

Nom : Female figure

Description : Female Figure, Bamana peoples, Mali, Late 19th to early 20th century, Wood
Like the large Bamana mother and child figure (2005-6-42,), this female figure formed part of a Gwan society display. The elegant, naturalistic figure is described as an attendant. The vessel on her head refers to the task of women fetching water for daily use and for washing both the Gwan sculptures and the bodies of the newly initiated. Her gesture of supporting her breasts with both hands suggests the nurturing role of women.

The dots of red, white and black pigment on the backs of the figures and on the center post are unusual. While Dogon masks have painted designs, figures and stools generally have encrusted or eroded surfaces indicative of ritual use.

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Source : Musée national d'art africain