

MUSEUM OF MLOMP

HUTENDUKAY MUSEUM OF DIOLA CULTURE





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FOREWORD

This catalog was developed as part of the project of renovation and enhancement of the Museum of Mlomp initiated by the **FOUNDATION OF THE HOUSING BANK OF SENEGAL (BHS)** in 2023. Located in the village of Mlomp, in Casamance (Senegal), the Museum of Mlomp was founded in 1992 with the aim of preserving and promoting Diola culture. It presents around forty traditional objects used by local communities, covering areas as diverse as agriculture, fishing, war, the place of women and children, and spirituality.

The Museum draws inspiration by the traditional architecture of the impluvium hut, a unique earthen dwelling characteristic of the Diolas. This type of architecture, in perfect symbiosis with nature, has been on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List since 2005, although only a few examples remain today.

A strong wind in 2016 led to an advanced state of deterioration of the Museum. It is in this context that the **BHS FOUNDATION** initiated, as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), a rehabilitation project in 2023, aimed at restoring the building while respecting the principles of traditional architecture. As an extension of this first phase, the Foundation then began work to enhance the Museum through a second phase, carried out with the technical support of **AKB HÉRITAGE** (a company specializing in consulting and cultural engineering in the field of African cultural heritage) and of the Institute of **Environ-**

mental Sciences (ISE) at Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar. This second phase included the establishment of a management committee for the Museum, the inventory of objects, the installation of solar panels for lighting the Museum, the design of a scenography adapted to the Museum and its content, and the production of this catalog.

The catalogue first provides an overview of the history of the village of Mlomp and the evolution of the museum. It then reveals all the objects exhibited in the museum, reorganized around eight distinct themes as part of the renewal of the scenography. Through this work, we hope to continue the mission of the Museum by contributing to the preservation and transmission of Diola cultural heritage so that it continues to shine well beyond the borders of Mlomp.

1. WORDS



SIBILE SAMBOU, KING OF MLOMP

The Museum of Mlomp is a mirror that reflects the Diola culture and tradition, from the time of our ancestors to the present day. It is a mirror that reflects the way our elders, our ancestors, lived here, how the populations have lived to the present day. This museum is therefore of great importance to our community. It allows individuals from all over the world who come to visit the museum to learn more about our culture, to understand how life is led in our land, in our society.

Every society has its culture. And the museum helps us to present ours to the rest of the world. I would therefore like, through these words, to express all my gratitude to the **BHS FOUNDATION** which, in particular thanks to the support of Mrs. Marie FALL and the work of Mrs. Alyssa K. BARRY, supported the renovation and enhancement of the Museum of Mlomp, thus making it possible to continue to perpetuate the culture and traditions of our land in accordance with the mission carried out by the museum. I am pleased to see that the work done for its renovation is already bearing fruit and helping to preserve our heritage for years to come. May this museum remain a place of memory and

of transmission, so that present and future generations continue to be immersed in our history and to spread our cultural identity throughout the world.



MARIE FALL, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE BHS FOUNDATION

As part of the complete renovation of this museum, our Foundation worked with passion and rigor to breathe new life into this emblematic place of Diola culture. This meticulously thought-out restoration project is part of a global approach to preserving our local heritage, respecting traditional architectural codes while infusing it with a discreet modernity that respects our roots.

The museum, a true showcase of our heritage, bears witness to the importance of ancestral knowledge and cultural practices that have shaped the Diola identity. Each element, whether ritual objects or materials used in the construction of the traditional hut, has been restored to ensure an authentic transmission of our collective memory. This place is thus intended to be a space for dialogue between the past and the present, where artisanal excellence and the richness of a living tradition meet.

I am convinced that the valorization and preservation of our culture represent essential pillars for building a harmonious future, based on respect for our origins and the transmission of our values. Through this project, our Foundation reaffirms its commitment to safeguarding Diola heritage, while offering everyone the opportunity to immerse themselves in the history and diversity of our culture.



JULES SAMBOU, CONSERVATOR OF THE MUSEUM

As the conservator of the Museum of Mlomp, I would first like to deeply thank all the people who have come to visit this museum since its establishment in 1992, in order to learn more about the Diola culture (in particular the Kassa culture), and Casamance in general.

I would particularly like to thank the **BHS FOUNDATION**, which since 2023 has supported the renovation and enhancement of the museum, in particular through the reconstruction of the museum, the installation of solar panels to provide lighting and the scenography work.

These efforts do not only benefit the museum, but also and above all the village of Mlomp, and by extension the Casamance region and Senegal.

More than a vector of economic development, the museum also contributes to the transmission of culture by preserving heritage, promoting ancestral knowledge and offering a space for learning and sharing for current and future generations. It must therefore continue to be supported, including by national authorities, in order to preserve and promote our national heritage while promoting local and international tourism.

I would also like to thank the curator and scenographer Alyssa K. Barry for her support in promoting the museum, and finally God, who protects us and guides us daily for the success of this work.



2. HISTORY OF MLOMP



Origins and royal organization of Mlomp

The village of Mlomp is located in Basse-Casamance, in the south of Senegal, about 40 km southwest of Ziguinchor. It belongs to the district of Loudia Ouoloff, in the department of Oussouye, and is divided into five neighborhoods: Djibétaine, Djicomol, Kadjipoolong, Haer and Etébe Emaye.

The first inhabitants of Mlomp are said to have arrived in Djicomol during migrations from Guinea- Bissau. They first settled in the Djihoua forest before settling in Djicomol, where the fertile land and climate offered them a more favourable living environment.

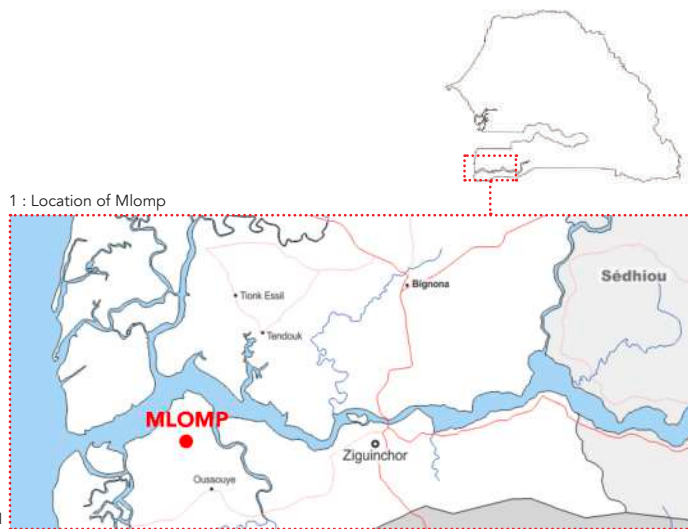
Originally, the kingship was ensured by the MANGA family, but after the early death of three successive kings, the notables understood, after consultation with the wise men, that these deaths were due to the fact that the MANGA lineage should not assume the kingship. They then chose a sovereign from the SAMBOU family. Their choice fell more particularly on Djiontu SAMBOU-KAYOUN, who reigned from 1665 to 1706. From that moment on, it was decided that royal power would be shared between four great families: KAYOUN, DJIHEUNT, DIKAYE, and BALEUW. The MANGA family, although no longer able to claim the throne, retained the role of designating the king.

Several kings succeeded one another after Djiontu SAMBOU, but only the names of those who had a long reign

have been remembered by history. These are:

- **Adioye SAMBOU-DJIHEUNT** (dates unknown) ;
- **Aleugue SAMBOU-DIKAYE** (1715-1767) ;
- **Andine SAMBOU-BALEUW** (1767-1815) ;
- **Kougamidio SAMBOU-DJIHEUNT** (1815-1855) ;
- **Ahum Hussele SAMBOU-DIKAYE** (1855-1906) ;
- **Silondefu SAMBOU-BALEUW** (1906-1969) ;
- **Sibuk Huyane SAMBOU-KAYOUN** (1974-2020).

The current King of Mlomp, **Sibile SAMBOU-KAYOUN**, was enthroned on 25 January 2020.



Role of the King in Diola society

The King (EYI) still plays an important role in Mlomp today. He is first and foremost a sacrificer, acting as the supreme operator. He is the one who performs the libations at the various sacred woods. He is also a social regulator, responsible for ensuring cohesion and understanding within the kingdom. After his enthronement in the Sacred Wood, which lasts six days, the King emerges entirely dressed in red, a symbol of his authority, and holding a sacred broom (HAS) in his hands. This object, which he keeps throughout his reign, allows him to exercise his authority: he restores order by raising the broom to stop any conflict and punishes the naysayers by throwing it to the ground. The King must also help the most deprived, in particular by ensuring that all the inhabitants can eat their fill.

Thus, through his spiritual and social authority, the King remains a pillar of Diola culture and traditions, ensuring the transmission of ancestral values to future generations.



1: King Sibile SAMBOU inside his courtyard



3. HISTORY OF THE MUSEUM

Origins of the Museum of Mlomp

The idea of a museum to preserve traditional Diola objects in Mlomp originated in the 1980s with the Humesa cultural complex in Djicomol. This project included an auditorium, a library and a space dedicated to traditional objects, serving as a conservatory and a sales exhibition for tourists. While the library has flourished thanks to donations of books, the museum has not enjoyed the same success.

Thereafter, the Hutendukay Museum of Diola Culture, better known as the Museum of Mlomp, was initiated in 1992 by Jules SAMBOU. The idea came to him when he was a young scout and was showing tourists around the village's two-story mud-brick houses. He then realized the keen interest of visitors in Diola culture.

The year 1992, marked by the African Cup of Nations football tournament organized in Senegal, appeared to Jules as an ideal opportunity to promote this rich heritage through the creation of a museum. After sharing the idea with his student friends, Jules discussed it with his father, then with the King of the time, Sibuk Huyane SAMBOU, who agreed on condition that the secrets relating to the fetishes would not be revealed.

The construction of the Museum began with branches and leaves of the palmyra tree. Traditional objects were collected from Jules' family, and four fetishes were reconstituted with the King's agreement. The museum opened its doors on 12 February 1992, blessed by the priest and the King, and celebrated with a great party.

1, 2: Old photos of the Museum before the construction of the hut



Challenges and developments of the Museum

Originally, due to its fragile architecture, the Museum only operated during the dry season. It was dismantled and reinstalled each year. In 2009, thanks to the revenue generated, an impluvium hut was built, allowing the Museum to be permanently open. However, in 2016, a strong wind caused significant damage. After several years of searching for funding, Jules met in 2022 Mrs. Marie FALL, administrator of the **BHS FOUNDATION**, who agreed to take the renovation project to the BHS Foundation.

After several discussions leading to the financing agreement by the **BHS FOUNDATION**, the work began in February 2023 and was completed in July 2023. The **BHS FOUNDATION** also supported the enhancement of the Museum through the installation of solar panels and the renewal of the scenography.

The Museum of Mlomp today

The Museum of Mlomp houses around forty objects illustrating Diola daily life and traditions. Through these artefacts, it bears witness to the know-how, spirituality and harmony with nature inherent in this rich culture. It also conveys the fundamental values of Diola society, based on solidarity, respect for ancestors and a deep attachment to the environment.

Since its creation, the museum has welcomed hundreds of visitors from all over the world, playing an essential role in the preservation and transmission of the Diola heritage.



1: Installation of solar panels
2: Interior lighting of the Museum



4. THE EXHIBITION

GENERAL PRESENTATION

The museum of Mlomp's exhibition offers an immersion into the heart of Diola culture through eight essential themes:

BUWEUNI MEU - BUMBALU MEU - BUWAHU MEU explores the exploitation of natural resources, highlighting agriculture, fishing and palm wine harvesting, essential for subsistence and in harmony with nature.

BURONGHU MEU presents eating practices through the utensils used for eating.

BUTIIKU MEU deals with means of defense and tools of war and hunting, illustrating community protection strategies.

KAGAAN celebrates entertainment and festive events, marking moments of transmission of traditions.

ANAAL DANIOLOOL highlights the central role of women and children in Diola society.

KUASEN highlights the importance of spirituality through the fetishes and ritual practices that govern the spiritual life of the Diolas.

BUKIN presents traditional Diola housing, with a focus on the typology of the impluvium hut, the architectural model of the museum.

Lastly, **BULONG DINDANO** highlights community life, a fundamental element of Diola social organization.

Through a collection of some forty objects ranging from agricultural tools to fetishes, the exhibition illustrates the practices and beliefs that have shaped the life of the Mlomp community for several centuries. These different objects attest to lifestyles and know-how passed down from generation to generation. They bear witness to the constant search for harmony that Diola men and women maintain with nature, and their deep relationship with their beliefs and spirituality.

The museum of Mlomp aims to be a place of memory and transmission, offering visitors the opportunity to better understand and appreciate the Diola cultural heritage, thus actively participating in its preservation and promotion for current and future generations.

1. BUWEUNIU MEU - BUMBALU MEU - BUWAHU MEU

EXPLOITING NATURAL RESOURCES

The Diolas have ingeniously exploited the natural resources of their environment, developing a way of life based mainly on agriculture, fishing and palm wine harvesting. These essential activities rely on ancestral know-how and traditional tools that demonstrate their harmony with nature.

Rice occupies a central place within Diola culture. It is not only the staple food but also a symbol of wealth. Farmers use the KAJANDU, a traditional hoe to plow the land, and wicker baskets to transport and store the harvest. These baskets, woven with local fibers, allow good conservation of rice.

Fishing, practiced in the bolongs and rivers of Casamance, is another vital resource. Fishermen move around using pirogues and paddles (EWEEN), and use traps (HUNUM, ESU) to catch fish and shellfish without destabilizing the ecosystem.

Palm wine harvesting is an ancient practice that requires great skill. Harvesters climb palm trees with natural fiber ties (KANDAAB) and make incisions using a special knife (ESIBAN) to collect the sap, which is then stored in gourds (ETUMPEN, ESENG) where it ferments to become wine.

Beyond their economic and subsistence dimension, these activities are deeply rooted in Diola culture and spirituality. Protective gris-gris play an essential role, attracting abundance and ensuring security. By perpetuating their ancestral knowledge while adapting to contemporary developments, the Diola maintain a harmony between heritage and environment, thus preserving a way of life that respects nature.





1: KEUYIM - A wicker basket used for winnowing rice and separating the bran from the grains ; **2: KATEKEL** - A wicker basket used to carry rice during transplanting or harvesting ; **3: EYIEU** - PA wicker basket used to carry rice from the rice fields to the home or after pounding it ; **4. ESU** - Tool used for fishing at low tide ; **5: ETUKUT/ETEKEL** - Basket used to store caught fish ; **6: HUNUM** - Basket used for fishing small fish ; **7: EHU** - Various protective objects used to attract wealth (livestock) ; **8: BANEU** - Protective object used to attract wealth (rice) ; **9: KANDAAB** - Belt used to climb palm trees for harvesting various products ; **10: HUBELEN (sing.)/KUBELEN (plur.)** - Funnel used for palm wine harvesting (transferring sap from the tree to the bottle) ; **11: ESIBAN** - Knife used to cut into the trunk of the palm tree and draw out the sap ; **12: KUBOSOK** - Rope used to tie wood or straw to facilitate their transport ; **13: EWEEEN** - Paddle ; **14: KAJANDU** - Tool used for working the land, especially when growing rice.

2. BURONGHU MEU

FEEDING ONESELF

The diet is based on a combination of cultivated, fished and harvested products, reflecting the Diola's close connection with the land and the sea. The diet mainly consists of rice, fish and local vegetables. This dietary diversity is supported by traditional utensils that facilitate the preparation, storage and consumption of meals.

Pottery (KABALA) plays a vital role in food preparation and preservation. Earthenware pots are used to cook rice, boil soups, or store food and water. These vessels are valued for their ability to maintain a stable temperature and their resistance to humidity. Calabash vessels are also used to store water or palm wine, a central beverage in the Diola culture.

The mortar and pestle (BUSIKEN, HUNT) are other crucial tools in Diola cuisine. Used to crush rice, pound spices or grind cereals, they are an essential element for preparing traditional dishes.

Water, essential to life, is transported and preserved in pottery or calabashes (ELOUMBEI, ETUMPEN, ESENG), which keep it fresh. To drink, the Diolas use in particular the HUKOBOT or the EDJUND, containers used to draw, drink and share palm wine. All these utensils promote the

sharing of meals during family or community gatherings.

Access to the granary, where crops are stored, often requires the use of a wooden ladder (ETANG), a simple but indispensable tool in managing stocks of rice and other food products. This space symbolizes food security, where each family preserves its wealth in crops for the future.





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1: KABALA - Utensil used for preparing dishes, especially sauces ; **2: ELUMBEU** - Utensil used to draw and store water ; **3: BUINJAY** - Utensil used for eating in sacred places ; **4: HUKOBOT** - Utensil used to draw, drink and share palm wine ; **5: EJUNG** - Container used during events to drink palm wine in groups ; **6: ETUMPEN (sing.)/SITUMPEN (plur.)** - Container used to collect palm wine or used as a bottle (water, palm wine, honey, etc.) ; **7: ETUMPEN/ESENG** - Container used to collect palm wine or used as a bottle (water, palm wine, honey, etc.) ; **8: BUSIKEN & HUNT** - Mortar and pestle, used for pounding rice, millet, etc. ; **9: ETANG** - Ladder to reach granary.

3. BUTIKU MEU

DEFENDING ONESELF

The art of war has always occupied an important place in the culture of the Diolas. Historically, this practice was linked to the protection of their territory, their resources and their autonomy against invasions or conflicts. War was often seen as a means of defending honor, community and land. As a result, weaponry and preparation for battle were essential to their way of life.

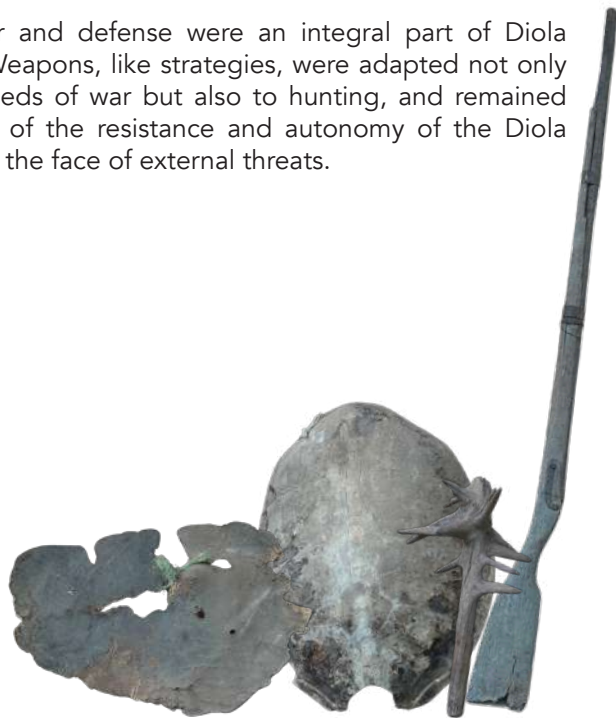
Rifles (EPUMBEN DIBAW), often inherited from colonization or purchased in trade, were powerful weapons used during clashes. The rifle is still today a symbol of strength and defense. Before the arrival of firearms, bows (HUNGAJEN) and spears (KABAAY) were the main instruments used, not only for war but also for hunting. These weapons, symbols of bravery of the Diola warriors, were particularly feared for their precision and efficiency.

The shield (EBANGAL ETIIKUM), made of wood, leather or even turtle shell, played a crucial role in protecting warriors during battles. Light but strong, it allowed protection from enemy blows while allowing great mobility to the fighter. In addition to war, these shields were used for hunting, where they served as defense against wild animals.

The brain-breaker (EHAK ETIIKUM), another tool used by

the Diolas, was both a combat weapon and a hunting instrument. It allowed them to inflict powerful blows, both during conflicts and to capture game.

Thus, war and defense were an integral part of Diola culture. Weapons, like strategies, were adapted not only to the needs of war but also to hunting, and remained a symbol of the resistance and autonomy of the Diola people in the face of external threats.





1, 2: EBANGAL ETIIKUM - Shield used during the war ; **3: EHAK ETIIKUM** - Brain-breaker used for war ; **4: HUNGAJEN** - Bow used for hunting and war ; **5: KABAAY** - Spear traditionally used in war (hand-to-hand combat); it is now used in funeral dances ; **6: EPUMBEN DIBAW** - A rifle traditionally used for war and hunting, it is also used to alert the population in the event of death or to demonstrate the joy of the newly circumcised.

4. KAGAAAN

CELEBRATING

Among the Diolas, ceremonies occupy an essential place in daily life and in the preservation of culture. Moments of relaxation and festivities are often an opportunity to strengthen community ties and celebrate traditions. Songs and dances are an integral part of these moments of celebration and serve to express emotions, honor ancestors and mark major milestones in life.

Diola ceremonies, often linked to social events such as weddings, births or harvests, are moments of great importance. They are marked by songs and dances. These ceremonies allow each member of the community to reconnect with their cultural heritage while celebrating the unity of the group. The songs are sometimes accompanied by drums and tam-tams, emblematic percussion instruments that create a vibrant and energetic atmosphere. The tam-tam (HUGEU) is not only a musical tool, but also a means of communication, used to transmit important messages and to coordinate dances and songs.

The flute (EGEG, ESEET), on the other hand, is an instrument often played during religious ceremonies or festive gatherings. Its sound mixes with the rhythms of the drums, creating an atmosphere conducive to dancing. The very rhythmic Diola dances are a way for the community to ex-

press itself, to exult and to celebrate life. The dance movements are both a means of entertainment and a symbolic language that tells ancestral stories and legends.

These events are not only a means of entertainment, but also of strengthening collective identity and the transmission of cultural knowledge. Thus, entertainment among the Diolas goes far beyond simple pleasure: it is a pillar of society, a means of connecting with tradition, celebrating life and maintaining community ties.



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2



1: HUGEU - Drum used during traditional dances, initiation, etc.; ; **2: EGEG/ESEET** - Flute used to transmit messages in case of danger or to accompany traditional dances.

5. ANAALE DANIOLOOL

THE WOMAN & HER CHILD

Women occupy an essential place, both in the family sphere and in Diola society. They are the guardians of traditions and play a central role in the transmission of cultural values. Motherhood, particularly symbolic, is venerated: the pregnant woman is considered a sacred being, embodying hope and prosperity.

The protection of pregnant women is therefore a priority for Diola society. An emblematic example of this protection is the KAFEN AGNALENA, a calabash used to protect women who wish to give birth. It is a symbol of safety and blessing, considered a means of facilitating childbirth by ensuring a harmonious transition between pregnancy and birth. The woman is thus enveloped in spiritual protection that reflects the special attention given to this sacred period.

The role of women is not limited to motherhood, as they actively participate in agricultural work. They work the land, carrying their child on their backs while engaging in essential agricultural tasks. They use wickerwork objects, such as the KAGEUND KAHIN and the KAGEUND KEUMEUK, to protect themselves and their child from the harsh sun or rain. These objects, handcrafted from natural materials, are both practical and symbolic, ensuring the

comfort and safety of mother and child while facilitating the transport of crops and tools.

For Diola society, the woman and her child are living symbols of continuity and fertility, being both sources of life and knowledge. The newborn is seen as a precious gift, carrying the souls of the ancestors. The mother will pass on traditional knowledge to them, particularly through agriculture, which is essential to the survival of the group. Through her work and dedication, the Diola woman plays a crucial role in the sustainability of Diola culture, strengthening ties between generations and preserving cultural heritage.



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2



3



1: KAGEUND KAHIN - Wicker basket used as a parasol to protect the baby from the sun during field work ; **2: KAFEGN AGNALENA** - Magic gourd used to protect women who want to give birth ; **3: KAGEUND KEUMEUK** - Wicker basket used as an umbrella to protect the baby from the rain; it can also be used as a cradle.

6. KUASEN

PRACTICING ONE'S SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality occupies a central place in the Diola culture, profoundly influencing the way of life, beliefs and social practices. Fetishes play a vital role in regulating behaviour and maintaining harmony within the community. These sacred objects, imbued with spiritual meaning, ensure the continuity of traditions and the protection of the community. Each fetish has a specific function that touches on different aspects of the daily and spiritual life of the Diola.

The KULULUNG, the first Diola fetish, embodies reincarnation: during the Kakonen ceremony, the soul of the deceased returns to take possession of his or her belongings, thus symbolizing the perpetuation of life through the generations. The KAHUSO, a confession fetish, is used by childless couples to atone for a fault, by throwing sacred objects on the fetish, thus restoring moral and spiritual order. The HUFILA, linked to the dowry, requires a sacrifice of pork and wine, guaranteeing fertility and blessing for the couple who wish to have children. The KAHINT/KAGN, an anti-theft fetish, allows for the return of found objects in order to avoid misfortunes such as illness or fire, emphasizing the importance of honesty and respect for the property of others. The HUBEN, a protection fetish, is planted during sacred events such as initiations and rituals, thus protecting the community and sacred places. It

symbolizes the power of spirituality to secure the community and ensure its well-being.

These fetishes are not only material objects, they are above all living elements of the Diola culture. They embody the sacred links between men, nature and ancestors, ensuring the balance between the physical and spiritual world. The Diola, through these fetishes, maintain a harmonious relationship with their environment and preserve their traditions for future generations.

Spirituality is, thus, a fundamental pillar for their cultural and social survival.



1



1: KUHULUNG - First fetish of the Diola ethnic group. When a member of the community dies, all his possessions are put aside. The soul of the deceased returns to take his possessions on the 6th or 7th day during the Kakonen ceremony. The dead person is never dead, because the Diola believe in reincarnation through the birth of another human being.

2



2: HUFILA - Fetish used for dowry. Pork and wine must be given by the husband to the bride's family, or she will not have children. It is at the fetish that the pig is sacrificed.

3



3: KAHINT / KAGN - Anti-theft fetish. No one has the right to take something that does not belong to them. If you find an object that does not belong to you, you can place it next to the fetish. If you do not do so, you will be the victim of illness or fire. The fetish can also be used for offerings (rice, fish, palm wine) by anyone passing by, especially those who have gone to harvest palm wine or fish.

4



4: KAHUSO - Fetish used for confession. For example, a man and a woman who have never had a child are not allowed to see a woman give birth, nor to enter a maternity ward. If either of them were to break this rule, they must confess to the fetish, take a few sheaves of rice or objects and throw them at it, turn their back on it, and go home without ever looking back or speaking to anyone along the way.

5



5: HUBEN - Protection fetish used during events (initiation, etc.) to welcome. Here, it is used to protect the museum. It was planted by the wise men during the night with the blessing of the King of Mlomp.

1



1: EHUNK YATA ANINE - An object used at the time of a man's death by men of his generation in order to praise his merits and all that he has accomplished during his life. The object is then placed on his grave, at the level of the deceased's head.

2



2: EHUNK YAALE - An object used at the time of a woman's death by women of her generation in order to praise her merits and all that she accomplished during her life. The object is then placed on her grave, at the level of the deceased's head..

3



3: KAWUUT - Utensil used to pour palm wine on fetishes.

4



4: HUNUK - Sacred stick used at the exit of the sacred wood. Each man has his own stick, which he must keep for 6 days to dance with. Each family then gathers its sticks and places them at the first Diola fetish.

5



5: EHLENG - Object used when an elderly man dies or a man who has disappeared in the sacred wood. The latter's clothes are placed on the object in order to inform his family of his disappearance. It is then placed in the middle of the public square, particularly at the exit of the sacred wood.

7. BUKIN

INHABITING

The architecture of the Museum of Mlomp is inspired by traditional Diola architecture. The impluvium hut (EDJAM) is one of the most emblematic habitats of the Diola. Designed to adapt to the climate and community needs, it is a model of ecological and social architecture.

Its circular structure rests on a central patio, called impluvium (HUIDJUM, HUENTUM), which collects rainwater through a sloping funnel-shaped roof. This water, stored in terracotta jars, is precious for domestic needs, especially in times of drought. In addition to ensuring a water reserve, the impluvium plays an essential role in the thermal regulation of the habitat. The evaporation of the water naturally cools the interior, providing optimal comfort even in intense heat.

Built from local materials such as clay, mangrove wood and palm, the impluvium hut is entirely ecological. Its construction involves the entire community: the elders choose the location according to tradition, while the young knead the clay while dancing. The walls (HUTEF) are built from cob, a sustainable and insulating construction technique using raw earth.

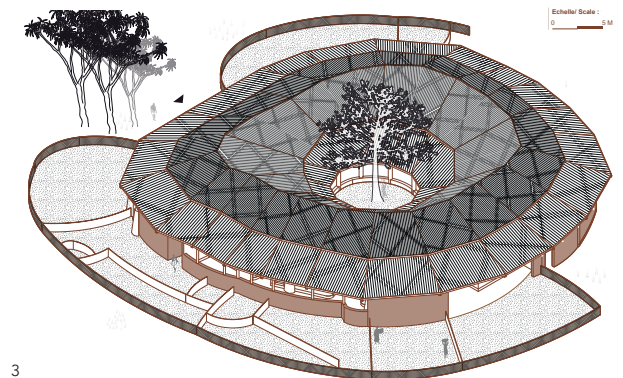
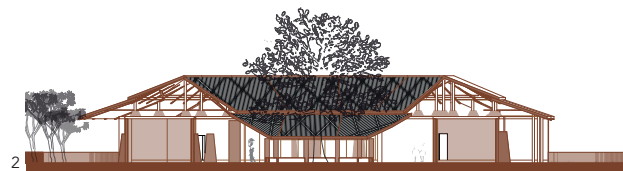
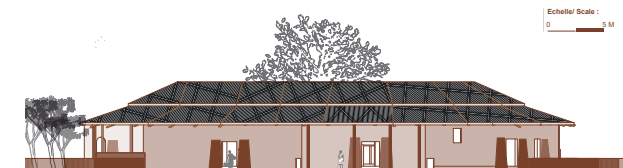
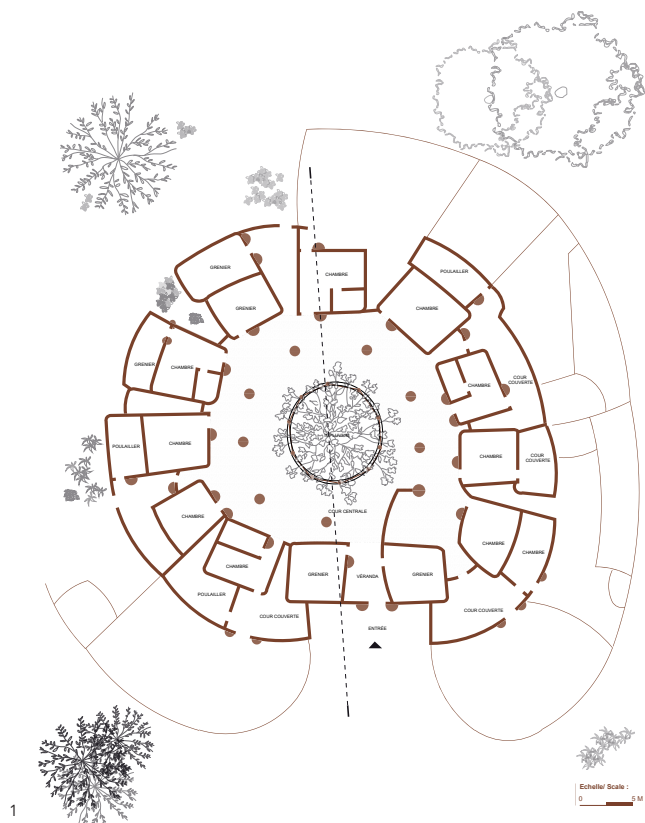
A collective living space, it traditionally houses several families of the same lineage. Its interior organization pro-

motes socialization and solidarity between the members of the household. Each room is arranged in a circle around the impluvium, while clay columns (YIIL/SIIL) support the thatched roof (KASOND KASEGELET).

A place of protection, the hut is also a rampart in times of conflict. Once the door made of the Fromager tree root (KAMBIPALELE) is closed, it becomes impregnable from the outside, protecting the inhabitants.

Today, these constructions are becoming rare because of their cost and the complex maintenance of their roofs. However, they remain a strong symbol of Diola architectural genius and cultural identity.

The impluvium hut of Enampore, in the department of Ziguinchor, is one of the last witnesses of this remarkable architectural typology.



1, 2, 3: TYPOLOGY OF THE IMPLUVIUM HUT - Typological plan, elevation, section and axonometry of the Diola impluvium hut. © Olufemi M. HINSON YOVO, Achilles COLY, André OSSAGA, Inès TIACOH



ENAMPORE IMPLUVIUM HUT
1: Front view, 2, 3, 4: Views from the inner courtyard



8. BULONG DINDANO

LIVING IN COMMUNITY

Among the Diolas, community life is essential to ensure social harmony and village cohesion. Based on mutual aid and respect for traditions, it is expressed through places and practices that regulate relationships and ensure the balance of the group.

The HUTENDUKAY, a royal public square, is a central space where the king summons the inhabitants to settle conflicts and deliver justice. This place of dialogue preserves unity and strengthens the feeling of belonging to the community.

The Fromager tree, called BUSANA, is an essential landmark of the village. Its trunk is used to make canoes, its leaves are used for medicine and cooking, its roots are used

to make doors, windows and coffins, while the shell of its fruit is used to preserve tobacco powder. It embodies both the stability and self-sufficiency of the community.

The HUTENDUKAY fetish watches over the village and guarantees peace among the inhabitants. It plays a protective role by deterring conflicts and strengthening the bonds of brotherhood.

These elements illustrate the importance of solidarity and sharing in Diola culture. Each individual contributes to the collective well-being, thus perpetuating a way of life rooted in respect for ancestral values and in harmony with nature and ancestors.



5. CREDITS



This catalog was produced in February 2025 with the financial support of the **BHS FOUNDATION**, with contributions from (in alphabetical order): Philippe BARRY, Marie FALL, Astou Rose GAYE, Assane GOUDIABY, Seydina Mohamed Rassoul KASSÉ, Adama MBENGUE, Fattou Abdou Mody NDIAYE, Bienvenu SAMBOU, Gilbert SAMBOU, Jules SAMBOU, Laurent SAMBOU, Leandre SAMBOU, Léon SAMBOU, Pierre Antoine SAMBOU, Sa Majesté le Roi Sibile SAMBOU.



Conception: **AKB HÉRITAGE** (Alyssa K. BARRY, Sokhna
Translations: Alyssa K. BARRY, Sokhna Marème Farma
FALL, Sergio SUÁREZ
Illustrations: Alyssa K. BARRY, Achilles COLY, André OS-
SAGA, Laurent SAMBOU, Inès TIACOH, Olufèmi M. HIN-
SON YOVO
Print: La Rochette Dakar



