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PRESS RELEASE

African Terra Cotta: a Millenary Heritage

Barbier-Mueller Museum Collections

From 18 November 2009 to 8 January 2010, BGL BNP Paribas is honoured to present ***African Terra Cotta: a Millenary Heritage***, an exhibition featuring collections from the Barbier-Mueller Museum in Geneva, at its Kirchberg headquarters in Luxembourg.

The use of terra cotta is not confined to the productions of pots, vases and other household utensils. Yielding readily to the extraordinary fertility of artistic imagination, it takes myriad forms: often a vase disguises itself in human forms, and sometimes the clay takes on a closer, more troubling likeness as a portrait.

Today Africa continues to celebrate the life-giving earth as it has for countless millennia. And who can say how many myths tell the story of man's creation from a piece of clay in the hands of a demiurge? The potter's moist hands, too, take possession of the earth and transcend it with gentle skill to conjure up rounds and hollows to be perpetuated in flame.

The Barbier-Mueller collections offer a panorama of African terra cotta illustrating both the long-vanished civilisations of the past and the living traditions carried on by the potters of today. That great cultural heritage, with a symbolic force equalled only by its beauty, takes us on a journey through the history and land of Africa in all its diversity and singularity.

Located in the heart of the old city of Geneva, the Barbier-Mueller Museum was founded in 1977 with the mission of safekeeping, studying and publishing the unique collection begun by Josef Mueller in 1907 and regularly enriched to this day by his heirs Monique and Jean Paul Barbier-Mueller. It now counts some 7,000 works including sculptures, masks, textiles and jewels, the insignia of rank and personal ornaments from Africa, Oceania, the pre- and post-Columbian Americas, Asia and Insulindia, along with archaic and prehistoric works from the cradles of great civilisations such as Greece, Italy, Japan and Southeast Asia.

With ***African Terra Cotta: a Millenary Heritage***, BGL BNP Paribas continues its support for the arts as part of a broader commitment to good corporate citizenship.

The catalogue accompanying the exhibition is a reference work drawing on the contributions of some 20 experts specialized in Africa. In 470 pages, it covers over 200 works and is richly illustrated with on-site photographs.



BGL BNP Paribas
50, avenue J.F. Kennedy
Luxembourg - Kirchberg

Exhibition open from 18 November 2009 to 8 January 2010, Monday to Friday from 9 am to 5 pm.

Free entry.

For information, queries and guided tours on request, call (+352) 4242-2000.

The catalogue is on sale for EUR 59 at the exhibition, in all BGL BNP Paribas branches or by phone on (+352) 4242-2000.

About BGL BNP Paribas

BGL BNP Paribas (www.bgl.lu) is one of the largest banks in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, with a balance sheet totalling EUR 52.8 billion at 30 June 2009. Now a leader on its domestic market, it offers an especially wide range of financial products to individuals, professionals, private banking clients and businesses. BGL BNP Paribas is Luxembourg's number-one provider of banking services to professionals and small- and medium-size companies, and number two in services for individuals. It is also the leader for bancassurance.

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* Within its peer group

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