Finch & Co



PAPUA NEW GUINEA HUON GULF SIASSI LARGE CARVED WOODEN CEREMONIAL FOOD BOWL

A PAPUA NEW GUINEA HUON GULF SIASSI LARGE CARVED WOODEN CEREMONIAL FOOD BOWL IN THE TAMI STYLE WITH ENGRAVED RELIEF DESIGNS

MID 20TH CENTURY

SIZE: 16.5CM HIGH, 68.5CM LONG, 48CM WIDE – 6½ INS HIGH, 27 INS LONG, 19 INS WIDE

LITERATURE

ONE OF THE MOST CHARACTERISTIC TYPES OF TAMI STYLE OBJECT ARE THE WOODEN BOWLS THAT ARE MADE ON THE SIASSI ISLANDS FOR TRADE AND LOCAL PURPOSES AND THAT ARE USED AS COMMODITIES IN A TRADE NETWORK THAT LINKS THE SIASSI WITH MAINLAND NEW GUINEA AND NEW BRITAIN.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE OUTBOARD MOTOR STIMULATED TRADE ACTIVITIES AND THE PRODUCTION OF WOODEN BOWLS, BUT WHEN CANOES WERE DEPENDENT ON THE WINDS TO RETURN HOME, SIASSI TRADERS COULD STAY FOR MONTHS IN NEW BRITAIN WAITING FOR THE WIND TO TURN, AND IN THE MEANTIME THEY WOULD CARVE BOWLS TO EARN A LIVING.

THE LUTHERAN MISSION SENT TAMI MISSIONARIES TO SIASSI IN THE HOPE OF CONVERTING THE PEOPLE AND WHILST THEY STAYED IN SIASSI THE TAMI CARVED BOWLS FOR EXTRA INCOME AND CONSEQUENTLY ALSO TAUGHT THE SIASSI HOW TO MAKE TAMI STYLE WOODEN BOWLS.

NEW MARKETS APPEARED IN THE FORM OF WESTERN TOURISM IN THE 1960'S AND ALSO INFLUENCED THE APPEARANCE OF SIASSI CARVINGS. HOWEVER THE BOWLS WERE, AND STILL ARE, ECONOMICALLY IMPORTANT AS THEY PROVIDE THE CARVERS WITH AN EXTRA INCOME AS WELL AS BEING USED DURING CEREMONIAL VILLAGE FEASTS AND BEING AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE TRADITIONAL BRIDE PRICE.