



Divination Dagger Featuring An Ancestor's Image - Iatmul - Papua New Guinea



420 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Other

Height : 37,5

Description

Divination dagger bearing the effigy of an ancestor - Iatmul - Papua New Guinea Divination dagger featuring an ancestor effigy, made of cassowary cannon bone, molded and painted clay, and Cypraea and Nassa shells. The handle is adorned with an ancestor mask modeled from clay, carefully painted, and embellished with small shell ornaments. The piece as a whole attests to the remarkable artistic skill of the Iatmul, a people settled primarily along the Sepik River in northern Papua New Guinea. These objects, associated with the ritual world and divination practices, are part of the particularly rich ceremonial tradition of Sepik societies. Among the Iatmul, depictions of ancestors play a central role in ritual objects and in conveying the relationships between the living, the dead, and

Dealer

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the spiritual world. The blade, made from the bone of a cassowary's leg, has a long, tapered shape. The cassowary, an emblematic animal of the region, holds an important place in the imagination and traditional practices of many New Guinean peoples. This piece is particularly interesting for its combination of natural materials--bone, clay, and shells--and for the presence of this sculpted ancestral figure, which lends the object great expressive power. 37.5 cm Provenance: private collection in Nièvre References: - Newton, Douglas, *Arts of the South Pacific*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1967. - Hauser-Schäublin, Brigitta, *The Sepik River: Tradition and Change in Papua New Guinea*, Museum Rietberg, Zurich. - Bühler, Alfred, *The Art of the Sepik*, Basel / Museum der Kulturen.