

## Africa Galleries

THEY ARE OFTEN CALLED “GOLD WEIGHTS,” but they are actually made of brass, cast using the lost wax process. These detailed, animated figures were used as standards to weigh gold dust. Some depict animals such as porcupines, fish, and snakes, or more mundane items like coiled rope and knives. Others are geometric symbols. Our collection includes a variety of human figures: standing, seated, mounted, and in groups. In the former Africa Galleries, these objects were a popular attraction. While the new Galleries are being built, the weights have been under conservators’ care for cleaning before they are exhibited again. They will be a part of a new section illustrating currency and exchange across the continent.



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.

THIS PAGE: (1.) The conservator gently cleans the weights—some are simple and others are quite elaborate. The large weight (PM object 77-9-2) is of a king being carried by attendants with an umbrella held over his head; (2.) Geometric design on brass Ashanti weight, PM object AF2531A; (3.) Brass open work shield, PM object AF2672; (4.) Coiled snake, PM object AF2436; (5.) A bird standing on a pyramid-shaped base, PM object AF2462; (6.) A quirky mudfish, PM object AF2406; and (7.) A stylized fish, PM object AF2415.

# Mexico and Central America Gallery

**THE LIVING ARTS** of Maya dance masks and clothing highlight cultural continuity through time, yet also tell dramatic stories of change, resistance, and resilience through centuries of colonization, environmental disasters, political unrest, and globalization. Maya dance has evolved with humor and satire in Highland Guatemala where wooden masks are danced regularly in complex dramas. For generations Maya clothing has adapted to influences from far and wide. New selections from the Museum's rich collection will be rotated into the Gallery each year including these women's cotton and silk *huipils* (blouses). The new Gallery will explore some of their stories.



1.



3.



2.



4.

THIS PAGE: (1.) K'iche' Maya folk hero Tecún Umán mask, PM object 48-4-15; (2.) Bull mask, PM object 86-49-1; (3.) Huipil from Totonicapán with embroidered quetzals, PM object 85-2-38; and (4.) Huipil from San Martín Jilotepeque, PM object 42-35-281.