



Korhogo Cloth

This quality hand woven hand painted cloth painting depicts some animals of sub-Saharan Africa. Korhogo Cloth always tells a story. It is very similar to mud cloth which is a more familiar fabric to many people. Korhogo cloth is made by the Senufo people of the Ivory Coast and is named after the village of Korhogo in the northern part of Ivory Coast. Approximately 5-inch strips are hand-woven. Mud is painted on the cloth to create patterns of animals, men in ceremonial dress, buildings, or geometric designs. The soil used to make this mud is usually black, brown, or rust and is collected throughout West Africa. This textile, which comes in various lengths and widths, is used for clothing as well as for pillows, wall hangings, and folding screens.

The Senufo are a group of people living in northern Cote d'Ivoire and Mali. They are known as excellent farmers and are made up of a number of different groups who moved south to Mali and Cote d'Ivoire in the 15 and 16th centuries.

The Senefou follow a strict caste-like system, in which the farmer is at the top and the musicians are on the bottom rung of the society. Farming is a huge part of the Senefou culture even for those who do not belong to the farmer caste. A very communal society people will often take turns working on each others lands and trading off and on. There is almost always a group in each village which is made up of men ages 15-35 who work in fields and with what they are given provide a huge festival during the dry season for the village. Local games to see how fast someone can hoe a field are also performed to make the work more enjoyable. One of the great honors for a Senefou male is to become the sambali, or champion cultivator. The sambali is respected throughout the region and in his old age is given predominantly leadership roles. Another society for Senefou males is the poro. The poro is usually located in the forest and serves as a school for young men until they reach adulthood. Much sculptured work is made in the poro this is where much of the wood carvings, brass sculptures, and masks are made. Sometimes these are sold to local artisans. The greatest achievement for a Senefou woman is the ability to cook well. If a girl or woman cannot cook well it is a great shame to the family, especially the mother. The womans society, known as the sandogo is mainly responsible for divination.

