The Virtual Coe  Being together while being apart....

January 22, 2021

Look closely, you might find something unusual...
This incredible Kuba mask is a *mukyeem* mask, a form distinguished by the trunk-like protuberance from the figure's head. The trunk's presence, a reference to elephants, links the figure to the power and esteem of the large animals in the region. This mask, adorned with cowrie shells, beads, raffia, and carved wooden human facial features—ears, nose, and mouth. Look closely, can you find an ear?

The Kuba Kingdom is a conglomerate of smaller, ethnically diverse, Bushongo-speaking principalities that was first centralized around 1625 in what is now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo. Long-standing political stability and wealth secured through agriculture and iron production resulted in a history of rich cultural production and artistic innovation.

To learn more about this piece, click here.

Artist Unknown (Kuba, Democratic Republic of Congo), *Mask*, c. 1930. Fiber, raffia, cowrie shells, beads, wood, and metal, 23.5 x 12.75 in. AF0097

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**Can you see the cows?**

The wonderfully evocative pictorial rug by the renowned Diné weaver Isabel John (b. 1993–d. 2004) portrays a panoramic scene from John’s life with her family at Many Farms, AZ.
Isabel John, who learned to weave from her mother, was a leader in the form of pictorial weaving that became increasingly popularized in the mid to late-twentieth century. Pictorial scenes can depict anything—from holiday greetings to flags, to landscapes and scenes of domestic or cultural life and range in size from miniatures that fit in the palm of your hand to massive, wall-sized weavings.

Learn more about this piece by clicking here.

Isabel John (Diné), *Pictorial Rug*, c. 1970s. Wool, pigment, 46 x 80 in. NA1155

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**From then to now...**
When talking with friends, colleagues, and supporters, these days the question, *How is the Coe?* and *What are you doing at the Coe?* often come up.

Not surprising questions provided the times we are living through, particularly for a small organization like the Coe Center. We are dependent on providing an in-person immersive and conversational approach to experiencing the arts via our visitors, partnering artists and organizations to assist in pushing the envelope with the collection as the fulcrum, instigator, or a doorway—it has been challenging.

Read more as Dr. Bruce Bernstein summarizes* How is the Coe?*

Ralph T. Coe, c. 1984
Coe Center, Boxes of artworks just arrived and waiting to be unpacked c. 2013-14

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