



Santa Cruz Islands Tevau Feather Money

A small Bride-Price money-role or tevau composed of a long composite band of banana fiber covered with thousands of red feathers of the myzomela cardinalis bird (up to sixty thousand are used to make a complete teau in traditional times). It is rolled on two bark cylinders with attached seed, and shell pendants. The center of the long band is not indicated on the reverse. Santa Cruz Islands, Para-Polynesia. 64,5 x 30 x 6 (as photographed) cm. 20th century.

Rolls of feathered bands from Santa Cruz Islands in the southeastern Solomons are truly the most beautiful and unusual currencies. Called tevau they are made of feathers from the scarlet Honeyeater and grey Pacific Pigeon. The feathered band is rolled on two bark cylinders with attached seed, and shell pendants. Tevau were used as bride price or as currency to buy pigs, canoes, taro root and labor.

Literature:

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