

Hoplessness

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The Yohure mask is a mask made by Yohure people who live in Africa between the white and red Bandama Rivers, in the central region of the Ivory Coast.

The inhabitants of this village are either entirely Baule or Mande speaking. Each village in this area is generally associated with one clan, and they are governed by one clan leader who is on a council with other Yohure clan leaders. The Yohure people have a strong sense of identity that they show in their different art forms, one of the well known forms of art are their Yohure mask. The Yohure mask are considered emblems of yu spirits, and used when someone has died, and their death could jeopardize the social order of the clan. Masqueraders then put on these mask and dance, their dances are supposed to restore the social equilibrium of the community, and to accompany the deceased into the ancestral realm.

There are two ceremonies in which the mask are worn, the je celebration and the lo ceremony. Women are not allowed to participate in these ceremonies or be there when they take place, they are not even allowed to look at the mask. They fear that seeing the mask, and that encounter with death might mess up their ability to have kids. Women often leave the village all together when these ceremonies take place. With the aid of these masks the people hope to influence supernatural powers, or yu spirits that can harm the village occupants. The Yohure mask represents the human faces, but are often supplemented by animal attributes.

These mask are often carved from wood, some may paint their mask. These mask faces often have an elongated face with a often low protruding

mouth and pierced semi-circular eyes set under a high forehead, there are often horns on the head. The face is typically surrounded by triangles on both sides of the face, or serrated edge. These masks often combine some animal characteristics with human characteristics. I like the way the mask combines an almost human face with a triangle pattern around the face and then some type of horn on the head. These masks have a really cool background, and are used for a very interesting purpose, I feel like I am capable of making this mask look somewhat like it is supposed to look.

I am going to create this mask by creating a normal looking human with an elongated face and a big forehead, and then I intend to then add big horns to the top, and surround the face with some type of triangular pattern so it looks like a Yohure mask used in ceremonies.