



BOLI NYAMA POWER FIGURE

\$18,000

c. 1900 • Mali • Cotton, Natural Material • Collection #CAA0405

W: 27.0" D: 9.0" H: 17.5"

Created at the beginning of the 20th century by artisans of the Bambara people of Mali, this figure was shaped with cloth and organic substances around a wooden core, emulating the sculptural form and crusty texture of the sacred boli. Layered with sacrificial materials, the boli served as a mediating force in Bambara culture, imbued with supernatural energy called nyama, and was invoked as a mediating force between the spirit and human realms.

The most sacred of all Bambara sculptures, these ritual objects are handled only by a select group of elders and consulted to resolve disputes, cure illnesses, hunt down malicious spiritual forces, and protect the community from harm. Continued...



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Amorphous and organic, the figure resonates with modernist sculpture yet is energized with a vibrant spiritual connection.



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