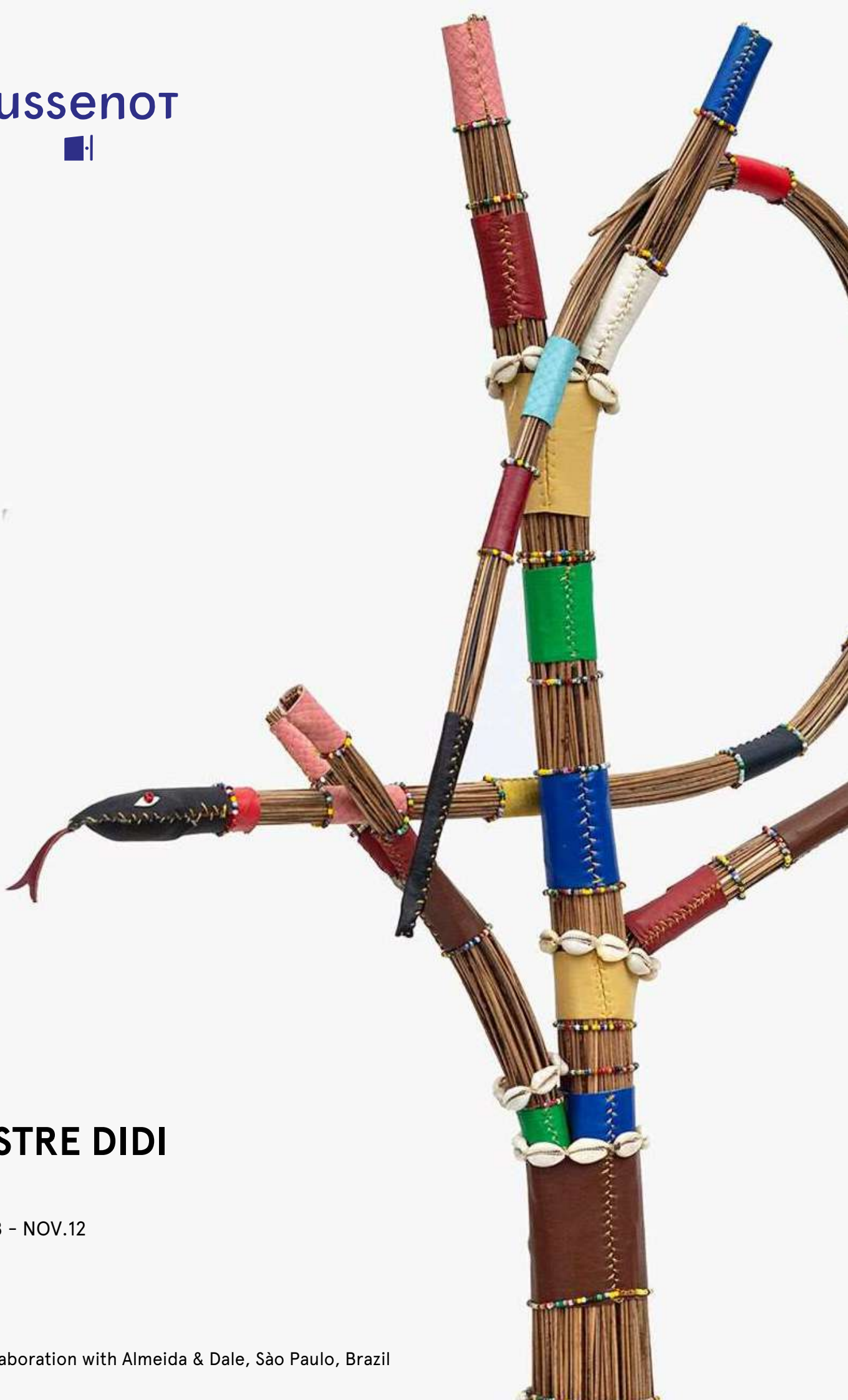


HUSSENOT



**MESTRE DIDI**

OCT. 8 - NOV.12

in collaboration with Almeida & Dale, São Paulo, Brazil



Mestre Didi

*OPA EXIN EDA OHUNKOHUN - S*  
*cepter of spear and force of nature Dec. 1980*  
palm grove, painted leather, shells and beads  
152 x 78 x 16 cm

USD 80.000,00 (+VAT if applicable)



Mestre Didi  
*OPA IWIN IGI IGBO -  
Spirit of the forest tree* Dec. 1980  
palm grave, painted leather, shells and beads  
138 x 50 x 15 cm

USD 60.000,00 (+VAT if applicable)



Mestre Didi  
IWIN IGI NLA -  
Majestic ancestor of the tree Dec. 1980  
palm grove, painted leather, shells and beads  
152 x 78 x 16 cm

USD 100.000 \$ (+ VAT if applicable)



Mestre Didi  
*Untitled s.d.*  
straw, painted leather, shells and colored beads  
76,5 x10 x 10 cm

USD 40.000,00 (+VAT if applicable)



Mestre Didi  
*IGI IKOJA ATI EJO - Beyond Serpent Tree* Dec. 1980  
palm grove, painted leather, shells and beads  
105 x 30 x 9 cm

USD 60.000,00 (+VAT if applicable)



Mestre Didi  
*Untitled s.d.*  
palm grave, painted leather, shells and beads  
104,5 x 45 x 14,5 cm

USD 60.000,00 (+VAT if applicable)



Mestre Didi  
*Sem título* s.d.  
nervura de palmeira, couro pintado, búzios e contas  
104,5 x 45 x 14,5 cm

USD 60.000,00 (+VAT if applicable)





Mestre Didi  
OPA EXIN EYE MEJI -  
Spear scepter with two birds Dec. 1990  
palm grove, painted leather, shells and beads  
110 x 37 x 15 cm

USD 65.000,00 (+VAT if applicable)



Mestre Didi  
*Bird* Dec. 1990  
palm grave, painted leather, shells and beads  
98 x 45 x 26 cm

USD 90.000,00 (+VAT if applicable)



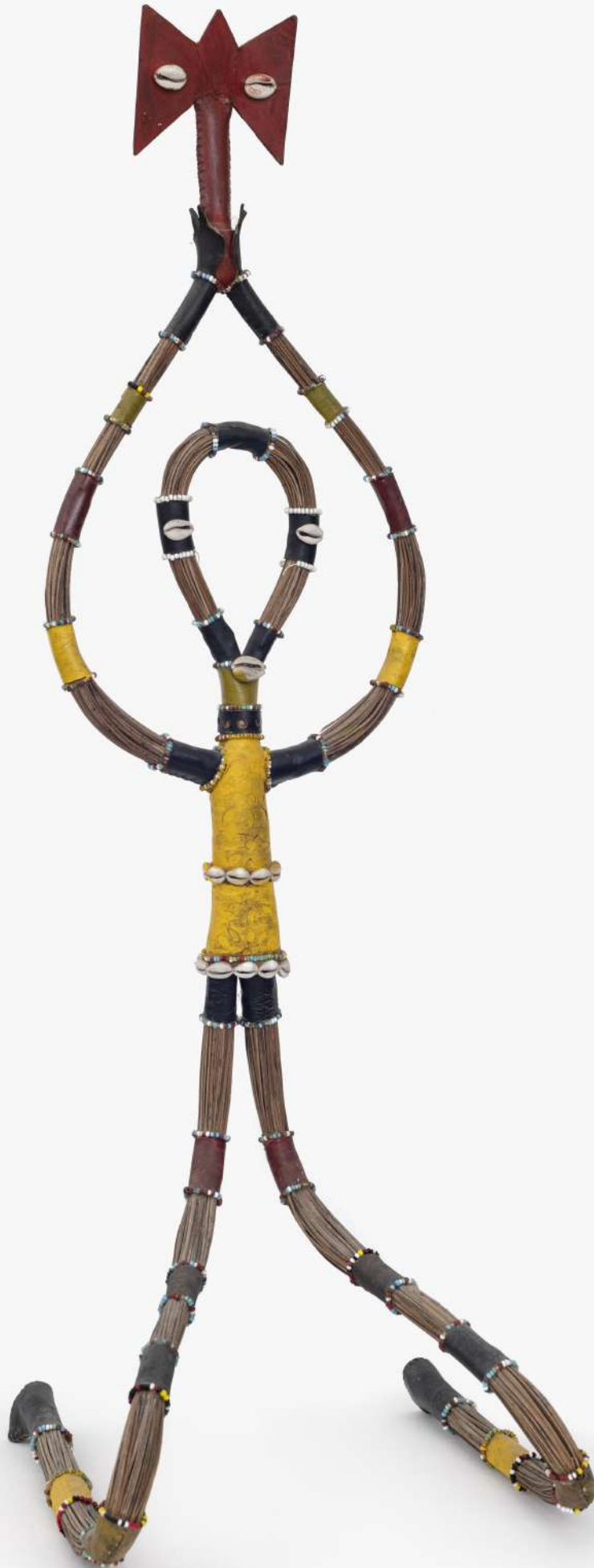
Mestre Didi  
*OPA ONÁ MERIN AYE:*  
*Center of the four cardinal points of the Earth s.d.*  
palm grave, painted leather, shells and beads  
140 x 55 x 14 cm

USD 75.000,00 (+VAT if applicable)



Mestre Didi  
*Untitled* c. 1998  
palm vein, painted leather, shells and  
beads 69,5 x 22 x 10 cm

USD 40,000,00 (+VAT if applicable)



Mestre Didi  
*Untitled s.d.*  
palm vein, painted leather, shells and beads  
75 x 24 x 25 cm

USD 50.000,00 (+VAT if applicable)



## MESTRE DIDI A COSMIC VISION OF A MYTHICAL REALITY

To acknowledge the work of Mestre Didi, whose *oeuvre* travels between visual arts and the rituals of his Black African ancestors, it is necessary to dive into the roots of Brazilian and Bahian culture, in its past relations and throughout time. His sculptures, which, though contemporary in the sense of Western art traditions, bear the bonds that connect Africa and Brazil.

Mestre Didi and his production of sacred objects/sculptures precisely delivers this anthropophagical blend so strongly defended in Brazilian culture: I would say that the work of Mestre Didi is one of the most authentic results of this kind of process in Brazil. Didi feeds the soul and seeks intrinsic sources in his Nagô universe, which reveals the forces of nature in the direct relationship of *candomblé* and its *orixás* with the peoples on both sides of the Atlantic.

The largest contingent of Africans to arrive in Bahia was from the region of Benin, and their religion took root in spite of prohibitions and persecutions. Cultural expressions of African origin were consolidated, especially in Salvador, through centuries of survival strategies, becoming active in daily life through religion, cooking, and music, etc. Slavery displaced the Black African but was unable to extinguish his values and vision of the world that survived in captivity, being transformed into a legacy, cultural identity and incentive for artistic production.

It is important to remember that *Candomblé* is a Brazilian creation and that despite the influence of African culture, the worship of the *orixás* in this format only occurs in Brazil. The *Terreiros* are an emblematic re-creation of a whole African nation and are complex societies with their own codes of conduct, hierarchies, and policies. In Africa, each region worships only one *orixá*, while in Brazil each house worships several *orixás* at the same time.

It is in this scenario of ebullition of black culture, in this city that is the cradle of *Candomblé* and of African traditions and in this unique religious context that Mestre Didi appears with his cosmic vision, which gives birth to the dialogue with this day and age. It is in the entrails of time that this visual artist with Afro-Brazilian assertions and values grows up and is formed as an educator concerned with the permanence of the *Iorubá* culture.

For Didi, as for other African sculptors, these works are a mythical reality, representing a place of exaltation and bonding with the sacred. The importance of verticality and symmetry show the values of aesthetic nature, totem forms climbing to the infinite, in a constant search to connect with the sacred, with the spiritual world, which confirms the impossibility of separating the artist from the high-priest and from his religion. This connectivity is part of the African vision of the world and, thus, of their ancestors. For them everything is connected: man, life, death, forces of nature. Everything is related to the workings of the cosmos and one doesn't act without the other.

The artist uses as a reference traditional symbols of the Nagô universe, transmitting customs, hierarchies, languages, aesthetic conceptions, dramatizations, literature and mythology of the African nations, above all of their religion, and uses in-depth symbolic knowledge to choose the materials for his sculptures. Material taken from nature, such as straw and palm tree ribs, leather, beads and seashells, and uses the colors that refer to sacred principles, based on the rainbow.

As in all creative processes, the artist's personal imagery re-creates forms and new possibilities for his sculptures. While Didi is, at the same time, inspired by and transfigures emblems and symbols of his traditions, he is also free to multiply colors and materials that have no religious intent, but are only evidence of a specific culture. The works emerge from the artist's singular manner of seeing, living and associating, thus creating his own specific contemporary sculptural vocabulary.

The importance and uniqueness of Mestre Didi's work is triggered by the anthropophagy of African culture in order to create a singularly Brazilian *oeuvre*. Just as Tarsila do Amaral did in relation to Indigenous culture, Didi later came to remind us of the Brazilian plurality and the different possibilities of inspiring models for the creation and re-creation of something authentic, unique and original, supported by one of the cultures that gave origin to Brazil. Oswald de Andrade, in his manifest, stated that: "*only anthropophagy unites us*".

Text by Thais D'Arzé