



Arts of West and Central Africa First Peoples Cultures
Late 19th and Early 20th CE
Selections from the Utica College
Eleanor and Roger Baker Collection

Exhibit Design
T. Dana Pierre
Freshman, Boston MA USA
for Kwanza / Kwanzaa 2007

Dec 1 – Jan 16

Kwanzaa is a unique African American celebration with focus on the traditional African values of family, community responsibility, commerce, and self-improvement. Kwanzaa is neither political nor religious and despite some misconceptions, is not a substitute for Christmas. It is simply a time of reaffirming African-American people, their ancestors and culture. Kwanzaa, which means "first fruits of the harvest" in the African language Kiswahili, has gained tremendous acceptance. Since its founding in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, Kwanzaa has come to be observed by more than 18 million people worldwide, as reported by the *New York Times*. When establishing Kwanzaa in 1966, Dr. Karenga included an additional "a" to the end of the spelling to reflect the difference between the **African American celebration (kwanzaa) and the Motherland spelling (kwanza).**

Kwanzaa is based on the Nguzo Saba (seven guiding principles), one for each day of the observance, and is celebrated from December 26th to January 1st.

- Umoja (oo-MO-jah) Unity stresses the importance of togetherness for the family and the community, which is reflected in the African saying, "I am We," or "I am because We are."
- Kujichagulia (koo-gee-cha-goo-LEE-yah) Self-Determination requires that we define our common interests and make decisions that are in the best interest of our family and community.
- Ujima (oo-GEE-mah) Collective Work and Responsibility reminds us of our obligation to the past, present and future, and that we have a role to play in the community, society, and world.
- Ujamaa (oo-JAH-mah) Cooperative economics emphasizes our collective economic strength and encourages us to meet common needs through mutual support.
- Nia (NEE-yah) Purpose encourages us to look within ourselves and to set personal goals that are beneficial to the community.
- Kuumba (koo-OOM-bah) Creativity makes use of our creative energies to build and maintain a strong and vibrant community.
- Imani (ee-MAH-nee) Faith focuses on honoring the best of our traditions, draws upon the best in ourselves, and helps us strive for a higher level of life for humankind, by affirming our self-worth and confidence in our ability to succeed and triumph in righteous struggle.