



## Meeting Of Two Noh Theatre Masks - Meiji Period (1868-1912).

1 450 EUR



Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Painted wood

Width : 14 cm et 14,5 cm.

Height : 21 cm.

Depth : 9cm et 7 cm.

### Description

JAPAN - Meiji Period (1868-1912). Noh theater mask depicting the character Ko-Omote, carved from monoxide hinoki wood. Oval in shape, with a high, smooth forehead, half-closed eyes, and high eyebrows reminiscent of the Heian period (794-1185). The slightly open mouth reveals the upper row of black lacquered teeth. The hair is painted black with a center parting from which three strands of hair fall. There are chisel marks on the reverse and a seal (branded stamp). Noh theater mask depicting the character Chigusa Ayakashi, carved from monoxide hinoki wood. The Ayakashi is a vengeful male ghost, often a warlord, driven by a deep-seated grudge. He is depicted with bulging, red eyes, a wide mustache, and a wide-open mouth revealing blackened teeth. There are chisel marks on the reverse and a

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seal (branded stamp). Dimensions: 21 x 14.5 x 9 cm and 21 x 14 x 7 cm. Mounted on a single base. Dimensions with base: 21 x 33 x 13 cm.

Notes: Noh is a purely Japanese classical theater style that draws inspiration from literary and poetic themes, implicitly blending Buddhist and Shinto concepts with folk beliefs. Noh began to develop in the 14th century, drawing inspiration from another very popular theatrical form of the time called Sarugaku no Noh (monkey music).

During this period, Kan-ami and his son Zeami, actors and playwrights, established the rules of Noh that are still followed today. A Noh performance consists of three to five acts separated by comic interludes (kyogen), and can thus last several hours. An orchestra and chorus accompany the actors' performance, which combines danced pantomimes and lyrical songs.

These dramas, mostly recounting stories of war, love, and jealousy, offer two types of plays: those dealing with true stories and those featuring supernatural beings. This form of performance uses masks, considered the embodiment of the divine presence, worn only by the principal actor (shite). The Noh mask (nomen) is placed on the actor's face in such a way that the cheeks and chin remain visible; it is slightly tilted downwards.

The masks are carved from hinoki wood (Japanese cypress) and lacquered on the reverse to make them impervious to the actor's perspiration; the carved wood is then coated with a preparation called gofun (powdered oyster shell powder bound with animal glue and pigments).

After drying, the mask is polished, and the hair, eyes, mouth, and teeth are painted with India ink and pigments. At the end of the manufacturing process, an artificial "aging" effect is achieved by intentionally distressing the cord holes, eyes, and mouth in such a way as to highlight the mask's use and function without compromising its harmony and beauty; a coloring (koshoku = old color) is also applied. This process does not aim to plausibly reproduce the marks of time, but rather to evoke the timeless nature inherent in

Noh. A mask that appeared devoid of any history could not correspond to the world of Noh. Noh masks thus refer simultaneously to life, to a culture, its conventions, to theatrical characters, to sculptors, to expressions, and, of course, to a particular aesthetic.