

Seeing the unseeing audience: women and West African power association masquerades

Susan Elizabeth Gagliardi

For more than a century, observers have noted that the West African power associations known as Komo and Kono prohibit women from seeing their performances and assemblages.¹ Yet, in western Burkina Faso today, certain Komo and Kono chapters authorize some women to view their arts, and women not authorized to see them still interact with performers during events or appeal to the organizations' leaders at other times for help in resolving problems in their lives. Some women also work for the organizations, maintaining yards around Komo and Kono houses or preparing the food and beer necessary for performances. Leaders of Komo, Kono and other power associations are specialists who develop knowledge and skills to treat illness, combat malevolence, and address other difficulties that individuals or communities encounter in their daily lives. The organizations span a culturally, religiously and linguistically diverse region that extends from Guinea to Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire to Senegal. They also sponsor a range of arts, including masquerades and three-dimensional works comprised of animal, vegetal and mineral matter (Figure 1). Whereas Komo and Kono prohibit women from seeing their arts, other power associations in western Burkina Faso, including the popular organization Wara, allow and even encourage women to attend their performances.

Women's restricted access to Komo and Kono distinguishes the organizations from other power associations, such as Wara. The gendered prohibition thus serves as a defining feature of Komo, Kono and the organizations' arts. Throughout the twentieth century, authors underscored the male orientation of Komo, for example characterizing it as a 'grand brotherhood' (Monteil 1924: 269–70), 'the secret of men' (Travélé 1929: 129), or 'men's initiation association'

Susan Elizabeth Gagliardi is assistant professor in the Art History Department at Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia. She has conducted field research in western Burkinabe communities of Senufo- and Mande-language speakers. Email: susan.e.gagliardi@emory.edu

¹Power is a complex concept that here broadly means the capacity to effect significant change, either positive or negative. Arens and Karp (1989) argue that the term 'power' designates neither a straightforward nor a singular concept. Patrick McNaughton introduces the phrase 'power associations' as an approximate translation for the Mande-language word *jow* (singular: *jo*), a term encompassing Komo, Kono and other organizations, including Ciwara, Nama, Nya and Wara (McNaughton 1979: 8–17; 2001: 167–73; see also Brett-Smith 1997: 72–3, note 3; Colleyn 2001: 244). Other observers of the organizations have used terms including 'fraternity', 'confraternity', 'brotherhood', 'religious cult', 'secret society' and 'initiation association' as approximations of *jo*. The English-language terms highlight an organization's male orientation, religious nature or secrecy bias. Several of the words imply a formal or graded indoctrination process. Following McNaughton, I use the phrase 'power association' because it more accurately reflects the organizations' emphasis on the development of restricted knowledge to effect change through interpersonal networks.



FIGURE 1 Helmet mask in the workroom of power association leader Karfa Coulibaly, Sokouraba, Burkina Faso, 4 January 2014.

(McNaughton 1979: 10).² But focusing on the all-male membership and male-only activities of Komo and Kono disregards gendered complexities recorded in even the earliest published accounts of the organizations. French colonial administrator Louis Tauxier (1927: 272) writes that, while Komo and Kono are often characterized as ‘secret’, they are actually ‘not very secret because they comprise almost all the men in a village’. Highlighting the gendered nature of secrecy surrounding the ‘not very secret’ organizations, Tauxier explains that they are secret for women, children and strangers. However, he also acknowledges women’s engagement with Komo, adding that, rather than refer to Komo by name, women call it ‘*Tyéko*’. He writes that the term means ‘male’ but that it also refers to a woman’s passion for a man (*ibid.*: 274).

Reflecting on French military officer Joseph-Simon Gallieni’s description of a Komo performance the officer witnessed during his 1879–81 mission to present-day Mali, historian Jonathan E. (Akare) Aden (2003: 55) similarly observes gendered complexity. Aden asserts that references to women in Gallieni’s account ‘[stand] in contradiction to the Western assumptions about Komo as a strict domain of men in perpetuity’. Written nearly forty years before Tauxier’s text, Gallieni’s account is one of the earliest published references to Komo. Aden adds: ‘considerable evidence supports a pivotal and powerful place for women in [Komo] that has not yet been discussed by scholars’. As Aden suggests, other, mostly male, observers have focused on the organizations’ male orientation. But

²Monteil and Travélé identified Komo with the French phrases ‘*grande confrérie*’ and the ‘*secret des hommes*’, respectively.

women and men I interviewed in western Burkina Faso led me to reconsider characterizations of Komo and Kono as male institutions. They repeatedly told me that Komo and Kono leaders prohibit most but not all women and children from seeing the associations' performances. In fact, I uncovered story after story of women engaging with local Komo and Kono chapters and the arts the organizations sponsor. Many women reported that they stayed inside during Komo and Kono performances, and they described experiencing fear. But they relayed stories of eager participation in and keen respect for the organizations' activities. Their accounts suggest respect rather than resentment or feelings of oppression.

I have found that research focusing on different individuals' accounts of a single performance yields more nuanced understanding of the event (cf. Drewal 1989: 39). Similarly, the gathering of different individuals' experiences of different instances of a particular kind of performance allows for a fuller but less streamlined understanding of the range of possibilities for that kind of event. This approach in my work coincides with the way in which Bruno Latour (2005) understands the term 'social'. According to Latour, 'social' does not describe an entity or essence that exists separately from individual actors but rather denotes the accumulation of their various interpersonal connections. Latour asks: 'Does this [understanding] mean that we have to take seriously the real and sometimes exquisitely small differences between the many ways in which people "achieve the social"?' He answers: 'I am afraid so' (Latour 2005: 36–7). By attending to the overlaps and differences in individuals' experiences of a single masquerade or different instances of a particular kind of event, I recognize the many actors who create the social rather than posit a 'social' norm imposed on people.

Audiences constitute critical but long overlooked actors in the study of masquerade. Performer–audience interactions yield dynamic events that are not simply predetermined by set practices but rather respond to and are shaped by specific individuals acting within specific contexts (cf. Drewal 1989; 1992). Indeed, power association leaders involved in performances seemed not just aware of but attentive to their different audiences, including women prohibited from seeing certain events. Twenty-two months of fieldwork conducted in western Burkina Faso since 2004 revealed that Komo and Kono performers assess the people in their audiences in order to calibrate their engagement with them, including both literal spectators and unseeing participants. Shifting the focus from performers to audiences – the indispensable but barely investigated contributors to African masquerades – makes it impossible to abide by descriptors of Komo and Kono that rely on hard and fast gender divisions.

Attention to the unseeing but ever-present audiences of Komo and Kono reconfigures our understanding of audiences for masquerades in Africa. Scholars of theatre audiences in different times and places have increasingly turned their attention to various audiences and the people who comprise them. At times, they use *spectators* as a synonym for *audience*, implying a group of people who are physically present for an event and can see it (see, for example, Bennett 1997; Lancaster 1997; Nield 2008; Freshwater 2011; Goode 2011). Scholars consider what it means for performers to see their audiences (Freshwater 2009: 50; see also Wagner 2000). They describe *ghostly audiences*, meaning audiences performers imagine when preparing for live performances (for example, Goode 2011: 468). They refer to *absent audiences*, signalling the lack or near lack of human spectators at an event (for example, Blackburn

1996; Nair 2009). And scholars refer to *invisible audiences*, or audiences not physically present for live performances such as radio broadcasts but implicated in them (for example, Black 2012). *Unseeing audiences* consist of people who are physically present at a live performance and who interact with performers but who are prohibited from actually seeing the event other people can see.

Komo and Kono refracted through gender

Kono leader Ibrahim Traoré told me that he wished women could see Kono arts, as the organization's leaders would then attract larger audiences for their performances.³ But the prohibition seems long-standing. From the late nineteenth to the early twenty-first century, observers have described Komo's and Kono's restriction on women viewing their performances and the risk of untimely death a women courts if she violates the prohibition (for example, Gallieni 1885: 328; Travélé 1929: 138; McNaughton 1988: 130; Brett-Smith 1997; Diamitani 1999: 98; Colleyn 2009: 37; cf. Henry 1910: 25, 151; Tauxier 1927: 279; Bangali 2002: 29, note 6, 150, 248). Gallieni (1885: 324–34) describes an absence of women in the crowd gathered to participate in the Komo activities he witnessed. He claims that death awaited women and children who did not stay in their houses during the events (*ibid.*: 327, 328, 329). Other observers of Komo and Kono in different times and places write that sounds alert women and children to masqueraders' emergence. Reportedly fearful of seeing something they are not permitted to see, women and children run for shelter and shut the doors (for example, Henry 1910: 25, 151; Tauxier 1927: 279; Travélé 1929: 138; McNaughton 1988: 130; Brett-Smith 1997; Diamitani 1999: 98; Colleyn 2009: 37; Jespers 2013: 41).

When I first considered studying Komo and Kono and their arts, I knew I was choosing a topic my gender would likely disqualify me from seeing. This decision may seem unusual for an art historian. Other female scholars' observations that their status as foreign researchers afforded them opportunities not available to local women suggested one possibility for gaining access to performances. For example, in her analysis of Komo helmet masks in communities of Mali identified as Bamana, Sarah Brett-Smith explains that 'a foreign female researcher is often regarded as having a male persona and is therefore permitted access to information that might not be available to Bamana women' (Brett-Smith 1997: 71, note 2; see also Brett-Smith 1994: 4–5). My pursuit of interviews with men about topics considered the purview of men and with the assistance of a male research associate has in some ways aligned me with the male sphere. Yet, rather than accord me a male-equivalent or third-gender status, power association leaders and other community members in western Burkina Faso have insisted on my inherent femaleness. I joke that I do not do women's things – prepare meals, carry water, or take care of children – and so am not like the women around me. Indicating that neither my comportment nor my foreign status overrides my femaleness, nobody has accepted the alternative position I have proposed. When men who did not know me referred to me as male due to the trousers I wore, the people who did know me quickly corrected them. Avoiding specific

³Ibrahim Traoré, interview by the author, 30 June 2006.

reference to my anatomy, my research associate Dahaba Ouattara hinted on multiple occasions that people's insistence on my femaleness reflected their assumptions about my biology, and, more specifically, my presumed capability to conceive and bear children.

In fact, my own subject position as well as attention to my interactions with different women and men led me to identify and assess complexities in women's and men's roles in organizations often framed as exclusively male. As anthropologist Kirin Narayan (1993: 680) explains, 'frankness about actual interactions means that [the researcher] cannot hide superficial understandings behind sweeping statements and is forced to present the grounds of understanding'. Thus, when Gnatio Traoré and Tchiwolo Traoré – daughter and wife, respectively, of the since deceased Kono leader Moukanitien Traoré – said that women and children enter their houses when children shout to announce the imminent start of a Kono performance in their town, I recognized my own subject position and wondered what it might be like to be with them on such an occasion. I probed for more information. The Kono leader's daughter and wife explained that Kono activities often last for several days but women and children do not stay inside continually for the duration of the activities. When an overnight performance takes place in the town, women and children stay in their houses. The women added that they sleep less well when Kono events take place in their neighbourhood than when the activities occur elsewhere in the town. They also said that, following an overnight performance, Kono events often relocate to an area beyond the town's limits. When Kono activities take place outside the town, women emerge from their houses to work until Kono members return to the town for additional performances or sacrifices that require women to shut themselves in their houses for shorter periods of time.⁴

When I interviewed elder women during the annual marriage festivities in Sokouraba, Burkina Faso, in July 2007, they brought cloths to their eyes to emphasize their point that women do not have permission to see Komo and Kono performances. I asked the women whether they had any stories about encounters with the performances to tell, such as a time when one of them might have been at a well or elsewhere when she heard the warning sounds. Tchipé Traoré said an alarm sounded as she fetched water from a well, perhaps a direct response to the example I provided, a memory of an actual event, or a story for the foreign researcher. She added that she let the cord holding a water bucket fall, presumably into the well, and ran for shelter. After Traoré shared her story, the women's initial quietness in response to my question seemed to turn into an eagerness for each woman to tell a story. Their accounts resonate with each other and allow us to honour women's stories and experiences. Subtle differences in the accounts also indicate that not every woman describes or experiences Komo or Kono events in exactly the same way.

Tiblé Traoré offered the next account. She said that once, while she pounded dried okra and another woman collected mangoes, she heard sounds heralding a performance. Gesturing as she talked, she recalled covering her eyes with a cloth upon hearing the noise and trying to find her way back to her house with the cloth blocking her vision. She indicated that when she arrived at the house,

⁴Gnatio Traoré and Tchiwolo Traoré, interview by the author, 19 April 2007.

she stumbled inside and fell to the floor in a foetal position. She said she stayed on the floor because she was scared to die and wanted to avoid death. After Tiblé Traoré told her story, Tchipé Traoré described another instance when, while carrying a child on her back, she heard sounds signalling that members of a power association chapter were travelling to a nearby town. As soon as she heard the noise, Tchipé Traoré removed the child from her back and pulled a cloth over their heads until a man told her that the entourage had passed and she and the child could continue safely on their way. Naliyere Coulibaly then added her own story, recounting a time when she and her companions heard the alarm as they returned to town from the fields. They covered their eyes and hit the ground. Prompted by my question, the women became animated in telling stories about encounters with Komo or Kono. They also engaged their audience, a single foreign researcher and her research assistant, a woman who had grown up in the town and whom they knew. Even if I could not cross-check any single report, the accounts suggest that women tell or retain vivid stories about Komo and Kono.

Women's interactions with Komo and Kono chapters during the annual marriages further reflect their engagement with rather than exclusion from the organizations. At the public opening of marriage festivities in the towns of Sokouraba and Kangala in 2006 and 2007, young brides and their entourages stopped in front of Komo and Kono houses to honour local chapters (Figure 2). Dahaba Ouattara's mother, also named Tiblé Traoré, explained that often, near the end of the multi-day marriages, married and widowed women gather in the evening at neighbourhood entrances to sing songs insulting men. During an interview the day after women sang such insults, Traoré laughed when she recalled a previous occasion when she heard sounds warning of Komo or Kono activities as women mocked men in song. She implied that men, tired of listening to women's insults, found a quick way to send women into their houses and end the singing.⁵

The study of masquerade in and beyond Africa has long distorted gender dynamics surrounding the art. In 1982, in fact, Henry Pernet called for more nuanced analyses of masquerade and gender. He writes: 'We can only be struck by the male complicity which emerges from some accounts in which the anthropologist (male) does not for a second question the information given by his informants (male as well), according to which the men know all about masks but the women are fooled by them' (Pernet 1982: 57). Indeed, much of the distortion in studies of masquerade may reflect male researchers' gendered bias. Inspired by Anita Glaze's study of gender and male initiation association performances in northern Côte d'Ivoire in the late 1960s and 1970s, Elizabeth Tonkin focuses on women's experiences of masquerade. Tonkin asserts: 'It is possible – who knows – that women [in communities across West Africa] do not always cower in their houses when the Masks [or masquerade performers] go by outside, even though the men would like to think so' (Tonkin 1983: 171; see also Glaze 1975; 1976; 1981). Margaret Thompson Drewal (1989: 207) describes women from certain Yoruba performers' families who considered sitting inside during a performance a '[demonstration] of solidarity with their father or husband'. Drewal adds:

⁵Tibl  Traor , interview by the author, 11 July 2006.



FIGURE 2 Procession of women in front of a Komo power association house during annual marriage festivities, Sokouraba, Burkina Faso, 20 July 2007.

‘These women seemed to enjoy the excitement of the event and sat inside either joking among themselves or chanting along with the men parading by outside.’ Nearly three decades after Pernet, Tonkin and Drewal each pointed at women’s complex experiences of arts that women are not permitted to see, women’s contributions to Komo and Kono continue to require attention (see also Aden 2003: 45, note 37, 51–6, 79–87, 116–17).

Women are not the only people who may be excluded from Komo and Kono events. Children, men from communities without Komo or Kono chapters, local men who engage in certain occupations, and even foreign male researchers may also be excluded. When Philippe Jaspers (2013: 41) first heard sounds of a Komo performance from within a completely dark room, he had not yet received permission to see Komo activities. He writes that, as someone who was initially prohibited from seeing Komo performances, he first experienced them from within a confined space filled with darkness and terrifying sounds.

And not all women are excluded. Some women and girls reported to me that they were born under the protection of a Komo or Kono chapter and consequently were permitted to see certain performances (see also Diamitani 1999: 47, note 15; Bangali 2002: 29, note 6, 248). Wonou Traoré told me she was born under the protection of her father’s family’s Kono chapter and thus allowed to see the chapter’s performances. At the time, Wonou Traoré’s father, Mélégué Traoré, was a prominent politician and international diplomat. She had spent most of the ten years of her life in Burkina Faso’s capital, Ouagadougou, and had also travelled internationally. Despite her urban upbringing and international travels, she said she eagerly anticipated visits with her father to his rural home town to attend the family’s annual Kono festivities. Traoré also confidently asserted that she knows what Kono is, is authorized to see it, and has done so. She added that she does

not have the right to talk about Kono with me or anybody else, including her mother, who was not sanctioned to see it.

During the same interview and on subsequent occasions, Wonou Traoré's mother, Anne-Marie Traoré, told me that she does not believe in Kono. A devout Roman Catholic, Anne-Marie stressed her belief that Kono must absolutely be the work of the devil. She explained that she preferred to attend Mass every morning at five. There, she prayed for everybody in her family, including her husband, who, she said, dismissed Catholicism as white people's business. Yet Anne-Marie Traoré also respected the Traoré family's annual Kono festivities. She said that when the masqueraders come out, she stays inside, because, unlike her daughter, she is not allowed to see Kono. She recalled that when Kono masqueraders have greeted her at the house, she has remained inside and conversed with performers on the other side of the wall. She said she closed her eyes when responding in order to ensure that she did not see something she was not allowed to see.⁶ Catholicism and Kono coexist in the Traoré family, but neither appears to eclipse the other (cf. Reed 2003: 40–6). Moreover, a daughter and mother in the same family experience Kono in different ways.

Despite her claims that Kono must be the devil's work and that she does not believe in it, Anne-Marie Traoré maintained that people not permitted to see Kono should seriously heed the proscription.⁷ She reported that a sneak peek of a Kono performance provoked the misshapen mouth of one of the wives of her husband's brother, the renowned Kono leader Drissa Traoré. Anne-Marie recounted that people familiar with the Traoré Kono chapter said that the morning after Drissa Traoré's wife hid to see a Kono performance, her face became lopsided. Concerned about the possibility of graver misfortune or death caused by the wife's sight of something she was not supposed to see, people who cared about her did everything they could to save her from falling ill and dying. According to Anne-Marie Traoré, the interventions averted the woman's death, but her disfigurement continued to bear witness to the transgression.⁸ When women see Komo or Kono performances they are not authorized to see, death does not necessarily immediately follow by execution or other speedy means. Transgression may result in disfigurement or disability, or it may precipitate an untimely death at a future moment.⁹

Reports of women breaching the prohibition to see Komo and Kono performances also indicate that, even though women at times told me that they should not discuss Komo and Kono, women as well as men talk about the organizations, their activities, and their arts.¹⁰ Less than a week after a May 2007

⁶Anne-Marie Traoré and Wonou Traoré, interview by the author, 15 February 2007.

⁷As Anne-Marie Traoré and I talked, I mentioned that an American acquaintance had suggested I try to hide and catch a glimpse of the masqueraders. I added that I had no interest in peeking or otherwise violating the trust placed in me.

⁸Anne-Marie Traoré and Wonou Traoré, interview by the author, 15 February 2007; cf. Karfa Coulibaly, interview by the author, 18 April 2007.

⁹Sarah Brett-Smith details a rare account she collected of a more immediate and overtly violent assault on and murder of a woman who purportedly saw an object she was not authorized to see (Brett-Smith 1994: 319, note 15; cf. 1997: 73, note 5).

¹⁰Massou Traoré, interview by the author, 3 May 2006; Minata Ouattara, interview by the author, 20 September 2006.

Komo performance in Sokouraba, Dahaba Ouattara and I saw people gathered outside the house of the Komo chapter that had sponsored the event. Ouattara later told me that the people had assembled to intervene on behalf of a woman who had seen the performance even though she was not authorized to do so. He said that he had gathered information about the incident through a conversation with the former leader of another Komo chapter and by overhearing a group of women talk about it as they braided each other's hair.¹¹ Ouattara relayed that the woman who had seen the Komo performance hailed from elsewhere but had moved to Sokouraba after marrying a man from the town. Despite the injunction against women seeing the performance, she had viewed part of the event after an argument with her husband. The woman reportedly liked to listen to music, and she thought her husband had warned her not to go to the performance because of their argument. She was also unfamiliar with Komo because she came from a town without an active Komo chapter. When she heard the music, she followed the sounds and arrived at the performance, where her husband's brother saw her. Ouattara reported that when she learned she had seen something she was not supposed to see, she asked if an object covered with horns and feathers was in fact the thing she was not supposed to have seen. The family consequently sought the costly intervention that Dahaba Ouattara and I saw taking place. The reparations could bring uncertain results, as future illness, misfortune or even the eventual death that everyone faces might later be attributed to the violation of viewing restrictions.

The unseeing audience

Shifting our focus to women as an unseeing audience of Komo and Kono highlights a range of possibilities for experiencing the power associations' events. It also reveals women's varied contributions to organizations and arts long framed as institutions that operate squarely within men's domains. When I first discussed my research with power association leaders and other community members, they often responded immediately to tell me that women are not allowed to see Komo and Kono assemblages and performances. I was familiar with the prohibition, and I assumed that people wanted me to know that, as a woman, I could not see what I had travelled a great distance to study. Then, in September 2006, I offered power association leader Karfa Coulibaly a wooden helmet mask base. I had commissioned the carving from the now-deceased blacksmith-sculptor Bè Coulibaly. When Dahaba Ouattara and I delivered the wooden helmet mask base to Karfa Coulibaly's house, the power association leader indicated that accoutrements for Kono are more important when they come from a woman.¹²

Coulibaly's statement prompted me to consider another dimension of women's importance to Komo and Kono: namely, women's procreative potential. In an article on power association arts and process, Brett-Smith writes that 'the female sex is, for women, the single sacred object whose power exactly balances

¹¹Dahaba Ouattara, personal communication with the author, 24 May 2007.

¹²Karfa Coulibaly, interview by the author, 23 September 2006; cf. Yaya Bangali, interview by the author, 12 January 2012.

that of the ritual objects [such as Komo and Kono assemblages] artificially constructed by men' (Brett-Smith 2001: 134).¹³ She also argues that Komo helmet masks visually reference female genitalia (Brett-Smith 1997). Power association leaders and other men I interviewed did not explain helmet masks in the same terms, but they did connect Komo and Kono to women's procreative potential in other ways. For example, power association leader Karfa Coulibaly compared Komo and Kono to *cikonre*, the yearly event that elder women lead to prepare young women to become wives and mothers, roles the young women begin to assume at the end of *cikonre*.¹⁴ Many *cikonre* activities exclude men, and in the past *cikonre* began with clitoral excision, now declared illegal in Burkina Faso.¹⁵ The event no longer encompasses women's surgeries, but in Karfa Coulibaly's home town, *cikonre* still begins at a location identified as the 'place of excision', suggesting that excision as a concept remains an important part of the event. Women but not men may approach this place, a location imbued with the potent capacity for human reproduction (see also Bangali 2002: 77–80). The power or energy to effect change, including the giving or taking of life, is known as *nyama* in Mande languages, and it is this power or energy that Brett-Smith references when she compares the female sex to Komo and Kono objects.¹⁶ When managed capably, *nyama* can help individuals and communities, but it can also cause great harm. Thus, leaders of *cikonre* events, like Komo and Kono leaders, limit access to activities that involve enormous concentrations of *nyama* in part on the basis of gender (cf. Picton 1988).

Material concentrations of *nyama* in Komo and Kono arts made visible during masquerades distinguish the organizations' performances from other power association events. Men in western Burkina Faso have told me that Komo, Kono and Wara events are alike in that they provide experts with opportunities to identify and comment on individuals' or communities' actual or potential problems.¹⁷ The performers address crowds, pull certain audience members to the side to offer private counsel, and move through towns to speak with cloistered listeners not permitted to see the events. Performers vie for prestige and recognition, and they earn distinction through stories that circulate about their abilities to manage potent materials and energies as well as to capture audiences' attention,

¹³Cf. Adama Drabo's 1997 film *Taafé Fanga (Pouvoir de Pagne/Skirt Power)* (Centre national de production cinématographique du Mali, Thelma Film AG and California Newsreel).

¹⁴Karfa Coulibaly, interview by the author, 21 July 2007.

¹⁵Jacques Traoré, personal communication, 7 July 2006; Tchipe Traoré, Kletio Sangare, Tafokon Traoré, Nariyere Coulibaly, Tiblé Traoré, Soubanyo Traoré, Nyowa Traoré and Kafoulou Traoré, interview by the author, 9 July 2006.

¹⁶Catholic missionary Joseph Henry (1910: 26–8) describes *nyama* as a never-disappearing force, power or energy in living beings that remains even after death. Drawing on linguist Charles S. Bird's description of *nyama*, McNaughton defines the term in English as 'energy of action' (McNaughton 1988: 15; see also Bird and Kendall 1980: 16–17; Brett-Smith 1994: 38–47; Colley 2001: 246). Eluding direct translation in French or English, *nyama* implies the capacity for dynamic change, positive or negative.

¹⁷Jan Jansen (2009: 124–5) argues that *expert* and *specialist* differ in meaning in significant ways. According to Jansen, 'the expert's contribution is always a form of *applied knowledge* [and] his knowledge is by definition a point of discussion'. This definition of *expert* also characterizes power association leaders' activities. Jansen contrasts *expert* with *specialist*; he explains that the latter term designates someone with 'knowledge [of] things that are true' and that are not subject to similar discussion. However, I use *expert* and *specialist* as synonyms.



FIGURE 3 Wara power association performance with fire to honour the deceased hunter Kakoni Traoré, Sokouraba, Burkina Faso, 4 March 2007.

provide keen insights and suggest impactful solutions. But whereas Wara chapters draw crowds to their fire-wielding performances (Figure 3), Komo and Kono chapters sponsor masquerades with complex assemblages that bring together an array of potent materials.

Few published photographs of Komo and Kono masquerades exist, and western Burkinabe Komo and Kono leaders have not permitted me to see performances, let alone photograph them. However, a photograph of a Komo or Kono masquerade attributed to the Catholic missionary Père Germain Nadal and dated to 1950 documents a crowd of masqueraders at one event that likely took place in western Burkina Faso, where Nadal worked (Figure 4) (Gagliardi 2015: 229–30; see also Zahan 1974: plate XXIV; Diamitani 1999: 202, 205, 208–10, 212, 213, 225; Jespers 2013: 62, photograph 8; Gagliardi 2015: 197, figure 54). When I showed the photograph to Komo power association leader Yaya Bangali, it seemed to correspond well enough with early twenty-first-century masquerades in western Burkina Faso for Bangali to study the photograph to see if he could identify anyone in it.¹⁸ Significantly, performers in the photograph attributed to Nadal appear attentive to their audiences. Two masqueraders with flutes drawn to their mouths gaze at the photographer, their faces clearly visible beneath the helmet masks balanced on their heads. They acknowledge the onlooker and demand mutual interaction. Present-day power association leaders also act with their audiences in mind.

¹⁸Yaya Bangali, interview by the author, 28 January 2007.



FIGURE 4 ‘Danse du “Kono” chez les Senoufo’, Bobo-Dioulasso, Haute Volta, 1950. Photographer: Attributed to Père Nadal. Fonds Agence économique de la France d’outre-mer, Archives nationales d’outre-mer, Aix en Provence, France, FR CAOM 30Fi5/14. Image courtesy of the Archives Générales des Missionnaires d’Afrique, Rome, Italy, and the Archives nationales d’outre-mer, Aix en Provence, France.

The phenomenon of staged performances is so widespread that the events and contexts surrounding them vary in significant ways. But wherever they are held, the events imply audiences, even absent ones, and audiences do not just passively receive the activities happening around them. As Susan Bennett (1997) shows in a general study of theatre from ancient Greece to the US in the late twentieth century, audiences respond to performers and contribute to the event. Patrick McNaughton likewise recognizes the importance of performer–audience interaction in his book that focuses on a single performance in southern Mali in 1978. He explains:

Performers feed off audiences, who often share a familiarity with the characters, ideas, and values the performers put at play. This mutual familiarity fuels the excitement of anticipation, the evaluation of execution, and the appreciation of improvisation, and all of that together takes the event out of the realm of mere spectatorship and into the realm of created experience. (McNaughton 2008: 53)

While Bennett and McNaughton separately signal the importance of audiences to performance design, each also implies that audiences see. According to McNaughton, audience experience requires, but is not limited to, spectatorship. Bennett writes in her foundational text on the subject: ‘The approach to theatre audiences is by way of those theories and practices which have suggested this

centrality of the spectator's role' (1997: 1). For Bennett, *audience* and *spectator* are interchangeable terms.

Art historian Herbert Cole refers to the 'audience [that] is present to see' in a text that Z. S. Strother (2013: 19) characterizes as 'the most quoted text on African masquerade'. Yet Cole also acknowledges the presence of other participants whom he tentatively recognizes as an audience. He writes: 'Some extremely powerful masked spirits forbid the *physical* presence of all but a few elder male supporters, but a significant "audience" is nevertheless nearby listening behind closed doors to their thunderous orders and judgments' (Cole 1985: 22). The quotation marks around the term *audience* suggest that Cole recognizes the people who listen but do not see a performance as a significant not-quite audience.

Women's and children's reception of performances they are prohibited from seeing may contribute to the design, execution and impact of the events, which means that people not allowed to see the event constitute a distinct audience. And the unseeing audience is integral to Komo and Kono performances. Similarly, Susan Vogel argues that when women '[keep] themselves invisible and submissive ... they enact part of the explicit purpose of the *bo nun amuin* dance' in communities of central Côte d'Ivoire identified as Baule (1997: 193).¹⁹ If unseeing audiences were not important to Komo and Kono events, the associations' leaders might stage them in venues less proximate to spaces that women and children commonly inhabit. Instead, Komo and Kono leaders orchestrate events within towns, sending women and children into their houses to witness the performances without seeing them.

Proximity to the sounds of a Komo or Kono performance rather than to its sights creates a select audience for the event. Women reported to me that they look forward to and seek opportunities for hearing performers' pronouncements. Some women may travel long distances to festivities they know they will not be able to see and find shelter with friends or relatives to experience the events, even though they do not witness them by sight. Citing a personal communication with Kassim Koné, Patrick McNaughton (2001: 178) recounts that the singing of particular Komo performers has at times appealed to women. He refers to women who planned to spin cotton or do other work during overnight performances in order to listen to the entire performance (see also Aden 2003: 88). Women's eagerness to attend performances so that they can hear performers' pronouncements and music underscores the importance of the auditory dimension of the events (see also Delafosse 1912, Vol. 3: 177; Jespers 1995; Diamitani 2004; Colleyn 2009: 36–7; cf. Smith 1984; Lifschitz 1988).

On 19 May 2007, Komo leader Yaya Bangali worked with other experts to prepare for an overnight performance of his family's Komo chapter in his home town of Sokouraba. His older cousin Lamissa Bangali, a University of Illinois-trained anthropologist and Komo leader, travelled from Ouagadougou to Sokouraba for the event. Yaya and Lamissa Bangali maintained that I could not see the performance nor record its sound. However, Yaya Bangali offered to

¹⁹Other scholars have established the importance of considering women's contributions to masquerade practices (for example, see Pernet 1982; Adams 1989: 75–6; Aronson 1991). Historian John Thabiti Willis (2014; 2017) offers focused studies of gender in Egungun masquerades in Yoruba-speaking communities of Nigeria.

let me spend the night in his son's vacant one-room house with Dahaba Ouattara's wife, Massoun Traoré, their eight-month-old daughter Susan, and Traoré's friend, Noumousso Sangare. The four of us experienced the event, even though we could not see it, from inside the house.

At around ten o'clock that night, with flashlight, mat and bucket in hand, Dahaba Ouattara accompanied the four of us to Yaya Bangali's courtyard. I entered the house with Traoré, baby Susan, and Sangare. Traoré, her daughter and Sangare took the bed. I set my mat on the floor and placed the bucket nearby. Once we found our places, we firmly closed the wooden window shutters and door. Traoré and Sangare insisted that we turn off our flashlights and keep them turned off in order to avoid any accusations that we tried covertly to view the performance. I had anticipated that we would need to shut the windows and door, but the mandate to turn off our flashlights inside the room surprised me. I had not considered the possibility that someone might see light emanating from inside our room and think that we were trying to see the event outside the room.

In telling me to turn off my flashlight and keep it turned off, Traoré and Sangare instructed me on how to experience a Komo performance as a woman who cannot see it. Their recognition of appropriate behaviour reflects self-awareness and ways of being part of the unseeing audience that were not immediately obvious to me. In her study of women's religious movements in Egypt, Saba Mahmood distinguishes between 'unconscious enactment of tradition' and 'critical reflection upon tradition'. She explains that, 'insomuch as the capacity to perform a task well requires one to be able to stand back and judge the correctness and virtuosity of one's performance, a certain amount of self-reflection is internal to such labor' (2012 [2005]: 54). Traoré and Sangare's instructions to me suggest that women consciously recognize and define expectations for unseeing audiences.

After the four of us took our places in Yaya Bangali's son's room and turned off our flashlights, we said little to each other. I soon heard sounds I assumed came from the performance, including unfamiliar music and indistinguishable voices, perhaps the disguised voices of people I knew. The four of us in the room experienced the performance aurally and through a shared absence of sight, aspects integral to the event's design. Women learn to recognize sounds indicating an impending performance, and, over time, they listen with experience to performances from inside dark rooms. According to art historian Boureima Tiékoroni Diamitani, Komo performers use whistles to render their voices unrecognizable to women and children. He asserts that 'it is difficult to imagine the Komo only by the voice' (1999: 98–9). But, for many women, the sound of a Komo performance may dominate their sensory experience of the event. They may or may not imagine people they know performing.

As I listened to unfamiliar sounds and muffled voices in the distance, I found myself thinking about visual aspects of the multisensory performance and wishing that an ethnomusicologist were experiencing the event with me. I imagined Komo helmet masks and full-body outfits I had seen in museums or reproduced in books worn by performers – some of whom were likely to be men I knew and had interviewed. My companions, as well as other women and children witnessing the performance from inside dark rooms, probably did not have identical visual points of reference. I wondered what, if any, images of the activities outside came to their minds and how, if at all, the women variously understood the sounds they heard.

We emerged from the room around six the next morning. Later that morning I asked Massoun Traoré if she had ever imagined what the things look like that she is not allowed to see. She told me that she listens to the performance but does not envision it.²⁰ Traoré also specified that, throughout the night, she had listened to performers for suggestions or insights about our lives and well-being. She remembered one performer who, from somewhere outside, addressed women listening to the performance from behind closed doors. The performer said that women not greeted should not feel slighted because there were too many women in the courtyard for performers to greet them all individually.

Months before attending the Bangali Komo performance, I asked Komo leader Yaya Bangali about women's interactions with masqueraders they are advised not to see. He said a masquerader might pass by a house and request that a woman inside sing while the performer outside the house dances.²¹ During a separate interview, Tiédourougo Marie Ouattara told me that, even though she was born under the protection of the Ouattara Komo in Sokouraba and was authorized to see the chapter's performances, Komo activities scared her when she was a child. She remembered that, as a child, she joined other children and women who ran for cover and fell asleep inside during the performances. Ouattara also recalled that the Komo performers sometimes came to the door without opening it and talked to the women inside. She recounted a particular event when a Komo performer reprimanded her mother.²² Ouattara and her mother were inside when the performer asked the mother why she had insulted her daughter. The performer gave Ouattara's mother instructions to make amends for the misdeed.

Western Burkinabe women's descriptions of their own experiences may not align neatly with academic assessments of women's agency in terms of either men's oppression of women or women's opposition to men's power. Komo's and Kono's directives that prohibit women and children from seeing certain performances do not translate into women's and children's exclusion from such events. Women and children hear and otherwise experience the activities. They listen carefully to performances that power association leaders insist they do not see while accepting their nearby presence. Women also sometimes engage, from behind closed doors, with performers who greet them or offer advice.²³ According to Mahmood (2012 [2005]), scholars tend to equate women's agency with resistance and liberal politics, and these formulations may result in scholarly blindness to the range of women's experiences in diverse cultural and historical contexts. She explains that analysis of women's experience 'remains encumbered by the binary terms of resistance and subordination [pervasive in poststructuralist feminist theory]' (*ibid.*: 15; cf. Butler 1993; 1999). Drawing on data she collected among women in Egypt, Mahmood demonstrates that, at times, women choose to embody rather than challenge norms. Similarly, women who engage with Komo or Kono may choose to accept certain gendered practices and even contribute to their reinforcement (see also Aden 2003: 87; cf. Brett-Smith 2014: 25–30). Women do not have to resist male oppression to have agency.

²⁰Massoun Traoré, interview by the author, 20 May 2007.

²¹Yaya Bangali, interview by the author, 12 January 2007.

²²Tiédourougo Marie Ouattara, interview by the author, 13 June 2006.

²³Tiblè Traoré, interview by the author, 8 January 2012.

Women and power

Stories that circulate about individual performances and their outcomes contribute to seeing and unseeing audiences' understandings and expectations. In a place where the extent of experts' knowledge is concealed from public view instead of displayed on the wall in framed diplomas or through other public declarations of achievement, people measure the abilities of power association leaders and other experts by stories that circulate about them. People outside the organizations discuss exceptional materials experts have acquired, their successes and failures, and their competitions and collaborations.

Lamissa Bangali told me that stories about power associations and their performances impress people. What people say about a local chapter and the work it accomplishes shapes people's perceptions of the chapter's power: namely, the ability of its leader or other members to address everyday concerns and community-wide problems effectively. In one interview, Bangali emphasized the power of a renowned expert, recently deceased at the time, when he told me that the man had collected a jar of clitorises during his lifetime.²⁴ I never saw the jar. But if the renowned specialist actually collected a jar of clitorises, he likely did so at great risk and with great skill. According to Brett-Smith, people in Mali reported that the clitoris is 'the most glaringly anomalous source of female *nyàmà* [potent energy]' (2001: 133; see also Brett-Smith 2014: 40–1, 204). The organs also likely constituted an important ingredient in the renowned Burkinabe expert's work. Whatever the case, the fact that people told stories about the power-packed materials he had acquired and kept at his disposal underscored their assertions regarding the man's abilities to heal or to cause harm and the potency of female organs.

The idea that expressions of women's sexual and reproductive potency would bolster a power association's reputation seems to coincide with Karfa Coulibaly's suggestion that *cikonre* operate as a counterpart to Komo and Kono. It also resonates with stories that credit women with the founding of Komo and Kono. Power association leaders Yaya Bangali, Karfa Coulibaly, N'gartina Coulibaly and Moukanitien Traoré told me in separate interviews that women originally owned Komo or Kono but relinquished the organization and its arts to men at some unspecified moment in the past.²⁵ Each power association leader explained that, who knows how long ago, women accidentally dropped Komo or Kono power objects into a well, the depths of which they could not overcome to retrieve the objects. Men rescued the objects from the well and decided to keep them for themselves, thereby supplanting women as owners of the objects and thus as leaders (cf. Diamitani 1999: 88–92; Aden 2003: 76). N'gartina Coulibaly added that, during Kono performances, men sing, 'Women gave birth to Kono, but they cannot see it.' This verse clearly signals that, without women, Komo and Kono would not exist.

Such a foundational narrative for Komo and Kono is not specific to the two organizations. Observers elsewhere in West Africa, and in the wider world, have

²⁴Lamissa Bangali, interview by the author, 6 September 2006.

²⁵Yaya Bangali, interview by the author, 22 January 2007; Karfa Coulibaly, interview by the author, 18 April 2007; N'gartina Coulibaly, interview by the author, 27 April 2007; Moukanitien Traoré, interviews by the author, 21 May 2007 and 9 January 2012. N'gartina Coulibaly provided a more detailed version of the story.

documented similar stories of men taking over masks from women along with the institutions that sponsor the masks (for example, see Pernet 1982: 45–6; Tonkin 1983: 169; Cole 2010: 122; see also Bamberger 1974; Taussig 1999: 109–26). In a rare analysis of myths of ‘a former Rule by Women’, Joan Bamberger (1974) argues that the accounts do not necessarily reflect specific historical events but rather serve to distinguish women from men and establish male authority. Bamberger asserts that ‘the final version of woman that emerges from these myths is that she represents chaos and misrule through trickery and unbridled sexuality’, and Bamberger advocates for eradicating the myths to liberate women (1974: 280). Other versions of Komo’s and Kono’s origins also circulate, and some accounts foreground Islam (for example, see Henry 1910: 130–4; Monteil 1924: 270; Travélé 1929: 129; Diarra *et al.* 1996; Conrad 2001). But as Jack Goody (2000: 26–47; 2002) has demonstrated with myths from northern Ghana, variations in the myths’ telling may reflect the different personalities involved in and the local circumstances surrounding each telling.

In addition to identifying women as foundational owners of Komo and Kono, western Burkinabe power association leaders and other community members recognize women in their towns who have helped establish or sustain individual Komo and Kono chapters. Do Ouattara, son of a deceased Komo leader with enduring renown in the region, recalled that a woman financed the founding of his family’s Komo chapter in Sokouraba. He identified the woman as Djeleni Ouattara. He explained that she sent men in her family with money she had earned from spinning cotton to obtain Komo even though she was not permitted to see it. Significantly, Do Ouattara said that he remembered her name but not the names of the men she entrusted with obtaining and installing the chapter.²⁶ His memory of a woman financing his family’s Komo suggests that women’s contributions in at least some instances are indispensable in installing a Komo chapter, a process that people often refer to as a marriage between chapters.

Women are instrumental to the operation of Komo and Kono chapters in other ways. Women and men I interviewed reported that women serve as *bamusow* (singular: *bamuso*), titled positions within power association chapters (see also Aden 2003: 80–7). Male power association leaders and a female *bamuso* I interviewed explained that guidelines for selecting a *bamuso* and her specific responsibilities vary depending on the chapter she serves and other circumstances. A *bamuso* may inherit the position or be nominated for it. She may or may not be born under the protection of the Komo or Kono chapter she serves. When she becomes a *bamuso*, she may or may not gain authorization to see objects or performances. *Bamusow* commonly maintain grounds around the houses of the power association chapters they serve. During performances and other chapter gatherings, *bamusow* and other women sometimes also prepare food and drink for power association members and distinguished guests.²⁷

²⁶Do Ouattara, interviews by the author, 11 and 25 March 2006.

²⁷Yaya Bangali, interview by the author, 12 January 2012; Karfa Coulibaly, interview by the author, 18 April 2007; Youhali Hebié, interview by the author, 6 April 2007; Tiotio Ouattara, interview by the author, 5 August 2013; Ibrahim Traoré, interview by the author, 11 January 2012; Moukanitien Traoré, interview by the author, 9 January 2012; Tiblé Traoré, interview by the author, 8 January 2012.

Tiotio Ouattara told me that she became the *bamuso* of the Bangali Komo chapter in Sokouraba after the death of her mother, the chapter's former *bamuso*. As the chapter's *bamuso*, Tiotio Ouattara prepares rice for events the chapter hosts. She also sweeps around the Bangali Komo house. She said that she was not born under the protection of the Bangali Komo chapter and was not allowed to see Komo prior to becoming the chapter's *bamuso*. After receiving an invitation to undertake the position, she prepared offerings for the Bangali Komo chapter. On the night when she presented the offerings to the chapter, the thing she had not been allowed to see – presumably the masquerader – emerged. Tiotio Ouattara said that she stopped, looked at it, and wondered what would happen to her.²⁸ She did not say more about what exactly she saw or what happened.

It is true that men usually lead Komo and Kono chapters. However, between 2005 and 2007, several western Burkinabe power association leaders identified Koutié Barro and Sita Traoré as female leaders of Komo chapters in the region. The women acknowledged the titles when I visited them but declined to talk with me in greater detail about their roles.²⁹ Clearly, female leadership exists in Komo, but the reticence of Koutié Barro and Sita Traoré further suggests that power associations in western Burkina Faso do not operate simplistically with respect to gender. Perhaps these two leaders have been fully integrated into the association and earnestly embrace its practices of secrecy. Or perhaps they grasp the tenuousness of their involvement and desire not to draw attention to their positions.

Conclusion

When the French colonial administrator Tauxier wrote about Komo in 1927, he noted the lyrics of several Komo songs. One of the songs he recorded in print states: 'The little *sénagali* bird drinks in the courtyard of the house from the same water pot as the chicken.' The song continues: 'Why? It's because he does not have his own water pot' (1927: 285).³⁰ Offering a gloss for the song, Tauxier writes: 'This [song] means that women must sing Komo songs, the songs of their husbands, because they do not have their own Komo' (*ibid.*: 286).³¹ The French colonial administrator's interpretation signals women's participation in Komo: women (as the *sénagali*) sing because they do not have Komo (a water pot) for themselves. But could his explanation have reversed the order? If the song is indeed about men and women sharing a container filled with a life-giving substance, then could the song point to men (as the *sénagali*) who recognize the life-giving potential of women (as the chicken at home) and

²⁸Tiotio Ouattara, interview by the author, 5 August 2013.

²⁹Yaya Bangali interviews by the author 6 May 2006 and 12 January 2007; Coulibaly Karfa, interview by the author, 18 April 2007; Sita Traoré and Dramane Koné, interview by the author, 25 January 2007. I also made notes on this topic on 3 March 2007.

³⁰The original French reads: 'Le petit *sénagali* boit dans la cour de la maison dans le même canari que le poulet. Pourquoi? C'est qu'il n'a pas de canari à lui.'

³¹The original French reads: 'Cela veut dire que les femmes doivent chanter les chansons du Komo, les chansons de leurs maris, puisqu'elles n'ont pas de Komo à elles.'

men's efforts to access similar energies? In either case, the song suggests that, rather than dividing them, the shared water pot requires the *sénagali* and the chicken to come together and negotiate access to a life-giving substance.

Komo and Kono leaders are often men who manage potent matter and energies. The notion that the organizations exclude women may reflect observations that for more than a century have focused on the limits the organizations place on women's visual access to their arts. The prohibition itself seems indisputable, and women in communities of western Burkina Faso, where my research has been based since 2004, also reported experiencing it. Their statements about feeling fear at announcements of impending performances and then taking cover to avoid seeing arts they are not authorized to see resonate with other observers' writings. Yet women's experiences of the organizations and their arts were not limited to fear. Women offered different accounts of where they were and what they were doing when performances interrupted their activities. They declared an interest in listening to and experiencing Komo and Kono performances in order to gain insight into their own lives and well-being. They recalled interactions with performers from behind closed doors. Women also engaged with and supported the organizations' activities in other ways, for example by assisting with preparations for performances or seeking private consultations with Komo or Kono experts to address problems in their lives. Women allow power association leaders to enact power, demonstrating agency that neither resists that power nor is oppressed by it.

Focusing on individual women's accounts, as I have done here, allows me to 'reassemble the social' (Latour 2005) and recognize women as a critical part of Komo and Kono. Women constitute unseeing but ever-present audiences for Komo and Kono. Performers engage with rather than disregard their unseeing audiences, people who are physically present at an event and who interact with performers but who are prohibited from actually seeing something that other people can see.

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Abstract

For more than a century, observers have noted that the West African power associations known as Komo and Kono prohibit women from seeing their performances and assemblages. Reportedly fearful of seeing something they are not permitted to see, women and children run for shelter and shut the doors. Yet, in western Burkina Faso today, certain Komo and Kono chapters authorize some women to view their arts, and women who are not authorized still interact with performers during events, consult with the organizations' leaders at other times or assist power association leaders in other ways. A focus on the unseeing but ever-present audiences of Komo and Kono reconfigures our understanding of audiences. Scholars of theatre audiences in different times and places have sometimes used 'spectators' as a synonym for 'audience', implying a group of people who are physically present for an event and can see it. Unseeing audiences are physically present at a live performance and interact with performers even though they are prohibited from actually seeing the event other people can see. Shifting our focus to women as members of unseeing audiences also reveals women's varied contributions to organizations and arts that have long been framed as institutions that operate squarely within men's domains.

Résumé

Depuis plus d'un siècle, des observateurs notent que les associations de pouvoir d'Afrique de l'Ouest connues sous le nom de Komo et de Kono interdisent aux femmes de voir leurs spectacles et leurs installations. Ils rapportent que par peur de voir ce qu'ils ne sont pas autorisés à voir, les femmes et les enfants partent se réfugier en courant et s'enferment. Cependant, dans la partie occidentale du Burkina Faso, certaines branches komo et kono autorisent aujourd'hui certaines femmes à voir leurs créations artistiques, et les femmes qui n'y sont pas autorisées ont la possibilité d'interagir avec les artistes lors de manifestations culturelles, de consulter les responsables de branches à d'autres moments ou d'assister les responsables de associations de pouvoir à d'autres égards. Une analyse centrée sur les publics qui ne voient pas mais sont omniprésents reconfigure notre compréhension des publics du Komo et du Kono. Les chercheurs qui étudient les publics de théâtre à différentes périodes et en des lieux différents ont parfois utilisé le mot « spectateurs » comme synonyme de « public », laissant

entendre qu'il s'agit d'un groupe de personnes physiquement présentes à une manifestation culturelle et qui peuvent la voir. Les publics qui ne voient pas sont physiquement présents à un spectacle vivant et interagissent avec les artistes quand bien même on leur interdit de voir le spectacle que d'autres peuvent voir. Une analyse recentrée sur les femmes en tant que membres d'un public qui ne voit pas révèle également les diverses contributions que les femmes apportent à des associations et des arts depuis longtemps présentés comme s'inscrivant pleinement dans le domaine réservé des hommes.