My activist research centers on tall, wooden statues, called vigango, erected by the Mijikenda peoples of Kenya to commemorate men who during their lives were members of a particular secret society. Hundreds of vigango have been trafficked to the USA by a single, California based dealer who then mediated their purchase by members of the Hollywood entertainment industry. He then brokered their donation to more than 20 U.S. museums. I assume the wealthy donors colluded with him because they could deduct the appraised value of the statues on their tax returns as charitable contributions. However, I am an anthropologist, not a tax accountant, and need your help determining what the monetary advantage was for them.

Celebrities who have given vigango to museums

- Andy Warhol, Self-portrait
- Shelly Hack
- Dirk Benedict
- Linda Evans
- Gene Hackman
- Actor Powers Boothe (above) who donated Kalume’s vigango