Finely Woven Covered Basket - Kingdom Of Kongo, 19th Century



1 600 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Rattan

Diameter : 13 cm

Height : 12.5 cm

Description

A cylindrical basket with a lid, made of plant fibers, featuring a highly intricate geometric design. The light, natural-colored fibers contrast with the dark brown background, creating a rhythmic composition of diagonals, zigzags, and offset patterns. This design extends across the entire sidewall and continues onto the lid in parallel bands.Wide, darker braided borders accentuate the base, the upper edge of the body, and the rim of the lid. The removable lid fits over the basket's raised inner rim. The interior reveals a structure composed of wider plant strips, interwoven in a checkerboard pattern. The bottom consists of a wooden disc.This piece is part of the rich basketry tradition of the Kingdom of Kongo, in the Lower Congo and Angola regions. Within this tradition, utilitarian containers became true

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works of textile art. The complexity of the patterns, the precision of the weaving, and the care taken in the finishing touches attest to the artisans' technical mastery. The literature associates these refined basketworks with prestige as well as with use by nobles and wealthy chiefs.Kongo baskets were appreciated well before they became known outside the African continent. Between 1651 and 1799, several remarkable examples found their way into European art and curiosity cabinets, notably in Ulm, Mannheim, Copenhagen, and Stuttgart. Kongo baskets also appear in 17th-century European paintings and manuscripts. The production of these refined containers made from plant fibers continued in the region until the mid- to late 19th century.The fragility of the materials and the constraints associated with their use explain the limited survival of ancient wickerwork. This example illustrates the combination of a simple form, contrasting fibers, and carefully crafted geometric ornamentation, characteristic of this tradition.Condition: good conditionPeriod: 19th century.Height: 12.5 cm.Diameter: 13 cm.