



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 10, 2017

MEDIA CONTACT
Kat Harding | (919) 664-6795 | kharding@ncartmuseum.org
High-res images available by request

North Carolina Museum of Art Celebrates African Art Gallery with Community Celebration and Concert on September 23

Free daylong event includes art making, food trucks, dance performances, and more

Raleigh, N.C.—The North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) celebrates the new African art gallery with a free community event, [Threads of Africa: A Celebration of Art, Nature, and People](#). The event, planned for Saturday, September 23, 2017, from noon to 5 pm, features dance and musical performances, art-making, food trucks, special gallery tours, and more.



The festival culminates in a sold-out, free evening concert with Grammy award winner Angélique Kidjo, with opening band Diali Cissokho and Kaira Ba, to cap off the Museum's 20th anniversary concert season.

"We are excited to welcome the community to our campus for a day of play, exploration, and conversation," says Director Lawrence J. Wheeler. "It's a continued celebration of our newly expanded African art gallery and interactive learning space, which honor the diverse art forms of the continent's history, present day, and future."

Generous support for the Threads of Africa celebration and concert is provided by Lee and Libby Buck.

See below for additional information on the event's drop-in activities.

Event details:

[Threads of Africa: A Celebration of Art, Nature, and People](#)

Saturday, September 23, Noon–5 pm

Rain date: September 30 (no evening concert)

East Building and Museum Park

Free

Join us as we unveil the newly reinstalled African art gallery in our East Building with a [daylong celebration](#) of African art, nature, music, and traditions! The Museum Park comes alive with music and

dance performances, drum-making workshops, collaborative community art activities, food, African cultural activities, and more. Walk the new gallery and experience conversations with experts and storytellers, and participate in a collaborative art project with artist [Maya Freelon Asante](#). The day concludes with a sold-out, [free concert](#) by world-renowned West African artist Angélique Kidjo

Drop-in activities include:

- **Drum making with [Magic of African Rhythms](#)**

Led by artist Teli Shabu and his family, this drum-making installation invites visitors to see the step-by-step process of creating the intricate West African “talking drums.” The drums-in-progress on display are the culmination of a residency with middle school students from Caldwell County, who worked with the Shabu family to sample African visual and performing art forms such as drumming and adinkra printmaking. Visitors will be able to explore each step and play the finished drums.

- **Collaborative collage with artist [Maya Freelon Asante](#)**

Visitors may help create a tissue paper quilt under the guidance of award-winning Durham artist [Maya Freelon Asante](#). The collaborative installation will remain on display on the Museum campus.



- **North Carolina Zoo station with African animals**

Representatives from the [North Carolina Zoo](#) in Asheboro will be on hand with a collection of African insects and animals, including a ball python, Madagascar hissing cockroaches, African giant millipede, and African hedgehog. Visitors will have the chance to see and touch the creatures.

- **Hands-on cultural connections in the gallery**

At stations around the African art gallery, experts will be on hand to answer questions and discuss the cultural connections between ancient and modern art. Artists include Ibrahim Said, an Egyptian ceramic artist, and Amponsah Opuku, a North Carolina Central University student and descendant of Ghana royalty, who will discuss kente cloth with samples visitors can touch.

- **Storytelling, culinary demonstrations, and art making throughout galleries and Park**

Hands-on and participatory opportunities include storytelling with Braima Moiwai, a West African storyteller and artist who has been performing for more than 30 years; culinary stations with Chef Kabui and The Palace International Restaurant to highlight both traditional and modern takes on African foods; and additional art making inspired by the African collection.

- **Parade through the Park**

At 3 pm the completed drums from the Shabu family drum making will be played and paraded through the Park by the Magic of African Rhythms and celebration visitors. The walk through the Park will showcase the instruments and highlight their breadth of sounds.

- **Outdoor music performances**

A series of performances and workshops will be staged on the John Deere Green between noon and 3:15 pm, including Senegalese kora master Diali Cissokho and his band Kaira Ba; Congolese ensemble Muningu, which mixes jazz, Afropop, and reggae influences with traditional sounds from the Republic of Congo; and Charlotte-based Ewe Dancers.

- **Food trucks and beverage tent**

Visitors can choose from more than 20 food trucks throughout the day; a beverage tent features beer from local breweries. Lunch trucks include The Palace International, [Bo's Kitchen](#), [Qspresso](#), [Flirting with Fire](#), [Chirba Chirba](#), and more. The dinner trucks will feature [Thai Box Zing](#), [Cockadoodlemoo](#), [Humble Pig](#), [Mac Ur Roni](#), [Jam Ice Cream](#), and more.

Outdoor Concert: Angélique Kidjo with Diali Cissokho & Kaira Ba
Saturday, September 23, 6:45 pm (doors open at 5:30 pm)
Joseph M. Bryan, Jr., Theater in the Museum Park
Free; ticket required ([this concert is sold out](#))

To conclude the Threads of Africa celebration and the Museum's 20th anniversary summer concert series, the NCMA presents a free concert by Angélique Kidjo, hailed by *Time* magazine as "Africa's premier diva." Kidjo blends the West African traditions of her childhood in Benin with elements of American R&B, funk, and jazz, as well as influences from Europe and Latin America. A three-time Grammy winner, Kidjo is admired throughout the world.

Opening for Kidjo is Diali Cissokho, a griot born to a family of professional musicians in Senegal, who currently makes his home in North Carolina. Cissokho is a master of the kora, a traditional West African instrument with strings and a skin-and-gourd resonator. Cissokho and his band Kaira Ba have created an electrifying style of West African dance music that has attracted a fervent following.

Behind the Scenes:

During the reinstallation process, the NCMA documented the conservation, planning, and design of the new gallery through a series of videos, blog posts, and an image slide show. This content, along with information on related programming, can be seen [here](#).

Credits:

This installation is made possible through generous funding by the William R. Kenan Jr. Charitable Trust. Additional support is provided by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources and the North Carolina Museum of Art Foundation, Inc. Research for this exhibition was made possible by Ann and Jim Goodnight/The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fund for Curatorial and Conservation Research and Travel.

Generous support for the Threads of Africa celebration and concert is provided by Lee and Libby Buck.

Support for drum residency, drum making, and performance is provided by the North Carolina Museum of Art Catawba Valley Fund.

Images:

Top: A family visits the newly expanded African Art Gallery

Bottom: An example of the interactive quilt installation to be made by artist Maya Freelon Asante, courtesy of the artist

###

About the North Carolina Museum of Art

The North Carolina Museum of Art's permanent collection spans more than 5,000 years, from ancient Egypt to the present, making the institution one of the premier art museums in the South. The Museum's collection provides educational, aesthetic, intellectual, and cultural experiences for the citizens of North Carolina and beyond. The 164-acre Museum Park showcases the connection between art and nature through site-specific works of environmental art. The Museum offers changing national touring exhibitions, classes, lectures, family activities, films, and concerts.

The Museum opened West Building, home to the permanent collection, in 2010. The North Carolina Museum of Art, Lawrence J. Wheeler, director, is located at 2110 Blue Ridge Road in Raleigh. It is the art museum of the State of North Carolina, Roy Cooper, governor, and an agency of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Susi Hamilton, secretary.