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## Noh Theater Mask, Polychrome Wood, Depicting The Demon Gigaku Obeshimi, Japan, 19th Century



300 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : En l'etat

Material : Painted wood

Length : dimensions : 12,3 cm x 15,7 cm

### Description

Japanese Noh\* theater mask made of polychrome wood depicting a menacing demon's face with red eyes; origin: Japan; late 19th century. This mask is in good condition. The nostrils and eyes are open, and it features horsehair for the beard and mustache. Please note: damage to the bottom and edges of the mask, missing polychrome paint, and signs of age; see photos. We have other Noh masks for sale on this site.\* Noh theater is one of the traditional styles of Japanese theater stemming from a religious and aristocratic worldview. Noh combines verse narratives with danced pantomimes. Wearing sumptuous costumes and distinctive masks (there are 138 different masks), the actors performed primarily for shoguns and samurai. Masks are used for all shite roles except for roles portraying children

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and living adult men (as opposed to ghosts).

When the shite performs without a mask, he must maintain a neutral expression, exactly as if he were wearing a mask after all. The design of Noh masks blends real and symbolic elements, their purpose being to convey information about the type of character as well as his mood. When putting on the mask, the actor symbolically sheds his own personality to assume that of the character he is about to portray. Contemplating the mask is thus part of the preparation for the role. Furthermore, due to the lighting, the mask's expression is designed to vary depending on the angle of illumination. The actor must therefore constantly adjust the angle of his head in order to position his mask in the light according to the orientation dictated by his character's mood.

Demon masks, which may have open or closed mouths, are distinguished by the highly expressive features and the golden color of the eyes. These two elements express the raw power and savagery of the supernatural beings they represent. Only female demon masks have horns; the male ones do not. Dimensions: 12.3 cm x 15.7 cm Reference: G10 261 All photos are available at: [www.antiques-delaval.com](http://www.antiques-delaval.com)