



Fang-gabon Relic Chest Lid



3 200 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Solid wood

Length : 28 cm

Height : 28 cm

Description

Origin: Gabon Tribe: Fang Material: Wood
Dimensions: 28 cm Shipping method:
Colissimo/DHL within 24-48 hours This
magnificent sculpture depicts a Fang reliquary
head (more specifically associated with the
Ntumu subgroup), traditionally used to crown
cylindrical boxes (nsek bieri) containing the
bones of revered ancestors. Here is a detailed
description of the work from various
perspectives: 1. Structure and Morphology of the
Head General Shape: The face features clean,
geometric forms characteristic of Fang art. The
forehead is prominent, domed, and rounded,
blending harmoniously with the line of the
nose. The eyes: They are formed by metal inlays
(brass or copper) secured with circular, serrated,
or radiating elements, each featuring a central pin

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marking the pupil. This technique gives the eyes a piercing, luminous intensity that contrasts sharply with the darkness of the wood.

The Nose and Mouth: The nose is straight, slender, and elongated, while the mouth is prominent, slightly parted with full, elongated lips, and sits above a short chin.

The neck: The head extends into a long, cylindrical, and powerful neck, originally designed to be firmly planted or inserted into the opening of the bark reliquary.

2. Hairstyle and Headdress

The dorsal structure: The back of the head is dominated by a voluminous and complex hairstyle, carved with fine geometric incisions.

The pattern: The strands are meticulously arranged in herringbone patterns or symmetrical parallel striations that run down the nape of the neck into a long braid or sagittal crest characteristic of traditional Ntumu hairstyles.

3. Patina and Surface

The Patina: The object is covered with a rich, dark, glossy, and deep patina (often created using soot, palm oil, and sacrificial resins applied during rituals).

Signs of Age: The wood bears the marks of its age, with areas of wear, natural cracks, and missing sections at the lower base (the mounting tenon), attesting to its authentic ritual use and historical handling.