

## ***Beaded Coronet***

1925-1975

Yoruba peoples, Nigeria

cloth, glass beads, metallic beads, and feathers

1997/1.345

Gifted to UMMA in 1997 by Dr. James and Vivian Curtis, this beaded coronet, also known as *orìkògbòfó* or *ojewe*, is a piece regalia worn by a Yoruba king. It was thought that a king's head must always be covered, so this object was made for day-to-day occasions. It is not as elaborate as the royal crowns, but it is still very embellished, and is culturally significant to the Yoruba society.

The beaded coronet is draped in vibrant colors such as red, yellow, blue, and green. These colors are often connected to royalty in the Yoruba culture. Beads also cover the object, along with birds which both represent the importance of spirituality to this culture. Beads signify a connection to ancestral spirits, as they are used to commemorate them. The birds represent the mother's protection over the king, as in Yoruba culture, mothers are associated with supernatural powers.

The beaded coronet's shape closely resembles one of a European crown, more specifically regalia from Great Britain. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Great Britain began to colonize parts of Yoruba and their impact was present in various aspects of Yoruba culture. This influence can be seen through the beaded coronet, as it imitates forms of British crowns, but it still portrays Yoruba artwork styles. The hybridity of this object proves that African societies were connected to other civilizations in the world, as the beaded coronet drew inspiration directly from British regalia.

written by **Lynden Hines**