



### **Tami Headrest Konietzko/Bretschnieder**

A very fine and early headrest supported by two kneeling female, balum or kami, ancestor figures. This example was definitely collected in the early colonial period at a time when European influence was limited. The overall workmanship is refined and the composition well balanced with the two massive, caryatide figures supporting the large oval plateau with their heads.

Apart from their generic name the ancestral figures also have their own individual names, which are related to the family group to which they belong. Headrests were a status symbol but also had a practical use protecting the elaborate hair arrangements from being crushed in sleep.

Tami Area, Huon Gulf, PNG, Melanesia. Hard wood (quila), lime and red and black pigment with a patina of age and light wear.

15 x 13 x 8 cm.

19th century.

**Literature:**

See the drawing of the headrest by Lore Kegel

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