Finch & Co



PAPUA NEW GUINEA EAST SEPIK MADANG PROVINCE COASTAL REGION AMULETIC MINIATURE MASK

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TRACES OF LIME, THE EARS PIERCED FOR SHELL ATTACHMENTS
LATE 19TH – EARLY 20TH CENTURY
SIZE: 14CM LONG, 8CM WIDE, 4.5CM DEEP – 5½ INS LONG, 3 INS WIDE, 1¾ INS DEEP

LITERATURE

THE SEPIK RIVER WINDS OVER ROUGHLY 1100 KILOMETRES DOWN TO THE COAST WITH 8 DIFFERENT TRIBUTARIES JOINING THE MAIN RIVER THAT FLOWS DOWN FROM THE CENTRAL AND COASTAL MOUNTAIN RANGES. HARD WOOD SCULPTURE FROM THE AREAS OF THE MIDDLE AND LOWER SEPIK, AND THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER, ARE CONSIDERED TO BE THE PRIME ARTISTIC EXPRESSION OF THE REGION SURPASSING ALL OTHERS.
THESE MINIATURE AMULETIC MASKS WERE OFTEN USED TO DECORATE BUSH STRING BAGS KNOWN AS 'BILUMS', WHICH MEN USED TO CARRY PERSONAL ORNAMENTS, MAGICAL SUBSTANCES AND BETEL CHEWING EQUIPMENT.