpiece showed Christ as African and the

walls were decorated with murals by the students. In *The Last Judgement* Our Lord holds an adze and a mealie-cob, intended (as Paterson wrote in the regular newsletter, *The Cyrene Papers*, in 1943) to remind attendees that the Reckoning may include the question *What have you made and what have you grown?* Circumstances, in the form of severe droughts for the first few seasons, promoted aesthetics over agriculture. After the terrible harvest of 1942 Paterson wrote that *day after day, week after week, month after month, one suffers with the slowly dying plant life. In such a time one grasps one's kinship with nature.* Paterson believed it was *God's work to make a man good, our work to make him interesting to himself.* He also thought it important, like Geoffrey Bardon at Papunya in Central Australia in

the early 1970s, not to influence the subject matter or style of the students' work. However, students would have been aware of existing SPG (the missionary arm of the Church of England) published volumes, such as D.J. Fleming's *Son of Man: Pictures and carvings by Indian, African and Chinese Artists* (1939). Paterson was adept at tapping into the public relations potential of the works in an era of paternalistic colonialism. The first exhibition was held in Bulawayo and Queen Mary visited Cyrene on one of her spare afternoons after seeing paintings in Government House. She went on to purchase work from the first London showing, held at the galleries of the Royal Watercolour Society in 1949. This exhibition subsequently toured the country and was followed by another in 1954.

Two films were made, one (Pitaniko, 1946) featuring the painter Sam Songo in the title role. Bewitching images that communicate the 'spirit of country', seen in the first flush of paintings by peoples with no tradition of figurative representation are, by definition, unsustainable. The apparently innocent charm of, to use Paterson's words, *a large imperial sheet crammed to the sky with every imaginable sort of detail: rocks, trees, trees, animals, villages and people* could only belong to a certain finite era. From the mid 1950s contemporary art in Rhodesia was dominated by Frank McEwen, first Director of the National Gallery in Salisbury. Soon after that politics pervaded and many art producers worked on the now ubiquitous soapstone carvings, shows of which still tour the globe.

Stephen Katsande
The Thinker

Inscribed verso with title, artist and *his first attempt in oils*
Oil on board
398 by 300 mm.

-

Particularly impressive is the artistic development of Stephen Katsande, whose technical dexterity is formidable over a range of diverse subjects, often leading him to confused formations, but generally indicative of an inborn power of expression.

From *The Recorder* review of the 1949 Cyrene Exhibition in London



Anon.

Strange Rocks

Verso with imprinted
*Society for the Propagation
 of the Gospel in Foreign
 Parts* label, typed with
*Cyrene Art, 8. Strange
 Rocks. Anon. Exhibition II*
 (1954)

Watercolour on grey card
 350 by 520 mm.



Monro S. Orr (1874-1955)
A Nyasaland boy on trek
6 March 1922

Signed. Inscribed verso
with title, date and *Lemani,*
Ardgowan
177 by 255 mm.
Watercolour on board



05

**Wood from tree under
which Dr. Livingstone's
heart was buried in
C. Africa**

c. 1900 (the tree was
chopped down in 1899)
83 mm. (case)



06

**Engagements by Gen.
Sir R. Buller, Natal Field
Forces, 1899-1902**

Wood, pigment
440 by 359 mm.



Tivenyanga Gwabe (1900-?)
Homestead with kraal,
Ox-waggon

c. 1939
 Wood with scorchwork
 700 and 580 mm.

Provenance: Chatsworth
 House, England

Zulu peoples stored their grass mats in racks fronted by decorated panels. Like much of North Nguni material culture from the mid 19th century onwards these inspired work for sale as well as for indigenous use. White patronage came through the local fine art and curio/tourist markets, providing a living to a few who defy categorisation as either artists or souvenir makers. Tivenyanga, who specialised in such panels, was one of three carving brothers. The four holes imply that they were once part of a frame but they were probably made to be hung as artworks. This pair were presented to, or bought by, the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire during their visit to Durban in June 1939. The Duke (William Spencer, 1895-1950) was Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs.



08

-
Knife

?Zimbabwe
Steel, wood
370 mm. overall,
head section 62 mm

09

-
Staff

Ovimbundu, Angola
Wood
575 mm. overall,
head 82 mm.
-
Provenance: Reverend
William and Annie
Fay, Congregationalist
missionaries, Portuguese West
Africa (Angola) from 1882
until 1907.



10

-

Flywhisk handle

Kongo (probably Yombe)

c. 1850

Ivory

133 mm.



11

-

Seated figure

Kongo (probably Vili from
Cabinda)

c. 1900

Wood

136 mm.



Nkisi, Yombe, Kongo

Wood, iron, glass etc
495 mm.

No African history for this piece is known. It was recently de-accessioned from the collection of Dr J.B. Wilson. Now in his 80s, he was raised in Edinburgh where at the age of 7 he decided to form his own museum. A neighbour donated this figure.

Sculptures of this genre have long fascinated Westerners as they readily embody our prejudices and clichés about Africa. Words like fetish and voodoo do not seem out of place when faced with the confronting mystery of the implanted nails. As often happens the

bilongo, or magic charge and mirror on the belly, is missing so this power figure is no longer active. With this present the spirit which it contained would be awoken by the *nganga*, or ritual expert, by the insertion of metal objects. Precisely which

spirit once inhabited this body is unrecorded. Some were invoked for specific illnesses and others served a judicial function. The Royal Geographical Society in London has an *nkisi* presented to it by Commander Wilmot after an anti-slavery raid up

the Congo River in 1865 and subsequently painted by Thomas Baines and it too has lost any trace of its *bilongo*, removed, it is said, by an RGS cleaning lady. On her last day before retirement she fulfilled a lifetime's wish and gave the figure a proper clean.





13

**Thomas Baines
(1822-1875)**
*Native woman,
Sierra Leone*

Inscribed with title and *Mr
Casella, from his friend
T. Baines*
Watercolour
182 by 112 mm.

14

**Fenton China Company
Herbert Macaulay and
Prince Eshugbayi Eleko**
c. 1930

Transfer printed plate,
imprinted verso with
Fenton. Made in England
250 mm.

This plate was perhaps from a service ordered by the retailer or by Macaulay to commemorate the political relationship between Eleko and himself, a *cause celebre* in the late 1920s and early 30s. Macaulay, grandson of Bishop Crowther, was a founder of the Nigerian Democratic Party and owner of the *Lagos Daily News*. Twice jailed by the British, he is hailed as one of the fathers of Nigerian nationalism.



***Perseverance conquered
difficulties***

Ewe, Ghana
Cotton, silk, dyes
1500 by 3000 mm.

For a similar woman's cloth
see Nils Quarcopone, *Through
African Eyes*, (2009), ps. 10
and 187.



Chest

Mauritania

Wood, brass, steel etc
280 mm. high (660 on
stand), 600mm. wide

For the type see Jean Gabus,
Au Sahara Arts et Symboles,
(1958), ps. 97-107 and p. 108
for the baggage stand.



Asefa Bogale.
King of Kings Yohannes
visiting the monasteries of
Lake Tana

Ethiopia, 1959

Extensively inscribed in amharic, including: *The painter is Asefa Bogale of the country of Addis Ababa. It was painted in the days of Haile Sellassie King of Kings of Ethiopia in the year 1952, on the 12th of the month of Hedar* (21 October 1959 in the Gregorian calendar) *in Addis Ababa.* The visit took place in the 1880s.

Pigment on cloth
 820 by 1400 mm.

Provenance:

From the collection of Margaret Gee, originally purchased in Ethiopia by University of California at Berkeley anthropologist Sherwood L. Washburn.



18

-

Figurine

?Kikuyu, Kenya
Clay, beads, metal
155 mm.

19

-

Club

Shilluk, Sudan
Wood, hide
250 mm. (ear section),
1200 mm. overall

-

For the type see E.S.
Thomas, *Catalogue of the
Ethnographical Museum
of the Royal Geographical
Society of Egypt*, (1924),
108, figure 141: *From
Kaka. Gift of Dr W. Innes
Bey... it roughly suggests
an elephant's head with
extended trunk*



Bruno Di Sopra (?-1965)
Mogadishu
 1938

Inscribed with title, date,
 signature and monogram
 Watercolour and ink
 374 by 502 mm.

Little is published about Bruno Di Sopra, one of those itinerant commercial artists who slip under the art historical radar. A folio of work with subject matter ranging from Eastern Europe to Vladivostock and Singapore dated 1916-20 that appeared in a London saleroom included documentation stating he was an Austrian taken prisoner by the Russians in WWI. He appears to have settled in Somalia in the 1930s as he is mentioned in one colonial memoir as “a local Italian artist” who painted an administrator’s daughter with hands as bunches of bananas. He also illustrated Douglas Collins’ *A Tear for Somalia* (1961) and his death there in 1965 was mentioned in the local press.



21

(overleaf)

Servants etc. ?Dar Es Salaam

1930s

pigment on cloth
900 by 1750 mm.

22

**?Dar Es Salaam,
Tanganyika**

1930s

Inscribed *Lindi* in three
places

pigment on cloth
910 by 1400 mm.

The story of how these two cloths came to be is lost. It is tempting to speculate that they were given to the previous owner's grandparents when they retired from the civil service in Dar Es Salaam in the 1930s. Certainly much of colonial life, as seen through African eyes, is shown and they would have been a fitting farewell gift for Ernest Allen (or Alan) Armstrong to muse over back in the UK. He had served in WWI, then briefly in India before joining the administration in Tanganyika. In 1920 he married Jeanne Marie Touche de Peugeol, a French speaker from Mauritius who, according to family tradition, had problems being accepted by her husband's English relatives. Earnest died in 1949 and she in the 1970s, when these cloths were found, long folded, in her steamer trunk.



22 DETAIL







Michael Graham-Stewart
38 Old Bond St
London W1S 4QW
m@mgsart.net
+ 44 207 495 4001

23

-

Lion

Akan, Ghana
Gold
35 mm. high

-

Design

Hannah Lawless

-

Post production

sjoerd@digisense.co.nz

-

Photography

Richard Valencia

-

Thanks to

Helen Beastall, Mark
Felix, Michael Stevenson,
Susana Montiel, Jean Fritts,
Anthony Jack, Paul Lewis
and Jacques Mercier

▼

MICHAEL
GRAHAM-
STEWART

