

## Press Release

### A Dazzling Exhibition of African Craft Opens at Mingei International Museum May 20

*African by Design: Form, Pattern and Meaning in African Craft*

May 20 - September 17, 2023

[Download Press Images Here](#)

April 27, 2023—San Diego, CA—Mingei International Museum will open [African by Design: Form, Pattern and Meaning in African Craft](#) on May 20, 2023. Curated by Mingei Director of Exhibitions and Chief Curator, Emily G. Hanna, *African by Design* presents works of traditional and contemporary African craft, including furniture, pottery, basketry, textiles, jewelry, clothing, weapons, currency and more. All the objects are part of the layered cultural stories and histories found across the continent of Africa. Over 100 objects will be on view, with many of the works drawn from Mingei's permanent collection, and others from private collections. *African by Design* showcases objects and the stories behind them while also revealing the design elements and decisions that make them special everyday objects.

"The exhibition *African by Design* celebrates the brilliance of African craft and design from the past and the present," says Mingei Director of Exhibitions and Chief Curator, Emily G. Hanna. "Each work invites us not just to consider the object, but also the makers whose inspiration and sense of design made an everyday object extraordinary."

Highlights include a spectacular indigo **Royal Display Cloth** made by the Bamileke people in Cameroon, metal **Currency Rings** from Nigeria and adornments such as **Beaded Collars** made by the Maasai People of East Africa. In addition to traditional examples of African craft, Hanna has selected contemporary works by designers such as Lalitibe "Lili" Lare, Taya Hughes and Amechi Mandi, to be included in the show. **Lalitibe "Lili" Lare** who operates Lili Kouture, a **San Diego-based clothing brand** with custom-designed West African apparel, will have dresses on view. Footwear made by Zimbabwean-born fashion designer **Taya Hughes** – Founder & CEO of Tayamika – will also be featured, along with pillows inspired by beaded modesty aprons, designed by Cameroonian-born creative **Amechi Mandi**.

*African by Design* shows that throughout the African continent, handmade crafts have been and continue to be central to the unfolding of daily life. On top of their importance as well-made, functional objects, African crafts are visually stunning. Objects of furniture feature bold, unexpected forms. Brilliant textiles dazzle with color and pattern. Clay vessels stand out because of their striking shapes and silhouettes, and also because of the applied designs meant to be felt with the hands. With its focus on design, this exhibition offers a fresh perspective on African craft and the meaning behind the making of an object. The objects on view are visually stunning and also provide an understanding of the rich histories and cultures found across the African continent, serving as a celebration of the past, future and present makers of African craft.

# Mingei International Museum

## Press Release

The exhibition will be accompanied by public programs focused on African craft. A list of events will be available in the weeks to come at [mingei.org/whats-on](http://mingei.org/whats-on).

### **ABOUT MINGEI INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM**

Located in San Diego's Balboa Park, Mingei International Museum collects, preserves and exhibits folk art, craft and design from all eras and cultures of the world. Within a newly reopened facility that includes an education center, theater, shop, restaurant and plenty of free, accessible public space, the Museum offers inspiring exhibitions and diverse community and educational programs to more than 100,000 visitors a year. As the presenter of [San Diego Design Week](#) and a partner to over 50 local artists and art and cultural organizations, Mingei puts celebrating creativity at the core of its mission through workshops, film festivals, lectures and more. Mingei is a nonprofit institution funded by admission, individuals, and institutional support.

[mingei.org](http://mingei.org)

### **Media Contact**

Ashley Christie

[achristie@mingei.org](mailto:achristie@mingei.org)