Among the Bamana the life cycle is passed on from grandmother to grandchild. As life is said to ebb away from the aging mother, so it is said to move into the daughter’s children as a form of the aging mother’s reincarnation in her daughter’s children. When the aging mother designs and decorates the *bogolanfini*, she imbues it with her own fertility through embedding fertility symbols, so that when the daughter wraps herself in the *bogolanfini*, she is wrapped in the “nyama” of her mother, ensuring her own fertility.

This design is one in a series entitled “Crossing Boundaries” (of ethnicity and colonial borders), which sought to capture the “nyama” of all the mothers of Africa, so that when all the daughters of Africa and beyond wrap themselves in the African cloth, they become imbued with the fertility of their ancestors, ensuring the continuity of society. Consequently, the design comes in a multiplicity of ethnic and regional colours that enable identification with the (otherwise West African) Bamana people’s cloth.

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