



African Art, Primitive Art - Great Nkisi Mbumba

395 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Solid wood



Description

Old Kingdom of Loango, present-day Democratic Republic of Congo, first half of the 20th century Ancient private family collection (Aubenas, Ardèche). This object was brought back from Central Africa by an ancestor of the family and then kept by descent until today. Ancient object of power belonging to the Nkisi Mbumba tradition of the Vili people, originally from the coastal region of the ancient kingdom of Loango. This remarkable piece combines a skull with a large spherical structure entirely covered in finely woven plant basketry. The skull, carefully integrated into the composition, emerges from a circular frame made of several concentric rows of woven fibers, creating a striking contrast between the organic materials and the basketwork. Among the Vili,

Dealer

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Nkisi were receptacles for spiritual forces activated by the nganga, traditional diviners and healers. The so-called Mbumba model belongs to a particular category of power objects linked to ritual "medicines", i.e. assemblages of natural substances, animal, vegetable or mineral invested with a protective and spiritual function. The spherical structure is not simply a container, but plays a full part in the object's symbolic effectiveness. In the past, it contained the ritual charges associated with the nkisi, while the visible animal elements reinforced its power and capacity for action. These objects were used in a variety of fields relating to protection, healing, divination or the fight against harmful influences. The ensemble stands out for the quality of its basketry, which is particularly dense and regular, as well as for its strong visual presence. Over time, the materials have developed a beautiful black-brown to black patina, revealing in places the natural nuances of the fibers and bone. By its singular character, the quality of its workmanship and its ethnographic interest, this object is a remarkable testimony to the spiritual traditions developed within the ancient kingdom of Loango during the first half of the twentieth century. Condition: Wear, old cracks, small chips and accidents of use. Some localized losses to the skull. Consistent old patina. Dimensions: Height: 30 cm.