



Wosera Big-Man Seat

An unusual seat with a large splayed nggwal figure carved on the back-rest. Seats of this type belong exclusively to Big Men : men with political power, wealth and direct links back to important ancestors. These Big Men are the elders, the village council and the voice of reason. The seat with a back-rest is unusual and possibly stems from the encounters with early European explorers and settlers who arrived with chairs. The large figure of the ancestral spirit is superbly rendered with the face carved in high relief jutting from the rear of the back-rest. The body is carved in a contrasting low relief. Wosera People, Middle Sepik. Wood (Alstonia ?) with remains of native and commercial paint. 53.8 x 27 x 30.5 cm. Early to mid 20th century.

Literature:

Pub. : Meyer, Anthony JP : OCEANIC ART / OZEANISCHE KUNST / ART OCEANIEN. Könemann Verlag, Köln. 1995, Fig. 305, p. 278