



Pair Of Theater Masks, From Guizhou Province, China, 19th Century



4 200 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Painted wood

Height : 21 cm

Description

A pair of theatrical masks, originating from Guizhou Province in the mountainous southwest of China, likely associated with Nuo theater, a tradition still practiced in ethnic communities such as the Dong, the Miao, the Buyi, and the Yao, where ancestral traditions endure with deep spiritual significance. They feature zoomorphic forms, with prominent foreheads decorated with circular reliefs or scales, bulging eyes, and eyebrows carved in radial patterns. The mouths, prominent and highly expressive, are carved from a single block with the cheeks, which accentuates their visual impact. Wood, with traces of black, red, and blue polychromy. Handle on the back of the mask. Provenance: Former Durand Dessert Collection Dimensions: 21 cm and 20.5 cm in height. Sold with a bronze base (see photos)

Dealer

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"Guizhou, a region of rich ethnic and geographic diversity, is one of the last bastions of traditional Nuo theater, where these masks serve an apotropaic function, that is, they protect the people during New Year's celebrations, purification ceremonies, or agricultural fertility rites. These masks were used in conjunction with specific costumes and choreographed dances, in which the performers--often local shamans or ritual specialists--embodied deities, heroes, or demons in narratives blending myth, history, and local cosmology. Pairs of masks like these may represent guardian twins, protectors, or complementary characters in a ritual dramatic scene." Sold with a certificate of authenticity and an invoice from Galerie Ocarina.* Shipping costs upon request. Shipped via DHL.