



## Prestige Lime Spatula Gabaela - Papua New Guinea - 19th Century



3 840 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Other

### Description

#### Prestigious Lime Spatula Gabaela

Milne Bay Province, Massim Area, Papua New Guinea

19th century

Tortoiseshell

H. 19, L 13 cm

This prestigious lime spatula is called Gabaela or 'Nga. It can be identified by its material and its characteristic fan-like shape. Its straight, thin, short handle opens onto a finely incised crescent moon-shaped spatula. Some regions associate it with parts of the human body: the spatula is thought to represent the head, the lateral extremities refer to the arms, the junction with the handle is thought to represent the chest, and the

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handle could represent the nose, a foot or the male sexual attribute. Other regions turn the spatula upside down to see it as a pirogue: the handle would then rise like a mast.

These spatulas were not intended for absorbing lime, but were reserved for ceremonies in the south of the Aire Massim. They were sometimes carried by young women of marriageable age as part of their dowry. They could also be used as currency.

Provenance :

- Former Galerie Anthony Meyer collection.
- Former Galerie Flak collection.

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