



Large Wanuma Archer's Shield, Madang Province, Papua New Guinea



2 200 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Solid wood

Width : 66 cm

Height : 115 cm

Description

Large Wanuma archer's shield (Wanuma) Madang Province, Papua New Guinea Carved and painted wood, handle made of woven plant fibers Late 19th - early 20th century Height: 115 cm Width: 66 cm This impressive war shield originates from the village of Wanuma, in Madang Province, northern Papua New Guinea, a region renowned for the quality of its ceremonial and war shields. Its elegant form, with its deeply notched upper section creating two rounded projections and its elongated pointed silhouette, is characteristic of this regional artistic tradition. The painted decoration is arranged in three distinct registers. The upper border is enriched with finely executed geometric motifs composed of red, white and dark brown diamonds and linear patterns. The broad central field retains the warm

Dealer

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natural colour of the aged wood, while the lower section is decorated with a band of undulating motifs above a dense field of white dots, creating a striking graphic composition. The shield retains its original plaited vegetal-fibre handle, exceptionally well preserved. Such original handles rarely survive on early examples and significantly enhance the integrity and historical importance of the piece. The surface displays several old impacts and signs of use consistent with actual use. These marks, particularly visible across the central field, attest to the object's history and reinforce its authenticity. Some may correspond to projectile impacts, although this cannot be stated with certainty. Because of its large size, refined painted decoration, excellent state of preservation, original handle and precise geographical attribution, this shield represents an outstanding example of the martial and artistic traditions of the Madang region. Expertised by Christian Hervé Njensi (2025). Provenance: Galerie de Chartres, March 2025.