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LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

## Estevao Soares (1914 - 1992) - African Masks, 1960



1 890 EUR

Signature : Estevao Soares (Marteleira 1914 - Lisboa 1992)

Period : 20th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting on cardboard

Width : 55 cm

Height : 70,5 cm

Depth : 0,5

### Description

A Portuguese itinerant painter, Estevão Soares embarked in 1955 on a decisive African decade (Angola, Mozambique, Belgian Congo, Southern Rhodesia, South Africa). Probably made in Angola, this painting was conceived to be shown in Africa: in 1960 Soares organized four exhibitions there, addressing primarily local audiences. African Masks bears this imprint--a pictorial "curatorial" hanging, where the mask is at once object, subject, and display device. Historically, the work stands at the crossroads of postwar modernities: debates around "primitivism," the migration of forms between ethnographic museums and galleries, and a dialogue with Portuguese Neo-Realism and geometric abstraction, echoing investigations by Dubuffet, Lam, or Brauner. Plastically, the

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modest support (cardboard), the restrained palette, and the seriality of faces build a frontal grammar that balances descriptive precision with gestural freedom. Its major interest lies in its status as a unique testimony: a rare surviving piece of a body of work conceived and exhibited in situ, it documents from within the circulation of forms and the making of the gaze at the threshold of independence movements. At once artwork and trace of exhibition, *African Masks* sheds light on a decentered Portuguese modernity and on the active role of African scenes in twentieth-century art history. A reference piece at the junction of aesthetics and history. A detailed catalogue entry is available on request