

CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN ART: THREE HYPOTHESES

What one book said
about African art:

innovation of form

visual abstraction (anti-
naturalistic tendency)

parallel asymmetries

sculptural primacy

performance

centrality of the human
body

assemblage and profusion

what we did not say:

collaborative or client-driven

use-driven

What you said about
African art:

pattern

color and contrasts

movement in more than
one direction

authoritative

ritualistic

exaggerated elements (like
the eyes)

natural materials

textural

abstract

repetition of elements

What you said about
Diasporan art:

sense of movement

conveys moods or
emotions

human body is present

organic

mask-like

abstract

textural