

Korn Gallery
Dorothy Young Center for the Arts
Drew University
Madison, NJ 07940

For Immediate Release

First Pieces: Board Games in Translation



Owela game, Yeyi players, Etosha National Park, Namibia, 1997. Photograph credit: Alex de Voogt

Exhibition: August 29 – October 6, 2023
Free Admission

The Korn Gallery is pleased to announce the exhibition, *First Pieces: Board Games in Translation*, curated by Alex de Voogt, on view August 29 through October 6, 2023. The Gallery is located in the Dorothy Young Center for the Arts at Drew University and is open Tuesday through Friday 12:00-4pm, and by appointment.

About the exhibition:

First Pieces: Board Games in Translation exposes the viewer to poems and game boards from diverse cultural and historical settings. The poems contain the first mention of an ancient game name or a set of playing rules, some of which are still known today. The game boards are displayed in contrasting contexts, highlighting the role of translation in understanding board games and those who played them across time and space.

Poetry translations and board game videos may be accessed using QR-codes that correlate with a catalogue of translations online, <https://ghostcitypress.com/2023-summer-series/first-pieces> (free to download). The exhibition is also accompanied by a printed catalogue on view for gallery visitors.

Gallery Guide (clockwise starting left of the door):

1. Poem excerpt by Ibn Dāniyāl in Arabic about the game of Tāb; 14th Century CE, Egypt
2. Tāb game; sand, stones and wooden stick dice
3. Owela game, Yeyi players, Etosha National Park, Namibia, 1997. Photograph credit: Alex de Voogt
4. Poem by Agathias in Greek about Tables (Backgammon); 6th Century CE, Greece
5. Poem by Muyaka bin Haji in Swahili about Bao; early 19th Century, Mombasa (today's Kenya)
6. Video with sound by Alex de Voogt of Kijumbe (left) and Nasoro (right) playing bao during the 1994 Bao Tournament, Zanzibar, Tanzania
7. Bao table; ebony wood, with playing counters or kete (*Caesalpinia bonduc*); 1994, Makonde, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania
8. Bao table; mvule wood, with playing counters or kete (*Caesalpinia bonduc*); 1992, Mikunguni, Stone Town, Zanzibar, Tanzania
9. Bao board; ebony wood, 1994, Makonde, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania
10. Bao board, elephant shape; ebony wood, 1994, Makonde, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania
11. Warri board; wood, 1992, Antigua
12. Poem from the *Man'yōshū* in Japanese about Sugoroku (Backgammon); 7th Century CE, Japan
13. Photograph by Alex de Voogt of three women playing Pallankuli; 1997, Colombo, Sri Lanka
14. Pallankuli board; wood, 1997, Colombo, Sri Lanka
15. Poem excerpt by Qu Yuan in Chinese about Liubo; 3rd Century BCE, China
16. Set of Xiàng qí (Chinese Chess) playing pieces; painted wood, 2010, China
17. Sorry! board; painted plywood, 2018, Tarawa, Kiribati
18. Barsi board; embroidered textile, 2009, Damascus, Syria
19. Lidu board; printed paper, 2010, Sai Island, Sudan
20. Poem excerpt by Eloi d'Amerval in French about Checkers; 16th Century CE, France
21. Checkerboard; painted wood, 2013, Habarana, Sri Lanka
22. Checkerboard; painted wood, early 20th Century, Connecticut, USA

For more information please email Visual Arts Coordinator Jason Karolak at jkarolak@drew.edu
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