



## Ekpo Mask



2 800 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Solid wood

Height : 33

### Description

Mask from the Ekpo society of the Bini people, originating from the region of the Edo Kingdom, corresponding to present-day Edo State, southern Nigeria - 19th/early 20th century. This elegant anthropomorphic-zoomorphic mask represents the head of an antelope-man, with delicately lowered eyelids and a gaze symbolically turned towards the ground, giving the whole a deeply introspective and meditative expression. The uncovered forehead is surmounted by a light, flat-topped headdress supporting two slender antelope horns, a symbol of power and spiritual connection. Made of lightweight wood, covered with kaolin remnants and displaying a beautifully nuanced, ancient brown patina, this mask is distinguished by its remarkable lightness, an undeniable sign of great age and prolonged ritual

### Dealer

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use. Traces of internal wear attest to repeated handling during ceremonies. Worn during ritual dances of the Ekpo society, it combined human features and animal symbols to invoke protective spirits, regulate justice, and reinforce the group's moral authority. This mask has numerous points of comparison published in the literature on the arts of southern Nigeria. A very similar example is preserved and exhibited at the Dallas Museum of Art, highlighting the rarity and museum quality of this piece. Provenance: Formerly in the collection of Brent Ashabranner (1921-2016), former Deputy Director of the American Peace Corps, a major collector of tribal and Asian art, and a regular contributor to the journal Arts of Asia. We provide free shipping for each purchase in Europe (included UK and Switzerland)