Nez Perce (shahaptians) -- Late 19th Century



32 000 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Description

Exceptional set of a bow case and quiver made of otter skin, richly decorated with polychrome glass beads -- Circa 1880-1900Remarkable Native American set consisting of a separate bow case and quiver, joined by a long shoulder strap, attributed to the Nez Perce (Nimiipuu), an Indigenous people of the Columbia Plateau in northwestern North America.The two elongated cases are made of brown hide and fur, likely from an otter, and feature rich ornamentation of polychrome glass beads, meticulously assembled into geometric patterns.The particularly intricate beaded decoration combines wide turquoise-blue bands with vertical red and white stripes, alternating with geometric triangular patterns in yellow, black, and red. Fine borders of white beads outline the contours of the decorative

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panels.The long shoulder strap, designed to be worn across the body, consists of a wide red fabric band, edged in black and accented with a narrow white piping. It is embellished with beaded panels and fur, as well as numerous pendants.Long fringes of leather and fur extend from the ends of the pouches and the shoulder strap's fasteners. Leather straps, beaded elements, and small multicolored fabric ribbons complete this particularly elaborate design, along with four bear claws arranged harmoniously along the shoulder strap.The set stands out for the richness of its decoration, the harmony of its colors, and the spectacular nature of its long fringes, reflecting the care taken in crafting these traditional accessories.The bow case and quiver form a cohesive set, characteristic of Native American craftsmanship on the Columbia Plateau in the late 19th century.Museum and Bibliographic ReferenceA set of the same type, attributed to the Nez Percé or Shahaptian people, is reproduced and described by Otis Tufton Mason in his important study:*North American Bows, Arrows, and Quivers*, published in the *Smithsonian Report for 1893*, Washington, plate XC.The illustrated specimen, from the collections of the United States National Museum, bears inventory number 29886 and was collected by Dr. Fred Kober.Mason provides a detailed description of the two separate quivers made of otter skin, their ornamentation with red, blue, green, and white glass beads, the shoulder strap edged with red flannel, and the long fur fringes.A comparison with this historical specimen, first published in 1893, is particularly interesting. It reveals close similarities in the overall design, the materials used, the arrangement of decorative elements, and the structure of the two cases.This reference constitutes an important documentary record of the typology and artisanal traditions to which this set belongs.ProvenanceFormer collection of Bernard Souteyrand (1943-2025).Origin: North America, Columbia Plateau region, Nez Percé

(Nimiipuu / Shahaptian).Period: Late 19th century, circa 1880-1900.Materials: Hide, fur (presumably otter), polychrome glass beads, textile, leather, and ribbons.Comparative bibliography: Otis Tufton Mason, *North American Bows, Arrows, and Quivers*, Smithsonian Report for 1893, plate XC, specimen from the United States National Museum, inventory no. 29886.