



Large Ceremonial Wooden Bowl - Admiralty Islands, Papua New Guinea

2 800 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Solid wood

Diameter : 39 cm



Description

Large Ceremonial Wooden Bowl - Admiralty Islands, Papua New Guinea

Late 19th - early 20th century

Exceptional and rare ceremonial wooden bowl (feast bowl) from the Admiralty Islands (Manus Province), Bismarck Archipelago, Papua New Guinea.

This impressive object was carved from a single solid block of dense tropical hardwood (merbau / Intsia-type), and rests on three anthropomorphic supporting figures, each functioning structurally as a leg and symbolically as a protective presence. The figures are carved in a highly reductive style, with rounded heads, incised eyes, straight noses and narrow horizontal mouths.

The bowl is hemispherical, powerful in volume and perfectly balanced, reflecting its original use

Dealer

Art Classique

curiosités, art premier et Asiatique

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Bilzen 3740

in collective ceremonial and ritual contexts, likely related to feasting, social hierarchy or ancestral rites.

Condition and patina

The surface displays a deep, authentic old usage patina, with smooth wear and polish resulting from prolonged handling and ritual use. Two of the three legs show old indigenous repairs, carried out during the object's functional life.

These repairs are honest, stable and culturally consistent, and testify to the continued importance and use of the bowl within its original context.

There is no modern restoration, no reworking and no cosmetic alteration. The object remains structurally sound.

Material and craftsmanship

The hardwood used is exceptionally dense and heavy, showing fine pores, rich reddish-brown coloration and a naturally polished surface. This type of wood was specifically chosen in the Admiralty Islands for large ritual objects requiring strength and durability.

The bowl is not assembled: all elements are integral, carved from one piece, a hallmark of high-quality traditional craftsmanship.

Dimensions

Diameter of bowl (excluding figures): 39 cm

Height of bowl (excluding figures): 14.5 cm

Provenance and attribution

Region: Melanesia

Culture: Admiralty Islands, Manus Province

Date: Late 19th - early 20th century