



Hemba Zoomorphic Mask



800 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Solid wood

Description

This zoomorphic mask, known as "Soko Mutu" ("the chimpanzee-man"), illustrates the great creativity of Hemba sculptors. Carved from very light wood (58gr), it presents a powerful and expressive model: a wide prognathic jaw, marked brow ridges, a half-open mouth suggesting an expression that is both threatening and parodic. The dark, cracked patina testifies to long ritual use and repeated manipulation. The Soko Mutu occupies a central place in initiation ceremonies and dances linked to secret societies, particularly within male associations. Representing the chimpanzee - an animal considered an ambiguous double of man - this mask embodied brute force, the transgression of social rules and the necessary domestication of primary instincts. Through his theatrical appearances, he reminded the initiated

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of the dangers of inhumanity and the fragility of
the balance between nature and culture.

Provenance Angevin collection before
2006 Private Collection in Nantes until
now Bibliography- So'o Masks and Hembra
Funerary Festival, Thomas D. Blakely and
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Felix, Pol Pierre Gossiaux, Manuel Jordanl,
Constantin Petridis, Zoë Stroher, Julien Volper,
Pan Yanqin. Edition Marc Leo Félix, 2016 We
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