

# "Colonial People"

## DESCRIPTION

These bright, colorful wooden figures are called "Colonial People." Because of their bright colored outfits and smiling faces, they appear to exude a positive energy, but Colonial figures carry a much more dynamic, even somber, message than a cursory glance may suggest.

Colonial or "colon" figures originated in West Africa in the Ivory Coast during the colonial period. "Colon" is the French noun for a colonist. These statues were not originally conceived for market, but rather for indigenous use. Some describe it as Transitional Art. The figures convey European colonial officials such as civil servants, doctors, soldiers or technicians or "Westernized" middle-class Africans. They bear elements of European design such as clothing, posture, and various accouterments.

Colonial figures achieved worldwide acclaim after World War II after decolonization. It has been debated that the genre originated as an African response to colonization and the repression at the hands of the colonial state. It is discussed whether the statues were originally seen as satirical caricatures of colonial officials or simply depictions of new subjects in local styles. Whether the original statues were intended to be purely ornamental or also served a ritual function is also debated by anthropologists.

"Colonial People" like many other African artworks, do not paint history with a broad brush stroke. These figures tell a real, genuine story. One can see the sadness in the eyes, the forced smile, and forced passivity (hands in pockets) as they mirror the appearance of their oppressors, the colonists. Be sure to bring home a unique piece of history.



## DIMENSIONS

Three sizes available: 39", 59", 61"

## MEDIUM

One of a Kind Hand Carved Wood  
Made out of one piece of wood

## REGION

Ivory Coast

## APPROXIMATE AGE

Made in 1995

## AVAILABILITY

One of a Kind

## PRICE

Depends on size: 39": \$250, 59": \$550, 61": \$650

## CONDITION

Some signs of age

## ARTWORK URL

<https://yorksshonagallery.com/products/colonial-people?variant=48786472147>

YouTube video can be found in above URL



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