The title of our next exhibition is not originally ours; the Jim Camp Gallery on Broadway in New York used it in 1980 for an exhibition organized by the late Franco-American artist Arman. I was so moved by this small but powerful exhibition that I bought a few fragmentary objects, one of which is in the present exhibition.

When I visited TEFAF two weeks ago, I was amazed at the number of fragments that were displayed with great fanfare, such as Roman marbles, Greek bronzes, Egyptian stuccos, and other sculptures from the ancient Near East. I was also surprised to find fragments of a rug and of paintings, drawings, Romanesque sculptures, Gothic pilasters etc. Fragments were absent only in the realm of furniture and decorative arts, whose collectors don’t know what they’re missing. One of my earliest collections, in my early teens, consisted of porcelain fragments and pieces of artifacts from around the world, given to me by my parent’s neighbours, who were Sablon antique dealers. These bits and pieces taught me a lot about geography, history, and craftsmanship. But most of all these vestiges gave me immense pleasure, because they forced me to concentrate on what was still present and gave me the freedom to imagine what was gone.

Thus Joelle and I decided to show fellow lovers of African art how “less can be more,” and selected around 30 “fragments of the sublime” from the Congo, which we hope you will come and discover with your own eyes.