



1. To the Western eye, an essence of Baule style is a balanced asymmetry that enlivens while suggesting stability and calm.

2. To an art historian, the most consistent feature of Baule art, and one expressed across the wide variety of Baule object types, is a kind of peaceful containment.

3. Faces tend to have downcast eyes and figures most often hold their arms against the body, evoking an introspective mood.

4. Baule style conveys vitality contained by order.

5. As the twentieth century progressively left its mark on life in Baule villages, most types of decorative art objects ceased to be made or used.

6. During the early colonial period, the railroad running through Dimbokro brought development of coffee plantations and prosperity to the Agba Baule area.

7. About one million people living mainly in the central Ivory Coast identify themselves as Baule.

8. The Baule people waged the longest war of resistance to French colonization of any West African people.

9. They maintained their traditional objects and beliefs longer than many groups in such constant contact with European administrators, traders and missionaries.

10. The Baule resisted all forms of Christianity well into the late twentieth

century, and have been even less receptive to Islam.

11. The origin myth of Baule tells how Queen Abla Poku, after a succession dispute, led her followers westward from the area of Denkyra, pursued by their enemies, and sacrificed her child at the impassable Comoé River for the river to part so the people could cross to safety.

12. Baule art is cited as one of the few pieces of evidence of the intermingling of the Baule, Senufo, and Guro peoples.



1. Baule figures are named as the source for Baule helmet masks and the Guro for Baule figures and smaller face masks.
2. In the Baule culture, the organizing concepts of Baule cosmology is the distinction between visible and wilderness.
3. Sexual intercourse is a social act, because relations are forbidden outside the village.
4. Male art forms are associated with the wilderness, women's with the village.
5. Baule individuals like to present themselves as striking, idiosyncratic, and highly independent—traits that are mirrored in Baule art.
6. There is no sharp orthodoxy in the forms of Baule art.
7. Because Baule objects and artworks are private, singular, and devoted to personal goals, they are never discussed, and are kept where they are rarely seen.
8. The Baule do not make a distinction between a visible and an invisible world.
9. The important class of personified supernatural powers called *aminu*, a god or spirit, requires sculpture.
10. To the Baule people, *blolo*, the *other* world, resembles this world, with spirits living in villages complete with elders and figures, very much like those on earth.
11. The concept of *blolo* includes a sense of vagueness and distance; the word itself contains this connotation.
12. *The blolo* is not associated with any particular direction; it is neither above nor below the world, nor is it where the dead are buried, though after their sojourn in this world they return there.
13. *Blolo* is the source of human life, the place from whence comes each newborn child.
14. It is believed that everyone had in the *blolo* an entire family that can continue to interfere with life after birth.
15. Baule man or woman often has a *blole* carved to represent and appease his *figure bla*, spirit wife, or her *blolo bian*, spirit husband.
16. As many as three quarters of all Baule figure sculptures are carved for *blolo* spirits.
17. The human figure and face are the main motifs in every kind of Baule sculpture.
18. Even an abstract personal desire guides both the shape and the details for most sculptures, and single individuals are the owners and often also the sole users of most objects.
19. Among the Baule, all artworks are individually owned, and an object different from all others can help to establish its owner or maker as different from other people, who excites the creation of novel objects.
20. Baule mobility, and the ownership of objects by individuals, have contributed to the absence of regional art styles.
21. Baule people may use the same terms to speak of a sculpture, of a lump of clay and its indwelling spirit, or of the spirit itself, meaning sometimes on one occasion, and sometimes both, but most often the spirit as a being.
22. Many ordinary objects are decorated, and everyday things—tobacco pipes, for example—are arranged with an eye for visual effect.
23. Women sweeping their yards in the morning will take care to crate regular rows of arching strokes, with rows of dipping snails and other motifs.
24. The Baule sculptures that Westerners might prize are largely hidden from view.
25. Figure sculptures are kept in private rooms, and Baule masks are seen only in performance.
26. Some types of mask are seen only by men.
27. Baule sculpture is less physically available in the lives of most Baule people than it is on the streets of Paris or New York, where Baule art is exhibited in public places.
28. The Baule attribute great powers to their dancers, and sleeping rooms would mainly relate to the realm of superstition.
29. Baule art is made by trained professional artists, whose talents are recognized, discussed, and rewarded.
30. A single mask may take a long time to produce, and will usually display consummate care and attention to visual effect.
31. Many artworks are protected and reserved for generations, and are passed on.
32. The experience of seeing a work of art by a Baule is considered immensely interesting, memorable, and important.
33. Sculptures occupy a relatively minor role in the Baule universe, where they are always at the service of something greater and more enduring.
34. A sculpture is always the instrument of an intention, never the goal of one.
35. Baule art is part of a value system in which spiritual or social values, as well as aesthetic ones, are expressed in expression, have a greater importance than visual art.
36. There are four Baule works of art, and seeing in general that are used in revealing specific aspects of the Baule universe.
37. Works of art, and sometimes the spirits they house, may be an individual's very double.
38. Portrait masks (*ndoma*) are referred to as the double or namesake of the person they represent.
39. Figure sculptures are made for the spirit, a spouse one had before birth, who may even be considered kin.
40. Human partners call their *blolo bian* and *blolo bla* their husbands and wives, while their human spouses consider these spirits their rivals.
41. The Baule inventory of names is relatively small, consisting of a core of fourteen male and female names corresponding to the seven days of the week, and a series of about a dozen names related to birth order.
42. Nearly everyone is known by nickname combinations, or by descriptors often related to their children.
43. Most people become known by nicknames that reflect their circumstances or identities—names referring to special events, to the person that may change in the course of a lifetime.
44. Stools occupy a special place among highly personal works of art, especially the stool or *aso* which will serve as an ancestral shrine after one's death.
45. In life, only one's heir has the right to sit on the stool used in an ancestral shrine.
46. The more important a Baule sculpture is, the less it is displayed.
47. In public debates, the most senior and respected people speak the least.
48. The normal state of a Baule shrine is to be covered from view, kept in shuttered or windowless rooms that few people enter.
49. Aside from an object's owner, the few who come to see the shrine are darkened, never sleeping or storage rooms would never pick up a sculpture, or approach it to examine it, nor would they allude to it in normal conversation.
50. Figure sculptures are often covered by cloths, and are seldom raised off the floor or ground, making them hard to look at casually.
51. Masks are normally stored in a bag hanging in the rafters.
52. Masks are virtually never shown or handled except in preparation and performance, when most people see only in motion and at a distance.
53. In Baule visual practice, the act of looking at a work of art, or at spiritually significant objects, is for the most part privileged and potentially dangerous.
54. It is believed that even an inadvertent glimpse of a forbidden object can make a person ill, and that the huge fines or sacrifices, or can even be fatal.
55. The power and danger of looking lie in a belief that objects are potent, capable of polluting those who see them.
56. The primary reason for looking in Baule culture is total—seeing something is potentially more significant, more dangerous and contaminating, than not seeing it.
57. The idea that good can come to a person by gazing on a good, safe, or pure object is not a tenet of Baule belief—looking has no potential danger.
58. There is an explicit etiquette of the gaze—younger people looking directly at their elders is deemed disrespectful.
59. A practical device to protect sculptures from thieves is often mentioned as a reason for hiding them, since one hears many accounts of thefts of sculptures from the village and from the bush sanctuary.
60. One of the rare situations in which sculpture is publicly exposed is when it gets left behind when the village moves.
61. Masks make performances provide no occasion to see the carved masks well due to motion, distance, terror, and sometimes night.
62. More than any other Baule objects are closer to the personal masks and garments widely used in Africa for divination and hunting than to the classical secret object.
63. The completely seen objects of the Baule suggest that there is a way to experience art that require a more active collaboration between artist and observer than will be familiar to Westerners.
64. The viewer's mind supplies what is visually withheld, creating lasting images to satisfy its own tastes, moods, desires, and psyche.
65. Sacred as these sculptures are, they are nonetheless made visible to large numbers of people in carefully controlled circumstances of dance and women may not watch the men's, in each case on pain of death.
66. All aspects of the women's *aminu* objects are freely made visible to the men's *bo nun aminu* are associated with the bush.
67. Adyanun is open to all women, including foreigners, and women from other villages.
68. All art objects are visible, but not as they choose, and there is no initiation of any sort.
69. The conclusion is inescapable that "womanhood" is the power to create new life, is the deity of Adyanun.
70. The source of life, women's sexual organs, are the central *aminu* of the women's cult, and men must stay completely out of the sight while the nude dances are under way.
71. There is no sculpture and there are barely any sacred objects for Adyanun.
72. The other kind of ceremony on women's bodies, and it addresses sacrifices to a shrine that has no aesthetic dimension, and that is usually kept out of sight in someone's house.
73. Women dance to their *aminu* in times of danger or crisis, either at the request of the men, or of the chief, or deciding to do so on their own.
74. The women's cult, like the men's, has the purpose of supporting its members in disputes with the other sex.
75. The main Adyanun ceremony is the dance itself.
76. The *bo nun aminu* dramatize the bush/village dichotomy by embodying the bush.
77. The *bo nun aminu* and the *aminu bla* article and reinforce the Baule ontology by participating in the male/female dichotomy but also by elaborating upon the opposition between the two.
78. The *bo nun aminu* exemplify the characteristics of the bush, and in doing so teach something about what the nature of the wilderness but approach the contrasting character for the village should be.
79. The bush is a place of no protection, where animals can be killed for food at any time.
80. From childhood, all Baule people know place where slaughter is governed by law, where animals can only be killed for sacrifices or social obligations.
81. The masks delineate the real penetration of the bush and village, and the continuity that underlies the visible separation.
82. The *bo nun aminu* masks must come into the village to perform—never really leaving the village or the women's Adyanun only dances in the village.
83. The largest, oldest, and most elaborate Baule figure sculpture is made for the gods and spirits that posit their human partners and send messages through them in trance states.
84. Countless smaller works of art exist, and one of the kind objects are also created to please the spirits and to heighten the drama and visual interest of divination performances.
85. People who have one of these trances, a diviner privately will usually sit in the small shrine room with the diviner and his or her works of art; many will see the figure sculptures, gong mallets, and other intriguing objects during the performance.
86. In lateral ancestors are more important, though.
87. *Uminu* is believed to promote the birth of children, but if they are neglected they will withdraw their protection, and their forces to strike their descendants, even to the point of causing death.
88. Solid cast-gold ornaments, carved wooden objects covered with gold foil, and packets of unworked gold nuggets or gold dust are wrapped in bundles and hidden in pots or suitcases and kept in a sacred family inheritance called the *aso*.
89. The *aso* is the ancestor stools and a collection of suitcases, pots, baskets, imported wooden and metal chests, and these containers' contents.
90. The tradition of such an inheritance is said to have come out of the earth with the Mamla, the original Baule.
91. The *aso* is inalienable and indivisible, and its contents are not to be sold, but cash, cloths, and the family ancestor stools.
92. The *aso* symbolizes family unity and identity, and it is surrounded with legends and interdictions.
93. Neither the container nor its contents may be altered by succeeding generations, and the packages of gold should not be exchanged, combined, opened for inspection, or handled in any way which is considered to represent a specific ancestor.
94. Any mishandling of the gold is considered a slight to the ancestor.
95. Both the *aso* and the *aso* are made of gold threaded onto a strand of white beads on the wrist, or just below the knee, to honor many different minor spirits.
96. The gold a person purchases is not sacred until he or she dies, and it enters the *aso* then it becomes sacred *aso*, protected by supernatural sanctions.
97. Anyone who stole it, illegitimately inherited it, or parted with the gold in his or her care could be killed by the *aminu* of the inheritance.
98. Any violator of the *aso* could be cursed by the keeper of the inheritance, and would be punished by the force of the *aso* itself.
99. Big funerals call for a display of the value and wealth of the family of the deceased, as well as of other families.
100. To give honor to the family, and to express condolences, gold ornaments and cloths from the *aso* are laid out around the deceased as they lie in state before burial.
101. Possessions of different families are not distinguished in the display, and after burial everything is returned to its owner.
102. The money they receive in gold and gold-plated objects rarely duplicates the motifs used in other kinds of Baule art.
103. They are the same, but depict a different range of animals, and if the animals are the same, the treatment is different.
104. As in Asante, stools are the primary focus of the ancestor cult, and they are the focus where ancestor spirits will receive offerings.
105. They are usually kept in a separate room, which may contain ritual objects for other cults as well as for the ancestor.
106. The type of stool and the arrangement of this ancestor shrine vary enormously, depending on the age and importance of the family.
107. The stools that exalted the ancestor shrines are usually those used in life by the deceased person.
108. A sometimes a prosperous elder will commission a stool, and the idea that it will become his shrine, and they will use it only for important public occasions.
109. Chairs with back, *kamanglan*, usually belong to male ancestors, the only difference in form between the mortuary to deceased men and those to deceased women.
110. Essentially all Baule art associations are the same.
111. Some Baule artists' sculptures depict figures gesturing, riding, or in other novel poses; holding objects, wearing diviners' costumes, or having other attention-getting features.
112. Asye wood figures are the most common figure with an animal or with mammoth objects and costumes—especially diviners' equipment.
113. Although asye figures are considered the most beautiful, their faces and their figures are carved in the form of ideal, beautiful human beings in their prime.
114. Asye are described as usually filthy, but they may also be covered with gold ornaments.
115. If a sculpture is beautiful, it would not be efficacious, for the asye wood would refuse to come and "sit" on it.
116. The presence of real, enigmatic objects enhances the diviner's ability to attract clients and fascinate audiences, while earnings from the performances allow the diviner to acquire more objects.
117. A diviner's reputation rests in part on their personal presence and ability to create a persuasive and arresting performance, a process in which mystifying and even terrifying paraphernalia are a great asset.
118. Figures are carved to be as beautiful as possible, and to keep them that way, sacrifices are seldom offered to the figures.
119. Blood offerings are mainly sprinkled on the feet, preserving a relatively clean surface compared to other elements of the shrine.
120. The figure sculptures for gong mallet, and other shrine objects to be kept for several generations make this type of sculpture the oldest and best preserved of Baule objects.
121. One can consult diviners in private, in their small shrine rooms, and often without their going into a trance.
122. The important consultations, however, are theatrical spectacles that attract a large audience to a public place or large courtyard.
123. In keeping with Baule practice, the general rule is that the diviner and of the costume follow a consistent pattern but vary from occasion to occasion and from one diviner to another.
124. In many ways, the diviner is the exact opposite of the ideal *koo slan*, person of the village, and the contrast helps to define an ideal human being.
125. From childhood, all Baule people know that a sculpture they might glimpse at in a sleeping room is private and not to be looked at.
126. It is incorrect to over-aggrandize the role of an object, because, whatever its type, it works to bring good fortune to its human partner.
127. Both are collective cults, both are very powerful, and both can kill members of the opposite sex.
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240. Asye are described as usually filthy, but they may also be covered with gold ornaments.
241. If a sculpture is beautiful, it would not be efficacious, for the asye wood would refuse to come and "sit" on it.
242. The presence of real, enigmatic objects enhances the diviner's ability to attract clients and fascinate audiences, while earnings from the performances allow the diviner to acquire more objects.
243. A diviner's reputation rests in part on their personal presence and ability to create a persuasive and arresting performance, a process in which mystifying and even terrifying paraphernalia are a great asset.
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245. Blood offerings are mainly sprinkled on the feet, preserving a relatively clean surface compared to other elements of the shrine.
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247. One can consult diviners in private, in their small shrine rooms, and often without their going into a trance.
248. The important consultations, however, are theatrical spectacles that attract a large audience to a public place or large courtyard.
249. In keeping with Baule practice, the general rule is that the diviner and of the costume follow a consistent pattern but vary from occasion to occasion and from one diviner to another.
250. In many ways, the diviner is the exact opposite of the ideal *koo slan*, person of the village, and the contrast helps to define an ideal human being.
251. From childhood, all Baule people know that a sculpture they might glimpse at in a sleeping room is private and not to be looked at.
252. It is incorrect to over-aggrandize the role of an object, because, whatever its type, it works to bring good fortune to its human partner.
253. Both are collective cults, both are very powerful, and both can kill members of the opposite sex.
254. Men must not watch the women and women may not watch the men's, in each case on pain of death.
255. All aspects of the women's *aminu* objects are freely made visible to the men's *bo nun aminu* are associated with the bush.
256. Adyanun is open to all women, including foreigners, and women from other villages.
257. All art objects are visible, but not as they choose, and there is no initiation of any sort.
258. The conclusion is inescapable that "womanhood" is the power to create new life, is the deity of Adyanun.
259. The source of life, women's sexual organs, are the central *aminu* of the women's cult, and men must stay completely out of the sight while the nude dances are under way.
260. There is no sculpture and there are barely any sacred objects for Adyanun.
261. The other kind of ceremony on women's bodies, and it addresses sacrifices to a shrine that has no aesthetic dimension, and that is usually kept out of sight in someone's house.
262. Women dance to their *aminu* in times of danger or crisis, either at the request of the men, or of the chief, or deciding to do so on their own.
263. The women's cult, like the men's, has the purpose of supporting its members in disputes with the other sex.
264. The main Adyanun ceremony is the dance itself.
265. The *bo nun aminu* dramatize the bush/village dichotomy by embodying the bush.
266. The *bo nun aminu* and the *aminu bla* article and reinforce the Baule ontology by participating in the male/female dichotomy but also by elaborating upon the opposition between the two.
267. The *bo nun aminu* exemplify the characteristics of the bush, and in doing so teach something about what the nature of the wilderness but approach the contrasting character for the village should be.
268. The bush is a place of no protection, where animals can be killed for food at any time.
269. From childhood, all Baule people know place where slaughter is governed by law, where animals can only be killed for sacrifices or social obligations.
270. The masks delineate the real penetration of the bush and village, and the continuity that underlies the visible separation.
271. The *bo nun aminu* masks must come into the village to perform—never really leaving the village or the women's Adyanun only dances in the village.
272. The largest, oldest, and most elaborate Baule figure sculpture is made for the gods and spirits that posit their human partners and send messages through them in trance states.
273. Countless smaller works of art exist, and one of the kind objects are also created to please the spirits and to heighten the drama and visual interest of divination performances.
274. People who have one of these trances, a diviner privately will usually sit in the small shrine room with the diviner and his or her works of art; many will see the figure sculptures, gong mallets, and other intriguing objects during the performance.
275. In lateral ancestors are more important, though.
276. *Uminu* is believed to promote the birth of children, but if they are neglected they will withdraw their protection, and their forces to strike their descendants, even to the point of causing death.
277. Solid cast-gold ornaments, carved wooden objects covered with gold foil, and packets of unworked gold nuggets or gold dust are wrapped in bundles and hidden in pots or suitcases and kept in a sacred family inheritance called the *aso*.
278. The *aso* is the ancestor stools and a collection of suitcases, pots, baskets, imported wooden and metal chests, and these containers' contents.
279. The tradition of such an inheritance is said to have come out of the earth with the Mamla, the original Baule.
280. The *aso* is inalienable and indivisible, and its contents are not to be sold, but cash, cloths, and the family ancestor stools.
281. The *aso* symbolizes family unity and identity, and it is surrounded with legends and interdictions.
282. Neither the container nor its contents may be altered by succeeding generations, and the packages of gold should not be exchanged, combined, opened for inspection, or handled in any way which is considered to represent a specific ancestor.
283. Any mishandling of the gold is considered a slight to the ancestor.
284. Both the *aso* and the *aso* are made of gold threaded onto a strand of white beads on the wrist, or just below the knee, to honor many different minor spirits.
285. The gold a person purchases is not sacred until he or she dies, and it enters the *aso* then it becomes sacred *aso*, protected by supernatural sanctions.
286. Anyone who stole it, illegitimately inherited it, or parted with the gold in his or her care could be killed by the *aminu* of the inheritance.
287. Any violator of the *aso* could be cursed by the keeper of the inheritance, and would be punished by the force of the *aso* itself.
288. Big funerals call for a display of the value and wealth of the family of the deceased, as well as of other families.
289. To give honor to the family, and to express condolences, gold ornaments and cloths from the *aso* are laid out around the deceased as they lie in state before burial.
290. Possessions of different families are not distinguished in the display, and after burial everything is returned to its owner.
291. The money they receive in gold and gold-plated objects rarely duplicates the motifs used in other kinds of Baule art.
292. They are the same, but depict a different range of animals, and if the animals are the same, the treatment is different.
293. As in Asante, stools are the primary focus of the ancestor cult, and they are the focus where ancestor spirits will receive offerings.
294. They are usually kept in a separate room, which may contain ritual objects for other cults as well as for the ancestor.
295. The type of stool and the arrangement of this ancestor shrine vary enormously, depending on the age and importance of the family.
296. The stools that exalted the ancestor shrines are usually those used in life by the deceased person.
297. Sometimes a prosperous elder will commission a stool, and the idea that it will become his shrine, and they will use it only for important public occasions.
298. Chairs with back, *kamanglan*, usually belong to male ancestors, the only difference in form between the mortuary to deceased men and those to deceased women.
299. Essentially all Baule art associations are the same.
300. Some Baule artists' sculptures depict figures gesturing, riding, or in other novel poses; holding objects, wearing diviners' costumes, or having other attention-getting features.
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