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Ceremonial Mother-of-pearl Necklace - Papua New Guinea - Jean-pierre Dutilleux Collection



8 500 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Très bon état

Description

PRESTIGIOUS CEREMONIAL NECKLACE  
MADE OF MOTHER-OF-PEARL Highlands of  
Papua New Guinea 20th  
century PROVENANCE Jean-Pierre Dutilleux  
Collection, Belgium Collected during fieldwork  
and subsequently held in a private  
collection. EXHIBITION Exhibited in Belgium as  
part of the exhibition: "Le Monde Premier" The  
item presented here can be identified in the  
photographs taken during this  
exhibition. DESCRIPTION An important,  
prestigious ceremonial ornament of circular form,  
consisting of a ring-shaped frame made of plant  
fibers entirely covered with finely carved  
mother-of-pearl plates arranged in a regular radial  
pattern. The succession of mother-of-pearl  
elements forms a continuous crown whose

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iridescent reflections create a powerful luminous effect. The natural variations in hue and transparency give the piece a particularly striking visual presence. The upper section is extended by a spectacular cascade of fine fibers forming a long, supple strand. This element adds movement to the headdress when worn and fully contributes to its ceremonial display function. One of the most remarkable aspects of this piece lies in the exceptional quality of its assembly. The mother-of-pearl plates are assembled using an extremely fine cord with an unusually silky appearance. This particularly refined craftsmanship attests to great technical mastery and clearly distinguishes this set from more ordinary examples. The balance between the geometric precision of the circle, the luster of the mother-of-pearl, and the fluidity of the suspended fibers produces a work of great formal elegance, designed to affirm the prestige and visibility of its wearer.

**ETHNOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS** In the societies of the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, mother-of-pearl ornaments occupy a central place in systems of prestige, exchange, and social representation. Worn during major ceremonies, inter-community gatherings, and displays of status, these adornments contributed to the visual construction of the wearer's authority and identity. The circular shape acts as a true staging device, amplifying the wearer's physical presence, while the long suspended fibers introduce a fundamental dynamic dimension within the context of ritual performances.

**IMPORTANCE**

- o Direct provenance from the Jean-Pierre Dutilleux collection;
- o Field collection;
- o Public exhibition documented as part of "Le Monde Premier";
- o Presence of an exhibition photograph identifying the item;
- o Exceptional quality of the mounting and bindings;
- o Remarkable use of mother-of-pearl;
- o Strong visual presence and museum-quality;
- o Excellent condition.

**CONDITION** Good overall condition. Stable and uniform structure. Some wear and irregularities consistent with the object's

age and ceremonial use. Two mother-of-pearl plaques show old damage, already visible in the photographs taken during the Le Monde Premier exhibition, attesting to the historical condition of the set. Old fibers displaying a patina consistent with the object's age. ESTIMATE EUR 6,000 - EUR 10,000 Price EUR 8,500