

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS ST. PETE

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG (MFA) ANNOUNCES NEW EXHIBITION,
MULTIPLE: PRINCE TWINS SEVEN-SEVEN

Prince Twins Seven-Seven created a unique and powerful style that rejected the international misconception of a division between the traditional and contemporary in African art

The MFA's New Exhibition Will Be On Display August 13, 2022 - January 15, 2023



ST. PETERSBURG, FL (August 11, 2022) – [The Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg](#) (MFA) is pleased to announce its upcoming exhibition, *Multiple: Prince Twins Seven-Seven*. The new exhibition will be on view from August 13, 2022 through January 15, 2023 in the Minck Gallery, which is supported by the Helen and Richard Minck Memorial Fund. This exhibition highlights the visionary work of Prince Twins Seven-Seven (Nigerian, 1944–2011), who was the only surviving child out of seven pairs of twins born to his mother. Because of this, and the associated traditional religious beliefs of the Yorùbá people of Nigeria, he held that he possessed unique spiritual insight and power. His perceptions in turn had a profound impact on his artistic expression as a printmaker, painter, and sculptor. Blending abstracted images of the physical world and evocations of the spirit world, Prince Twins Seven-Seven created a unique, powerful, and international style that bridges traditional and contemporary arts. *Multiple:*

Prince Twins Seven-Seven features 14 total pieces, including 10 works on paper by Prince Twins Seven-Seven and four other Yorùbá works of art from the MFA's collection.

"It is rare to see so many of Prince Twins Seven-Seven's early works together," said Dr. Genevieve Hill-Thomas, curator of the exhibition. "When most people think about African art, they think about masks and small wooden figures. Prince's art is on one hand drawn from traditional Yorùbá art, but at the same time he created uniquely modern pieces that are a reflection of his lived experiences—both in Nigeria and the United States."

Prince Twins Seven-Seven began his artistic life singing and dancing in a band. He then shifted his attention to the visual arts after participating in a workshop established in the late 1960s by Ulli and Georgina Beier (German, 1922—2011; English, 1938—2021) in Oşogbo, Nigeria. There he was encouraged to explore different types of media, including the literature of Nigerian author Amos Tutuola (Nigerian, 1920-1997). This ultimately led him to create a distinctive style that remains rooted in the physical environment, even though it evokes otherworldly visions. His work is akin to the literary genre of Magical Realism, which creates a realistic view of the world while adding supernatural elements to blur the lines between spirits and humans.

Multiple: Prince Twins Seven-Seven offers a remarkable opportunity to examine the complicated, richly symbolic work of the artist, who relied on both artistic legacy and innovation. The artist's paintings, prints, and drawings also powerfully repudiate the frequently misconceived division between the traditional and contemporary in African art. One of the unique features of this exhibition is the MFA's holdings of early Prince Twins Seven-Seven prints in different states, which provide a special view into his working process during the first half of his career.

IMAGE CAPTION

Prince Twins Seven-Seven, Nigerian, 1944-2011

Green Painting (detail), before 1975

Mixed media on cloth

Gift of Irwin and Marcia Hersey

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ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

The MFA at 255 Beach Drive NE is the largest encyclopedic art museum in Florida. The collection includes works of art from ancient times to the present day and from around the world, including ancient Greek and Roman, Egyptian, Asian, African, pre-Columbian, Native American, European, American, and contemporary art. The photography collection is one of the largest and finest in the Southeast. For more information, please visit mfastpete.org and follow @mfastpete on social media.

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