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Yoruba Maternity - Solid Wood - Magic Charge - Nigeria - First Half Of The 20th Century



350 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Solid wood

Height : 55

Description

A carved wooden maternity statue depicting a female figure carrying a child. It embodies Yoruba aesthetics and spirituality, celebrating fertility, motherhood, and ancestral protection. Origin: Yoruba, Southwest Nigeria (Oyo or Ijebu region) Period: First half of the 20th century (circa 1900-1950) Material: Hardwood with an old patina of use Dimensions: 55 cm high Condition: Good general condition with authentic patina of ritual use The main figure: Hairstyle carved into a high and prominent sagittal crest, a major characteristic of Yoruba aesthetics Face with finely chiseled features: almond-shaped eyes with sculpted eyelids, incised pupils Triangular scarifications on the cheeks, symbols of ethnic identity and beauty Half-open mouth revealing the teeth, an expression of vitality Domed

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forehead and harmonious features according to Yoruba canons The body: Hieratic and frontal posture, an attitude of maternal dignity Stylized breasts symbolizing fertility and motherhood Body scarifications on the torso and stomach Arms holding the child at the side (less common position, giving originality to the piece) Legs slightly bent, feet firmly anchored The child: Small, carefully sculpted figure, carried on the maternal side Proportions respecting the spiritual hierarchy (small size compared to the mother) Magical charge (ase): Visible dorsal cavity containing residues of ritual substances This charge activated the spiritual power of the statue during ceremonies Evidence of authentic and prolonged cult use Elements of ritual adornment: Vegetable cords/natural fibers around the neck and waist Traces of offerings and libations over the entire surface This statue was probably used in the context of: Fertility cult: invocation to promote conception Maternal and child protection: health and longevity rituals Connection with ancestors: spiritual intermediary during ceremonies Family or community altar: object of devotion and prayers In the Yoruba tradition, these sculptures embody the principle of ase (vital force) and serve as receptacles for the benevolent spirits (orisha) protecting the family line. The sculptural treatment refined, the quality of the execution and the iconography correspond to the productions of the renowned Yoruba workshops, probably from the region of Oyo or Ijebu, major artistic centers at the beginning of the 20th century. STATE OF PRESERVATION Rich and deep patina of ancient use, testifying to a long ritual life Some natural erosions of the wood, normal for age Slight desiccation cracks without structural gravity Small localized losses of material (fingers, child's hand, mother's right foot) Dorsal magical charge preserved Original cords partly preserved For context and comparisons: LAWAL, Babatunde. The Gelede Spectacle: Art, Gender, and Social Harmony in an African Culture DREWAL, Henry John &

Margaret Thompson. Yoruba: Nine Centuries of African Art and Thought FAGG, William & John PEMBERTON. Yoruba Sculpture of West Africa