



**Pende**  
**Visions of Africa**  
**Zoe S. Strother**

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Although many societies in the Congo were once renowned for vibrant masquerades and architectural sculpture, these phenomena have only been studied as living traditions among a handful of peoples, most notably the Pende. Building on the extended fieldwork of numerous researchers since the 1950s, this text offers a unique window into the dynamic performance contexts of both masquerade and architecture in Central Africa. As much as possible, it privileges Pende voices and seeks to understand the inter-relationship between ritual practice and aesthetic form. Attentive to history, the text also shows these artistic practices have responded (sometimes unpredictably) to both colonial and post-colonial pressure. Lavish illustrations feature both iconic and hitherto unpublished masterworks, which have been selected to evoke the full range of Pende expression.

**Zoe S. Strother** is Associate Professor of African Art at Columbia University in New York. She studied History of Art at Yale University, where she earned a Ph.D. in 1992. Her research is based on thirty-two months of work in eastern Pende and central Pende. She has written extensively on Pende including *Inventing Masks: Agency and History in the Art of the Central Pende* which received the 'Arnold Rubin Outstanding Publication Award'.