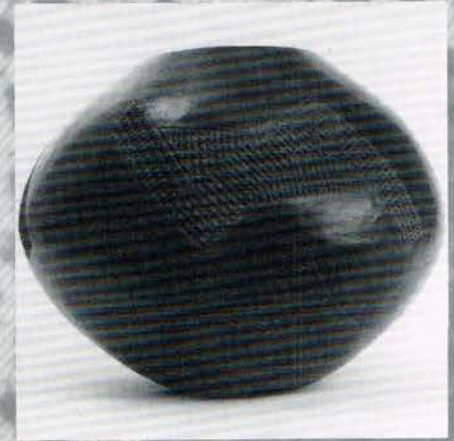
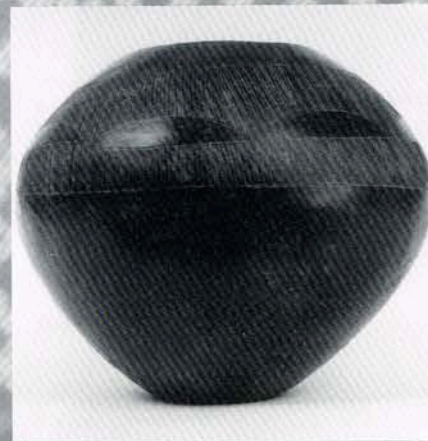
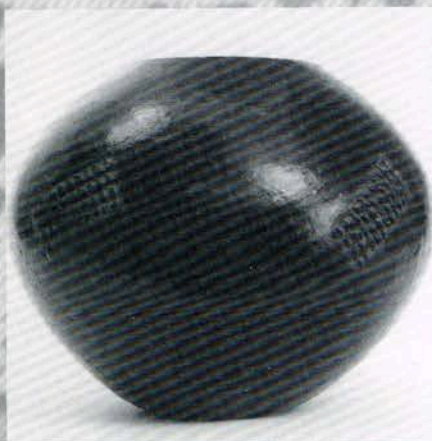
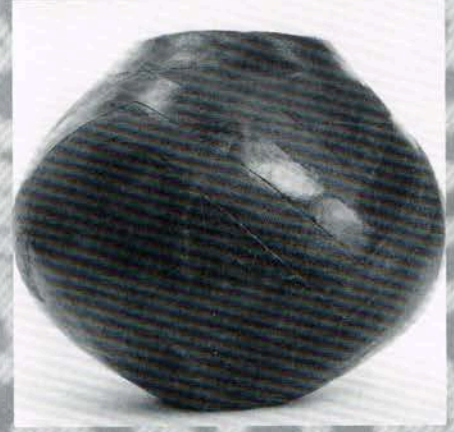
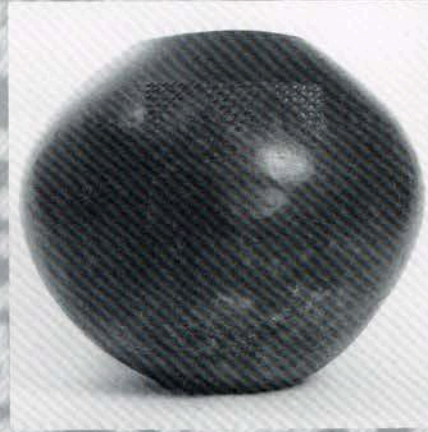
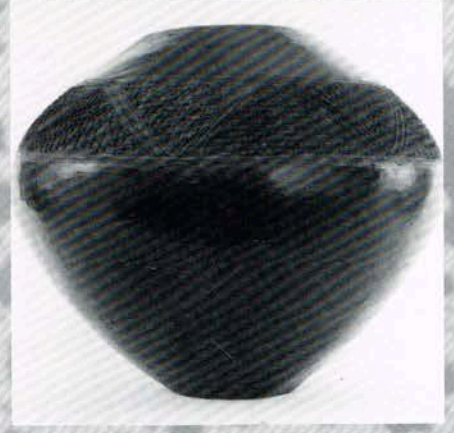


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Works of Art
by the People of Southern Africa



Imisebenzi Yobuciko
Bezizwe Yase Mzansu Afrika
PUCKER GALLERY

Discovering the Familiar

"Anna Heller wrote in large block letters the word "Familiar" on the blackboard and then turned to face the class. What do we mean when we use that word, she asked. What is familiar?"

How German Is It
Walter Abish

Late in 1992, we travelled to South Africa to celebrate the wedding of friends. We were enticed to share in their happiness and also to participate in a ten day journey to an unknown land. We had heard much of the splendors of South Africa; we had read of the political turmoil and the violence; we were aware that we would be encountering the "unfamiliar".

Each day of our visit was filled with unique experiences— a gracious home in Johannesburg; an intimate and uneasy visit to Soweto; the animal reserve with its infestation of *false army worms*; the glories of Capetown and environs; and an introduction to the art and artifacts of tribal Southern Africa. We became fascinated with the marvelous Zulu beer pots, meat trays, ladles, spoons.

By chance, we happened upon an excellent source for these used, antique objects that had been part of daily tribal life. Each piece felt that it had been an active participant in the life of the Zulu, Shona, Tonga, Lozi, Chokwe. We purchased a small collection of these works for our home and felt that by living with them, we would learn and expand our own experience.

Once they arrived, they quickly became treasured objects and a part of our everyday lives. The beautiful patterns on the terracotta beer pots, the raised designs, the scratched shapes, the variation in form, size and coloration— all these differences became meaningful and the pots became "familiar".

Our interest in these objects grew as we read about them and lived with them. And so, we decided to acquire a collection of these works and share them in this exhibition. In doing research, we found that this may indeed be the first exhibition of Southern African artifacts in the United States.

For years, trade sanctions prevented the purchase and import of these works. Given the present rapid changes within the political, social and economic scene in South Africa, it is not clear whether works of such rich patina and use will continue to be available. Furthermore, the fragility of the clay beer pots along with the progressive Westernization as well as the introduction of tin and plastic containers will no doubt diminish the availability of these works in the future.

We invite you to discover the *familiar* with us.

Sue and Bernie Pucker
Boston 1994

Acknowledgement.

We are grateful for the careful collecting of Mynhardt Bester and Susan Ward of Capetown. Their numerous and perilous trips have created the collection from which we selected our exhibition. Their meticulous attention to quality, age and provenance has enhanced our ability to present the objects with accuracy and understanding. Special thanks to the Menell family for introducing us to the wonders of South Africa.



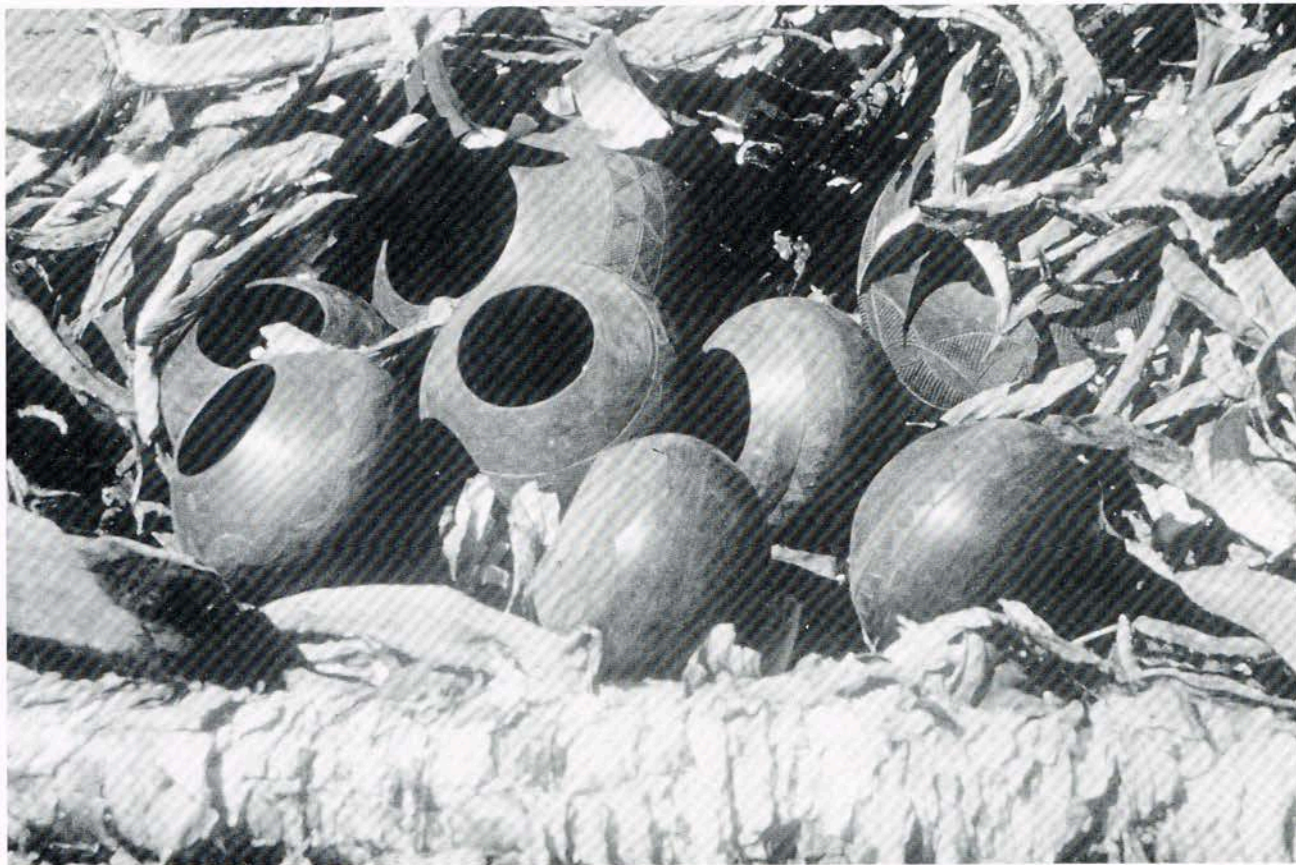
1. *Ingcungu: Zulu Beerpot, 12¾ × 15"*, Clay, 2A-1
Ceremonial Drum: Tonga, 29¼ × 16", Wood and Elephant Skin, 62ex
Scratch Design: Zulu Beerpot, 11 × 12", Clay, 7F

Front Cover — Beer Pots:

- a. *Ingcungu: Zulu Beerpot, 7½ × 10⅞"*, Clay, 2C
b. *Uphiso: Zulu Beerpot, 13¼ × 14¼"*, Clay, 6C
c. *Carved Motif: Zulu Beerpot, 15 × 18"*, Clay, 3B
d. *Amasumpa: Zulu Beerpot, 11⅞ × 15"*, Clay, 1J
e. *Amasumpa: Zulu Beerpot, 13⅜ × 15¼"*, Clay, 1R
f. *Scratch Design: Zulu Beerpot, 11¾ × 13½"*, Clay, 7C
g. *Amasumpa: Zulu Beerpot, 11¼ × 13¼"*, Clay, 1E
h. *Scratch Design: Zulu Beerpot, 8⅞ × 11"*, Clay, 7L-2
i. *Scratch Design: Zulu Beerpot, 10½ × 13"*, Clay, 7I

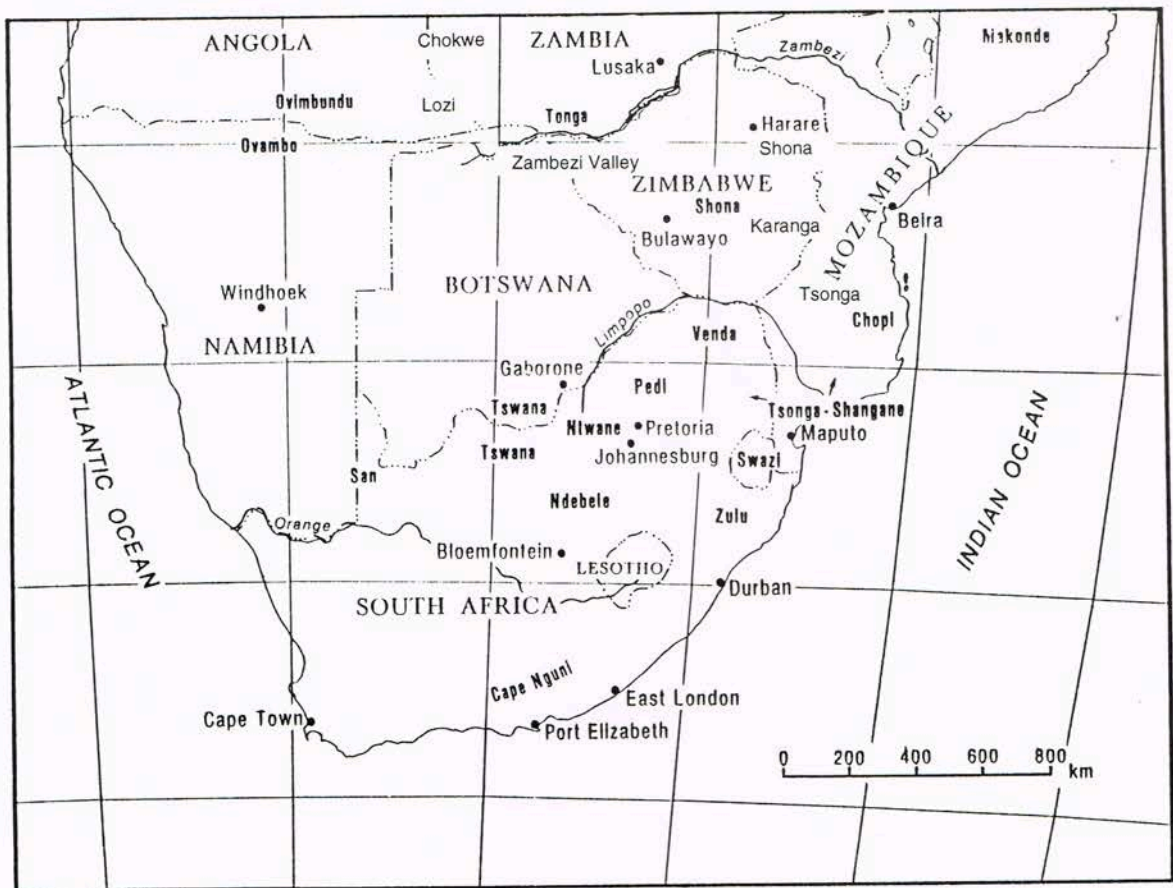


BINA GUMEDE firing pots.



Pots readying for firing-TUKELA-NATAL.

Photographs taken from slides from the Witwatersrand Art Gallery



LOZI Relish Bowl: "Mikeke ya likota"

Used only by LOZI people. These wood bowls are used for serving vegetable relish which accompanies the maize staple. The dish is placed in the center and balls of maize are rolled in the hand and dipped into the communal bowl. Very rarely do individuals have their own relish bowl.



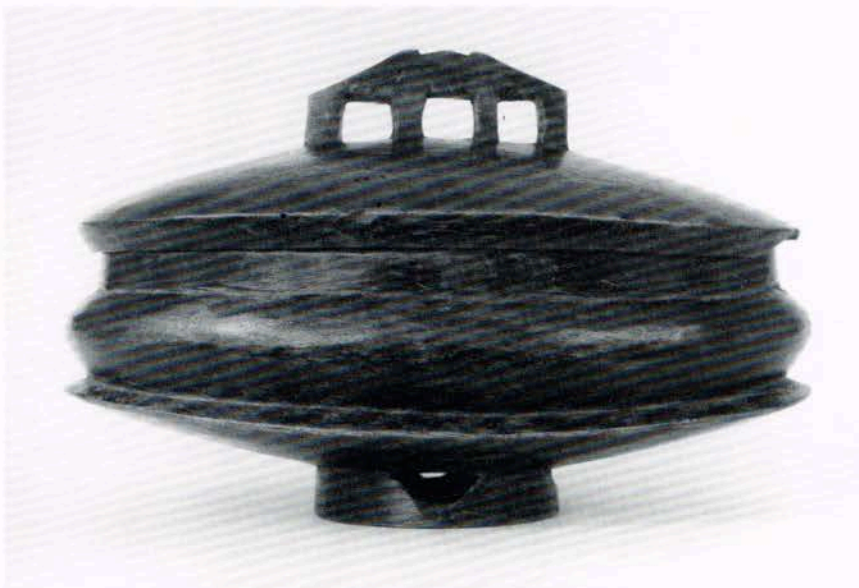
2. "Mikeke" Relish Bowl: Lozi, $7\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$ ", Wood, 60F
3.



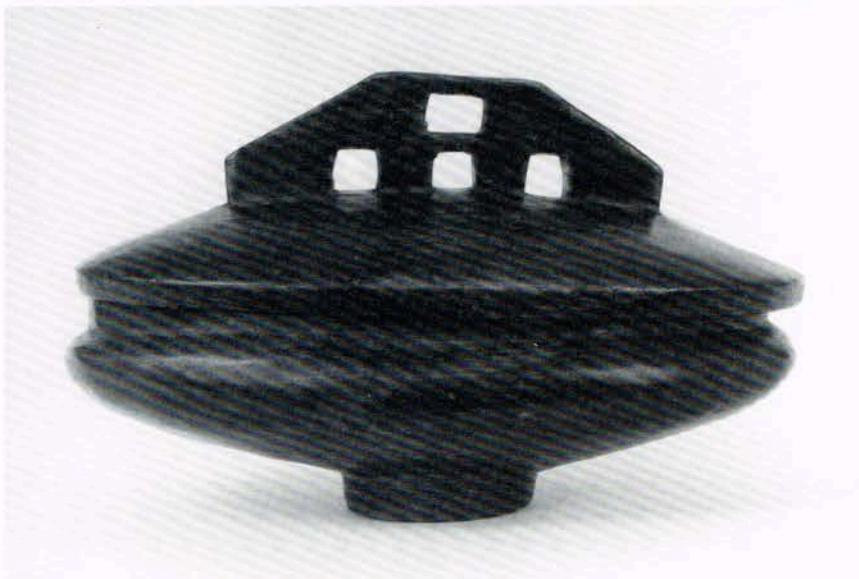
3. "Mikeke" Relish Bowl: Lozi, $7\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$ ", Wood, 60D



4. "Mikeke" Relish Bowl: Lozi, 11 × 13", Wood, 61A



5. "Mikeke" Relish Bowl: Lozi, 7½ × 11¾", Wood, 59A



6. "Mikeke" Relish Bowl: Lozi, 6½ × 10¼", Wood, 59B



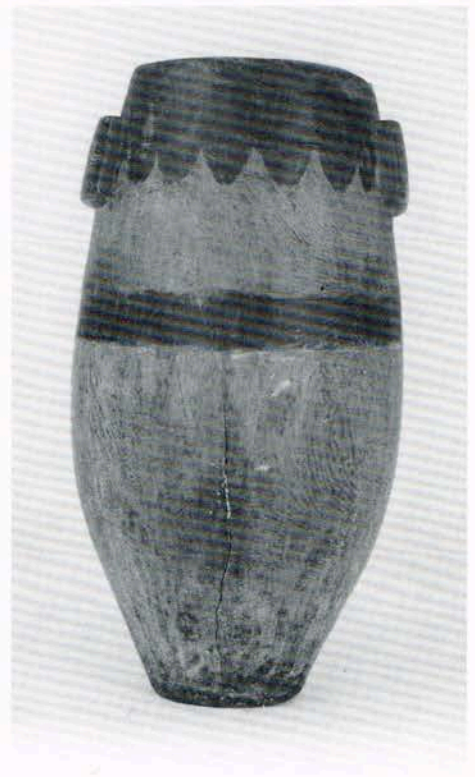
- 7. "Ugqoko" Meatray: Zulu, 21½", Wood, 17C
- 8. "Ugqoko" Meatray: Zulu, 30", Wood, 17F
- 9. "Ugqoko" Meatray: Zulu, 24½", Wood, 17G
- 10. "Ugqoko" Meatray: Zulu, 21", Wood, 17Gex



11. "Ugqoko" Meatray: Zulu, 23¼", Wood, 17B

12. "Ugqoko" Meatray: Zulu, 24½", Wood, 17E

13. "Ugqoko" Meatray: Zulu, 28½", Wood, 17D



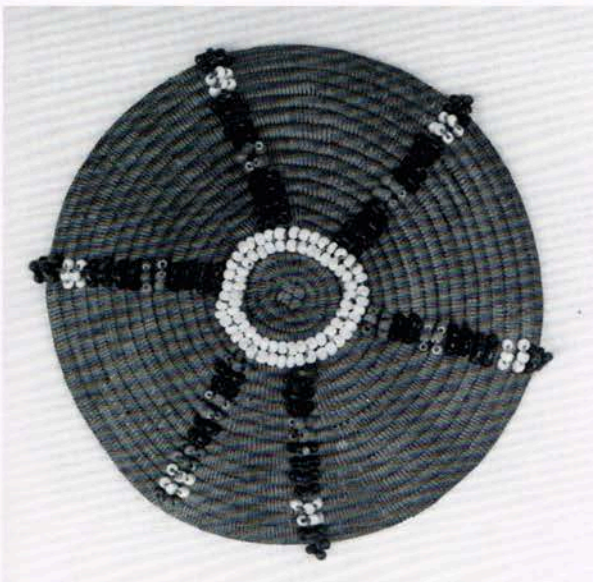
14. "Ithunga" Milkpail: Zulu, 13³/₄ × 7¹/₄",
Wood, 16E-1

15. "Ithunga" Milkpail: Zulu, 14¹/₄ × 7¹/₂",
Wood, 16E-2

16. "Ithunga" Milkpail: Zulu, 13 × 5",
Wood, 16E-3

Vessels of Kings (Amasumpa)

Amasumpa is the Zulu vernacular for a design motif particular to this tribe (the pellet-shaped protrusions fixed to a vessel before firing). This design motif may be found throughout the material culture on vessels, headrest, spoons, milkpails, etc. The amasumpa motif was reserved for the decoration of objects belonging to the Zulu royal family and the few chiefs favored by them. It is possibly the most important reference in identifying the cultural origins of a Zulu piece. However, with the exile of King Cetshwato, and the end of the great warrior-state of the Zulu empire, the use of this design motif became more widespread, a prestige symbol still today amongst the Zulu. The multiple pallet design motif has been said to represent vast herds of cattle, a symbol of the wealth of a proud Zulu nation. The tradition of creating "amasumpa" vessels seems to be dying out with the last generation of potters skilled in this time consuming technique.



17. "Imbenge" Beerpot Cover, (grass weave and beaded), 72ex

18. "Imbenge" Beerpot Cover, (grass weave and beaded), 75ex



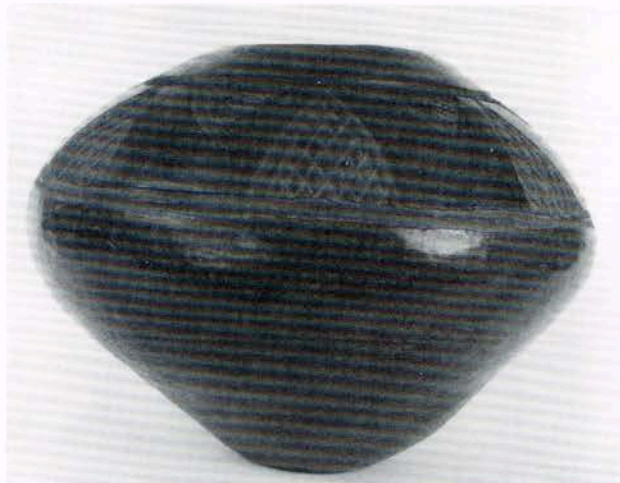
19. Uphiso: Zulu Beerpot, 14½ × 14", Clay, 6E

ZULU Beer Pots

Within the Zulu culture (the Northern Nguni tribe), the making of beer pots is the traditional function of women. A potter will travel far searching in river-beds or for anthills which can supply the correct clay for the vessels. Formed using the coil technique and smoothed using flattened stones, the pots are fired in a dug out earthen "kiln", and covered with palm leaves, whose oil results in the blackened, shiny texture of the vessels. Years of use deepens this texture to a rich woody patina impossible to replicate.



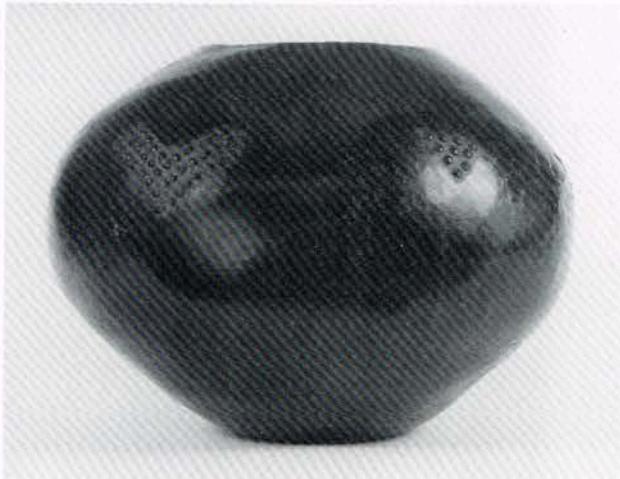
20. Uphiso: Zulu Beerpot, 14½ × 13", Clay, 6H



21. Ingungu: Zulu Beerpot, 12½ × 16½", Clay, 2A-2



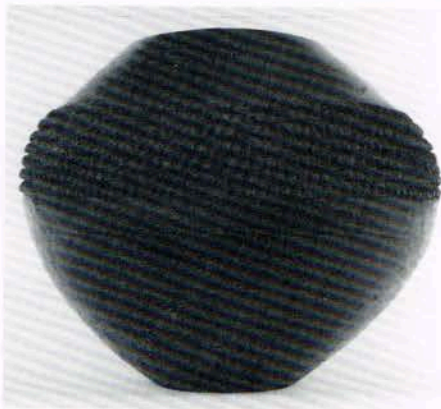
22. Scratch Design: Zulu Beerpot, 15¾ × 14½", Clay, 7B



23. Amasumpa: Zulu Beerpot, 11½ × 15½", Clay, 1M



24. *Scratch Design: Zulu Beerpot, 9 × 11¾", Clay, 7A*



25. *Carved Motif: Zulu Beerpot, 9¾ × 11⅞", Clay, 3C*



26. *Scratch Design: Zulu Beerpot, 10¼ × 11⅞", Clay, 7K-3.*



27. *Amasumpa: Zulu Beerpot, 9¾ × 11½", Clay, 1I*



28. *Amasumpa: Zulu Beerpot, 10⅞ × 13", Clay, 1N*



29. *Amasumpa: Zulu Beerpot, 8⅞ × 10½", Clay, 1K*



30. *Scratch Design: Zulu Beerpot, 10 × 11¾", Clay, 7K-1.*



31. *Carved Zulu Beerpot, 9¾ × 12½", Clay, 3A*



32. *Amasumpa: Zulu Beerpot, 9⅞ × 9⅞", Clay, 1T*



33. *Scratch Design: Zulu Beerpot, 9⅞ × 11¼", Clay, 7K-2.*



34. *Brewing/Storage Vessel: Zulu, 14 × 20¼", Clay, 14G*



35. *Amasumpa: Zulu Beerpot, 10¼ × 11⅞", Clay, 1P-2*



36. *Sitting Stool: Tonga, 10½" high × 13¾", Wood, 29A.*



37. *Tonga Vessel, 7 × 9", Clay, 12C*



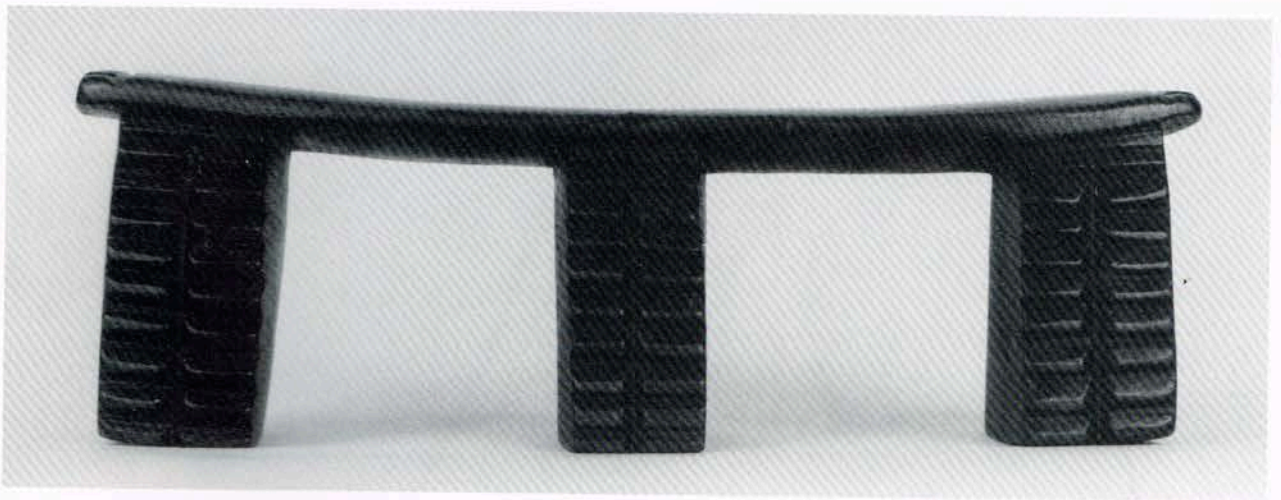
38. *Tonga Vessel, 6¾ × 9¼", Clay, 12B*



39. *Sitting Stool: Tonga, 10¼" high × 10¾", Wood, 29B*



9. 40. *Diviner's Throwing "Bones" (engraved wooded totems), Wood, 64ex*



41. "Isigqiki" Headrest: Zulu, 14", Wood, 18F



42. "Isigqiki" Headrest: Zulu, 13½", Wood, 18G



43. "Zezeru" Headrest: Shona, 5¼ × 8¾", Wood, 20B

ZULU Headrests "Isigqiki"

These headrests are always given to a bride by her family as part of her dowry and passed down over the generations. A Zulu bride's hair is plaited into a large conical framework (dyed bright red and beaded) and this necessitates ornately carved headrests as it is impossible for the head to rest on the ground or sleeping mat. The headrests are extremely difficult to acquire as it is believed that while sleeping the ancestor from whom the headrest was inherited, communicates to the sleeper through dreams. Thus the headrests are seen as a vehicle through which the ancestral spirits may be contacted.



44. *Shona Cooking Vessel*, 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", Clay, 13A



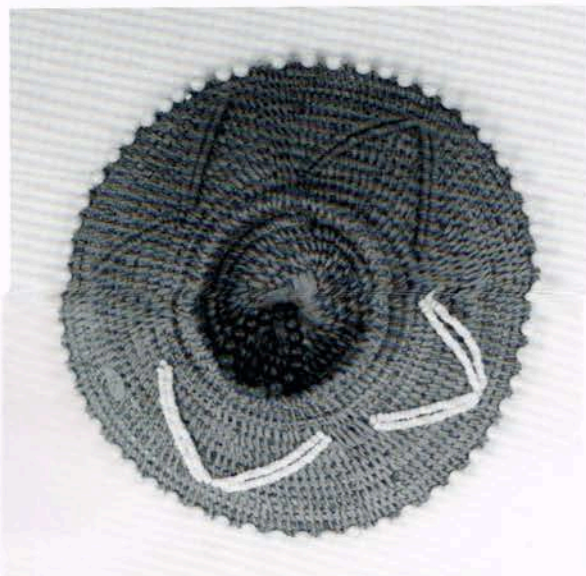
45. *Shona Beerpot: Karanga*, 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", Clay, 13C



46. *Shona Beerpot: Karanga*, 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ ", Clay, 13L



47. *Brewing/Storage Vessel: Shona Karanga*, 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", Clay, 14F



48. "*Imbenge*" Beerpot Cover, (grass weave and beaded), 73ex



49. "*Imbenge*" Beerpot Cover, (grass weave and beaded), 74ex



50. *Chokwe Vessel*, 11¼ × 10½", Clay, 9E



51. *Chokwe Vessel*, 6¼ × 5½", Clay, 10B



52. *Chokwe Vessel*, 12¼ × 10¾", Clay, 8F

CHOKWE Beer Pots:

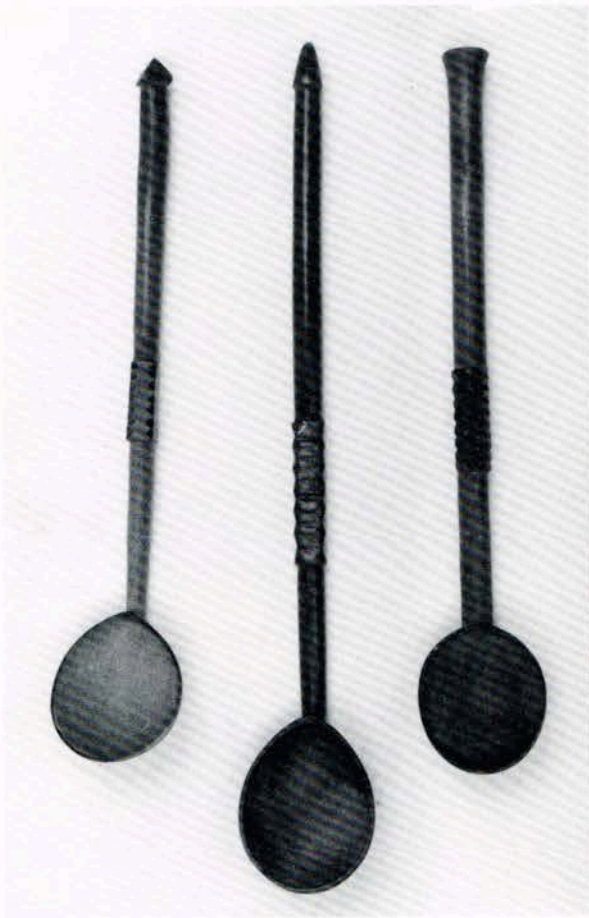
Identified by tall narrow necks which have been decorated, these vessels are made by men. The vessels from the Chokwe (Luvale, Lunda, Mbunda, Luchazi) peoples of Angola were also large gourds but these are being replaced by metal containers to serve a similar function. Now only wealthy members of a community consider commissioning clay vessels.



53. *Sitting Stool*: Lozi, 9½" high, Base: 8¾ × 9½", Wood and Animal Skin, 35B



54. *Snuff Holder*, Shona Karanga: horn and oxtail, 67ex



55. "Ukhezo" Spoon: Zulu, 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", Wood, 15D
 "Ukhezo" Spoon: Zulu, 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", Wood, 15R
 "Ukhezo" Spoon: Zulu, 12", Wood, 15Aex
56. "Ukhezo" Spoon: Zulu, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", Wood, 15Fex
 "Ukhezo" Spoon: Zulu, 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", Wood, 15Dex
 "Ukhezo" Spoon: Zulu, 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ ", Wood, 15I
57. Diviner's Staff: Mbunda (Detail), 32",
 Wood and Animal Hair, 23C
58. Ladle: Chokwe/Luchazi, 12 $\frac{7}{8}$ ", Wood, 25B



59. Amasumpa: Zulu Beerpot, 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", Clay, 1L

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Back Cover:

Ingcungu: Zulu Beerpot, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", Clay, 2A-2 Amasumpa: Zulu Beerpot, 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 15", Clay, 1J Scratch Design: Zulu Beerpot, 11 × 12", Clay, 7F

Photography, Kristin Roy Design, Donna Bodell Preparation, Jill K. Richardson

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Works of Art by the People of Southern Africa
Imisebenzi Yobuciko Bezizwe Yase Mzansu Afrika

April 9 - May 2, 1994

Reception

Saturday

April 9, 1994

3:00-6:00 p.m.

Beer will be served courtesy of John Harvard's Brew House, Cambridge.

The public is invited to attend.



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