



Anthropomorphic Baining Dance Mask - New Britain, Papua New Guinea



3 200 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Length : 175 cm

Width : 22 cm

Depth : 45 cm

Description

Rare and spectacular anthropomorphic Baining dance mask, made of tapa painted with natural pigments, originating from New Britain, Papua New Guinea. This exceptional work belongs to an extremely limited corpus of Oceanic ritual objects to have survived, as Baining masks were traditionally created for ephemeral ceremonial use.

Used during highly theatrical nocturnal rituals, often involving fire, movement, and music, such masks transformed the dancer into a powerful anthropomorphic presence, standing at the threshold between the human and spiritual worlds. Its monumental sculptural presence, bold graphic qualities, and the inherent fragility of its materials combine to create an object of striking visual intensity, both in its original ritual context

Dealer

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and as a standalone work today.

The rarity of this piece lies in its original function: very few Baining masks were preserved, and even fewer were collected under conditions ensuring authenticity and integrity.

This example was collected in situ by Didier Zanette, a recognized specialist in Oceanic art.

The mask was exhibited at the Oceanographic Museum of Monaco during the exhibition TABA NABA - Peoples of the Sea, Peoples of Art (March-September 2016), underscoring its museum-level significance and exceptional collectability.

At the crossroads of ritual art, ethnographic sculpture, and contemporary design, this Baining mask represents a major acquisition for collectors of Oceanic art, museum collections, or high-end interiors seeking a rare, powerful, and historically grounded statement piece.