Large Mende Helmet Mask From Sierra Leone



800 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Description

These masks are truly remarkable because they are worn and danced with by women, which is extremely rare in Africa, where this is generally the domain of men!Notice the folds at the neck; they represent folds of fat, the ideal of feminine beauty for the Mende people, and they also symbolize the abundance and fertility of the earth--and thus of women. To be able to wear them, young girls retreat into the forest for three months and, through numerous rituals, must gain weight.These masks are quite heavy because they are made of hardwood and are large in size; this one is 52 cm tall, with significant internal and external patina from age, slits on the back, and signs of wear; dating from the early 20th century or late 19th century.

Dealer

Galerie d'art Thierry Brusquet

Antiquités, art premier et curiosités, peinture contemporaine .

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