An Interdisciplinary Symposium: Striking Iron
Friday, November 9, 7 PM
Saturday, November 10, 9:30 AM—6:00 PM
Fowler Museum at UCLA, Lenart Auditorium

This two-part symposium explores iron in the context of its history, spiritual potencies, cultural roles and meanings, and artistic possibilities in Africa and its Diasporas. On Friday night, acclaimed visual artists Sokari Douglas Camp and Alison Saar talk about the centrality of metal to their artistic practices, followed by a conversation moderated by Fowler Museum Director Marla C. Berns. Saturday’s sessions feature an interdisciplinary range of distinguished speakers, including astronomer and director of the Griffith Observatory Ed Krupp, archaeologist Shadreck Chirikure, artist Tom Joyce, historians Candice Goucher and Colleen Kriger, art historian Rowland Abiodun, and anthropologist Ade Ofunniyin.

Friday November 9, 12 PM: Join us for a Gallery Talk on bronze ofo with Philip M. Peek, guest co-curator of Summoning the Ancestors: Southern Nigerian Bronzes.

For a complete schedule and to register, click on ironsymposium.eventbrite.com

Friday, November 9, 7:00 PM
Keynote Presentation:
Artist Talks by Sokari Douglas Camp and Alison Saar
Followed by a conversation moderated by Marla C. Berns

Saturday, November 10, 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM

9:30 AM Coffee reception in the UCLA Art Council Amphitheatre
10:00 AM Welcome/Opening Remarks
10:15 AM-12:00 PM Session 1: Africa’s Iron Origins

“Heavy Metal: Hammering Iron out of the Sky”
Ed Krupp, Director, Griffith Observatory, Los Angeles

“Archaeological Evidence for Iron’s Independent Invention in Africa: Empirically Proven or Red Herring?”
Shadreck Chirikure, Senior Lecturer, Archaeology, University of Cape Town

“The Scabbard Only Embellishes, the Sword Never Feels Cold”
Rowland Abiodun, John C. Newton Professor of Art, the History of Art, and Black Studies, Amherst College
12:00-1:45 PM  Lunch Break, Film Screening, and Exhibition Viewing

2:00-3:00 PM  Session 2: Iron and the African Diaspora

“Forging the History of Iron in the Atlantic World”
Candice Goucher, Professor, History, Washington State University, Vancouver

“Memory and Public Culture: The Making of an African American Icon in Charleston, South Carolina”
Ade Ofunniyin, Adjunct Professor, Anthropology, African American Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies, College of Charleston

3:00-3:15 PM  Break

3:15 - 4:15 PM  Session 3: Forging Identities

“Forging History and Memory in Central Africa”
Colleen Kriger, Professor, History, University of North Carolina, Greensboro

4:15 PM  Artist Talk by Tom Joyce: Lingua-Ferrum

5:00-6:00 PM  Reception

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About the Exhibition

Striking Iron: The Art of African Blacksmiths
Through December 30, 2018

Striking Iron is a major international traveling exhibition that 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, and astonishing artistry.

Parking is available in UCLA Lot 4, 398 Westwood Plaza, directly off Sunset Blvd | $12/day Rideshare drop-off 305 Royce Drive.