Fowler
MUSEUM AT UCLA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 21, 2017

Fowler Museum at UCLA receives $250K NEH Grant
***Striking Iron: The Art of the African Blacksmith* opens in 2018 and travels to the National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, and the Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac in Paris**

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Los Angeles, CA—The Fowler Museum at UCLA has been awarded a major grant for the international traveling exhibition, *Striking Iron: The Art of African Blacksmiths*, scheduled to open at the Fowler in June 2018. Assembled from public and private collections, it will include over 225 artworks from across the African continent, focusing on the region south of the Sahara, and covering a time period spanning early archaeological evidence to the present day. It will be the most comprehensive treatment of the blacksmith's art in Africa anywhere in the world. *Striking Iron* reveals the history of invention and technical sophistication that led African blacksmiths to transform one of Earth's most basic natural resources into objects of life-changing utility, empowerment, prestige, spiritual potency, and astonishing artistry.Nowhere else in the world is there a more diverse and sophisticated corpus of forged iron utilitarian forms and artistic expressions than in Africa.

In his award letter, George Lazopoulos, Senior Program Officer in the Division of Public Program wrote to Fowler Museum Director, Marla C. Berns: "With respect to your proposal, panelists appreciated the proposal's treatment of Africa 'as a place of invention and innovation, as a world leader, spearheading iron technology.' All of this, the panelists declared, reflects 'years of thought and care' on the part of the co-curators and advisers. 'I could go on and on,' exclaimed one panelist who felt the exhibition scored 'high points for all of the NEH goals for advancement of humanities.'"

The curatorial team for *Striking Iron* is headed by MacArthur Fellow, acclaimed Santa Fe-based artist and master blacksmith Tom Joyce, and includes Allen F. Roberts, UCLA Professor of World Arts and Cultures; Henry John Drewal, Evjue-Bascom Professor of Art History and Afro-American Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; William J. Dewey, Associate Professor of African Art History at Pennsylvania State University; and Marla C. Berns, Shirley and Ralph Shapiro Director of the Fowler Museum at UCLA.

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About the Fowler Museum
The Fowler Museum at UCLA explores global arts and cultures with an emphasis on works from Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and the Americas—past and present. The Fowler enhances understanding of world cultures through dynamic exhibitions, publications, and public programs, informed by interdisciplinary approaches and the perspectives of the cultures represented. The Fowler also features the work of international contemporary artists presented within the complex frameworks of politics, culture, and social action.

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