Anthropomorphic Folk Sculpture - Character Head - Carved Wood - Folk Art



295 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Solid wood

Description

Second half of the 19th century - 1864 France - Haute-Loire, AuvergneA moving and unique folk sculpture carved from fruitwood, depicting the head of a figure with highly stylized features, resting on a large, architecturally designed two-tiered base.This work, with its striking presence, exemplifies the freedom of expression characteristic of folk art, where the simplicity of the materials and the spontaneity of the gesture sometimes give rise to creations of remarkable intensity.The figure faces us, motionless, with an expression that is at once serious, naive, and deeply human. Its face, quadrangular in shape with rounded corners, features a high, unobstructed forehead, accentuated by a deeply incised horizontal line.The almond-shaped eyes, in which two small black glass beads are

Dealer

STUDIO ML +
Religious Art - Folk Art - Curiosities - Early Period
Mobile : 0663167866

Maussane-les-Alpilles 13520

embedded to form the pupils, are undoubtedly the most striking feature of this sculpture. They give the figure a fixed, almost unsettling gaze that seems to transcend time and establish a silent dialogue with the observer.The nose, powerful and prominent, is carved in high relief, while the mouth, merely suggested by a few horizontal incisions, remains closed in an enigmatic expression. The whole creates a unique facial expression, halfway between the naivety of a folk depiction and the solemnity of a portrait.The ears, deliberately stylized, stand out from the sides of the head. At the back, several longitudinal incisions form a carefully arranged head of hair, extending down to the base of the neck.The head rests on a massive quadrangular element, which in turn sits on a wider rectangular base. The front of the base features a panel carved in reserve and adorned with a diamond-shaped motif in relief, a geometric pattern belonging to the traditional decorative repertoire of folk art.The entire piece appears to have been carved from a single block of wood. The precision of the forms, the balance of the composition, and the absence of superfluous details lend this small work an unexpected, almost archaic monumentality.The wood retains a superb antique patina, with warm hues ranging from golden honey to reddish brown, which are particularly deep in the recesses and carved areas. The surfaces, softened and polished by time, along with the small marks and irregularities in the wood, fully contribute to the charm of this sculpture, every detail of which seems to bear the memory of its history.The lower section features a central cylindrical cavity, likely intended to accommodate a fastener or to allow the sculpture to be fitted onto a support. This feature suggests an original function as a finial, a post cap, or a furniture element, though a precise purpose cannot be definitively established.Beneath the base is a date carved into the wood: "1864." This inscription is a particularly interesting piece of evidence, allowing the work to be dated to the third quarter

of the 19th century.Beyond its ethnographic interest, this sculpture captivates with the power of its expression and the surprising modernity of its visual language. The streamlined forms, the deliberately accentuated proportions, and the geometric rendering of the face foreshadow, by nearly a century, certain formal explorations in modern sculpture.But it is above all the humanity of this small figure that captures the viewer's attention. Behind the apparent roughness of the carving and the almost childlike simplicity of the features lies a unique sensitivity--that of an anonymous artisan who, with just a few tools and a piece of wood, was able to bring to life a face whose expression remains intact more than 150 years after its creation.At once mysterious, touching, and deeply authentic, this sculpture stands as a remarkable testament to Auvergne folk art, where individual inventiveness, artisanal tradition, and human sensitivity converge in a work of rare presence.Condition: In good overall condition. Remarkable antique patina, showing signs of wear, small marks, scratches, and natural cracks in the wood. Glass inlays preserved in the eyes. Mounting hole under the base and the date "1864" preserved.Dimensions: Height: 16 cmALL SHIPMENTS ARE MADE EXCLUSIVELY VIA DHL EXPRESS.