Eket Mask



900 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Solid wood

Diameter : 16 cm

Description

The Eket are a small tribe in southeastern Nigeria, neighboring the Ibibio and the Ogoni. During harvest festivals, members of the Ekpo secret society dance with these round masks. In doing so, they give thanks to their ancestors and Mother Earth for a bountiful harvest and honor their distinguished warriors.The mask shown here is a typical example of the Eket style: circular, carved from hardwood, and painted here in a yellowish-brown color. Around the face is a wide, round rim--characteristic of this type of mask--which rises toward the center in a conical shape. This rim features a star-shaped relief, . The triangular spaces between the star's rays are left in natural wood. The mask's round face, in the center, has the characteristic Eket shape: the forehead is broad and arched. In contrast, the

Dealer

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hairstyle, carved in high relief, as are the typical triangular tribal scarification above the bridge of the nose and the broadly drawn eyebrows. The lower part of the face was originally entirely yellow: it is slightly concave and curved inward. Depicted are the arched almond-shaped eyes, the small aquiline nose, and the narrow, closed mouth, tinged with reddish-brown along its lower edge. A stylistically perfect example of this type, showing signs of wear on the polychrome paint, small chips, and cracks along the back rim. Beautiful, glossy patina on the front and back. Formerly in a French collection.