



Sense of Place

Lois Mailou Jones created *Ode to Kinshasa* as a tribute to the capital city of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire). The orange shape at the center of the work evokes the form and patterns of shields from the region.



Ode to Kinshasa, 1972

Take a closer look

Lois Mailou Jones (1905–1998) incorporated different materials to create this piece, including paint, gold foil, and handmade paper. Many African sculptures display rich textures, which influenced Jones’s use of mixed media in this painting.

Something to talk about

Abstract works like *Ode to Kinshasa* rely on the viewer’s experience and associations to interpret the painting. How has the artist employed shape, color, and pattern to create a specific mood or sense of place?

Who knew?

Jones received a grant from Howard University to document contemporary African art of West and Central Africa, Haiti, and the United States in its original context. In 1970, she traveled to 11 African countries for research. This period of travel strongly influenced her art.

Lois Mailou Jones, *Ode to Kinshasa*, 1972; Mixed media on canvas; 48 x 36 inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of the artist; © Lois M. Jones Pierre-Noel Trust

