

1. *Head*

African, Edo peoples, Nigeria, Benin kingdom, about 1750  
Benin City, Nigeria  
Terracotta, traces of pigment  
21.59 cm (8 1/2 in.)

**Provenance:**

January, 1990, said to have been collected from the family altar of brass casters, Benin City, Nigeria and acquired by Davis Gallery, New Orleans; May, 1990, sold by Davis Gallery to William and Bertha Teel, Marblehead, MA; 1991, year-end gift of William and Bertha Teel to the MFA (accession date: January 22, 1992); February 26, 2014, deaccessioned by the MFA for transfer to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.



2. *Memorial screen (duen fubara)*

African, Ijaw Kalabari peoples, Nigeria, late 19th century  
Wood, pigments, fiber  
93.98 cm (37 in.)

**Provenance:**

September, 1990, said to have been collected in Buguma, Nigeria, and acquired by Davis Gallery, New Orleans; October, 1990, sold by Davis Gallery to William and Bertha Teel, Marblehead, MA; 1996, partial gift of William and Bertha Teel to the MFA (accession date: December 18, 1996); 2014, remaining interest bequeathed by William Teel to the MFA; February 26, 2014, deaccessioned by the MFA for transfer to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.



3. *Head*

African, Nok peoples, Nigeria, About 500 B.C.–A.D. 200  
Ceramic; terracotta  
16.51 cm (6 1/2 in.)

**Provenance:**

1993, said to have been found near Nok, Kaduna State, Nigeria and taken to Europe, where it was acquired by Marc Leo Felix (dealer), Brussels; March, 1994, sold by Felix to William and Bertha Teel, Marblehead, MA; 2014, bequeathed by William Teel to the MFA and transferred to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.



4. *Head of an Oba*

Edo peoples, Benin Kingdom, Nigeria, 19th century  
Nigeria  
Terracotta  
34.6 x 24.1 x 27.3 cm (13 5/8 x 9 1/2 x 10 3/4 in.)

**Provenance:**

February, 1993, said to have been collected in Nigeria and acquired by Davis Gallery, New Orleans; April, 1994, sold by Davis Gallery to William and Bertha Teel, Marblehead, MA; 2014, bequeathed by William Teel to the MFA and transferred to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.



5. *Male Figure*

African, Nok peoples, Nigeria, About 500 B.C.–A.D. 200  
Ceramic; terracotta  
50.8 cm (20 in.)

**Provenance:**

August, 1994, sold by Kofi Hassan, Kafanchan, Nigeria, to Charles Jones (dealer), Wilmington, NC [see note]; December 9, 1994, sold by Charles Jones, through Davis Gallery, New Orleans, to William and Bertha Teel, Marblehead, MA; 2014, bequeathed by William Teel to the MFA and transferred to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

NOTE: Although documentation that appears to authorize the export of this object from Nigeria was issued in 1994, recent correspondence from the office of the Director General, National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Nigeria, has cast doubts upon this document's authenticity.



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6. *Portrait head*  
African, Yoruba peoples, Ife Kingdom, Nigeria, 12th–14th century  
Ceramic; terracotta (?)  
19.68 cm (7 3/4 in.)

**Provenance:**

By about 1980, said to be in the collection of M. Luttig, France [see note]. By June 1994, Lovart International, Montreuil, France; February, 1995, sold by Lovart International to William and Bertha Teel, Marblehead, MA; 2014, bequeathed by William Teel to the MFA and transferred to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

NOTE: This collecting history is unverified. At the time of its acquisition, the sculpture was accompanied by a typed statement apparently from Ekpo Eyo, former Director General of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Nigeria, which said that the piece did not come from any public collection or museum in Nigeria. Recent correspondence from the office of the Director General, National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Nigeria, has cast doubts upon this document's authenticity.

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7. *Oron Ancestral Figure (Ekpu)*  
Oron people, southeastern Nigeria  
Wood  
Overall: 120.7 cm (47 1/2 in.)

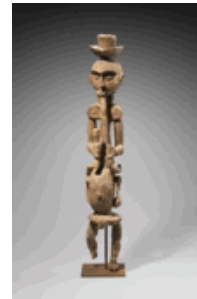
**Provenance:**

Until at least 1970, Oron Museum, near Calabar, Nigeria [see note]. By 1996, René David, Zurich; 2004, sold by René David, through the Galerie Walu, Zurich, to William Teel, Marblehead, MA; 2014, bequeathed by William Teel to the MFA and transferred to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

NOTE: Published by Keith Nicklin, *Ekpu: Oron Ancestor Figures from South Eastern Nigeria* (London, 1999), pl. 40, cat. no. 326, photo credit National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Nigeria. In Appendix III, p. 111, cat. no. 326 is listed among the Ekpu carvings that survived the depredations of the the Nigerian Civil War, or Biafran War (1967-1970), suggesting that it was still part of the Oron Museum collection in 1970. When and how it was removed from the museum is not known.

Documentation that appears to be issued by the National Commission of Museums and Monuments, which was provided at the time of the sculpture's sale in 2004, waives ownership rights by the Federal Republic of Nigeria. However, recent correspondence from the office of the Director General, National Commission for Museums and Monuments, has cast doubts upon the authenticity of this documentation.

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8. *Altar figure*  
Benin peoples, Nigeria  
Brass  
Overall: 53.3 cm (21 in.)

**Provenance:**

Until at least 1970, and probably until 1976, part of the ancestral altar of Oba Ovonramwen, the Royal Palace, Benin City, Nigeria; 1976, probably stolen from the Royal Palace [see note]. 1997, purportedly sold by Joel Usiosefe Inneh, Chief of the Benin brasscasters' guild, to Alhaji Abdoulaye Ibrahim, Cotonou, Republic of Benin. 1997, acquired by Davis Gallery, New Orleans; May 15, 1999, sold by Davis Gallery to William Teel, Marblehead, MA; 2014, bequeathed by William Teel to the MFA and transferred to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

**NOTE:**

This figure was part of the ancestral altar dedicated in 1914 to Oba Ovonramwen, and was photographed in situ as late as 1970. Paula Ben-Amos Girshick has written about the 1976 thefts of ancestral altars from the Royal Palace in her essay "The Symbolism of Ancestral Altars in Benin," in *Benin Kings and Rituals: Court Arts from Nigeria*, ed. Barbara Plankensteiner (Vienna, 2007), 157-158; see images on 154-155. Although the figure was accompanied by documentation that appeared to authorize its sale by the chief of the guild of Benin City's brasscasters, or Igun Eronmwon, inconsistencies within the bill of sale, as well as recent correspondence from the office of the Director General, National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Nigeria, have cast doubts upon the authenticity of this document.

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