



Tapa Dance Apron

An extremely rare and fine tapa cloth from the nsaguo dance costume. The double motif is quite rare on a single piece of tapa. These panels were used as loin-cloths by the main dancers wearing the huge nsaguo coif. The design elements on this piece seem to be anthropomorphic which is not unusual and the lower one seems to represent a vulva. Jupna River Valley, Finistere Mountains, Huon Peninsula, PNG, Melanesia. Tapa (probably Mangrove tree) and traditional pigments. 86 x 43 cm. Late 19th to early 20th century.

Literature:

See two other examples from the Wirz collection in Meyer 1998 fig. 9 and 10 (miss-catalogued as New Britain).

Ref. :

Meyer, Anthony JP.: TAPA – Bark cloth of Oceania. Catalogue d'exposition. Galerie Meyer, Paris. 1998. Text by Pascal Cusenier.

Schmitz, Carl A.: ZUR ETHNOGRAPHIE DES JUPNA-TALES IM NORDOSTEN VON NEUGUINEA in ACTA ETHNOGRAPICA. Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae. Tomus VII, Fasciculi 3-4, Budapest 1958.

Peter Mesenhöller und Oliver Lueb (Eds.) Made in Oceania: Tapa – Kunst und Lebenswelten | Art and Social Landscapes. RAUTENSTRAUCH-JOEST-MUSEUM, Köln, 2014