The “Fetish” Revisited: AFRICAN GODS IN THE WESTERN MUSEUM

Since the Enlightenment, Europeans have flattered themselves by disparaging the African goddesses and gods as “fetishes.” This talk, like the Fleming Museum exhibition that it opens, explores the idea that, especially in the context of the museum, Westerners also fetishize material things, and that Europeans and Africans simply endorse different forms of social relationships in the awesomely beautiful things they venerate. These opposing forms of relationship and conceptions of beauty come together as the goddesses and gods of western Africa, Brazil, Cuba, and Haiti are made available simultaneously for aesthetic admiration and heartfelt worship in the halls of the Fleming Museum. In this talk, secrets will be shared that cannot be written in the conventional museum caption.

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HOSTED BY
THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION

Date
September 26, 2017

Time
4:00 p.m.

Location
Livak Ballroom,
Dudley H. Davis Center

This lecture is in conjunction with the Fleming Museum’s Fall 2017 exhibition SPIRITED THINGS: SACRED ARTS OF THE BLACK ATLANTIC.

Marie Maude Evans, Paket Kango for the God Kafou. Cloth, metal, ribbon and wood. 11 7/16 in. tall. Sacred Arts of the Black Atlantic (SABA) Collection, Duke University