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Legacy: Jewelry Techniques of West Africa

Matthieu Cheminée

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With little more than an anvil and a small box of tools, successive generations of jewelers in West Africa have developed a style of working in silver and gold renowned the world over. While many books have been published documenting jewelry artifacts of Africa, few have documented the makers, their process and their traditions until now.

Part technical guide, part anthropological study, Legacy offers a glimpse into the daily lives and work habits of the jewelers of West Africa. Author Matthieu Chiminée traveled to seven countries, interviewed hundreds of craftsmen and took thousands of photographs over the course of a decade to compile this comprehensive resource. While metalsmiths in the West will be fascinated and humbled by the techniques presented here, all readers will glean insight into African culture and art as they stand today, a legacy from ancestors.

In this beautiful and personal volume, readers are invited to visit the sparse market stalls, examine the heirloom tools and meet the craftsmen responsible for the living tradition of jewelry in West Africa. *Legacy offers step-by-step investigations into many working processes as well as fascinating anecdotes and biographies of the artists. The book is illustrated with hundreds of beautiful photographs and offers access to a world not often visited by outsiders. Equally relevant as an instructional guide and as a profound glimpse into the artistic heritage of Africa, this book adds something fresh and dynamic to the academic study of African art.*

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