



Antique African Mask - Tribal Art - Dan Race Mask "gunye Ge" - Ivory Coast



195 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Solid wood

<https://www.proantic.com/en/1512015-antique-african-mask-tribal-art-dan-race-mask-quotgunye-gequot-ivory-coast.html>

Description

First half of the 20th century Ivory Coast / Liberia
Private collection - France, collected in Ivory Coast between the 1930s and 1950s
Originating from the ritual traditions of the Dan people, this ancient running mask is a rare witness to initiation competitions where speed and agility were put to the test under the gaze of elders. A ritual running mask: Gunyeya (Gunye ge) Dan
Gunyeya masks, also called "happy masks," were worn by young men during ritual races, organized under the supervision of elders and members of the Poro initiation society. These races were intended to test the endurance and skill of future members of the community, while strengthening social cohesion. Unlike the Zakpai ge, which had a more disciplinary and health-related function, the Gunye ge were associated with athletic

Dealer

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performances and public displays of agility and speed. Stylistic and ethnographic characteristics

Carved from light wood, this mask has a deep patina of use, revealing its use in a ceremonial context. The widely perforated circular eyes are a key feature of running masks, providing the wearer with optimal vision while running. The face, with its clean and minimalist aesthetic, is marked by:

- o A domed forehead, a distinctive element of Dan art, often associated with wisdom and knowledge.
- o A prominent, angular nose, reinforcing the facial structure.
- o A raised mouth, once decorated with red pigments, of which partial traces remain, testifying to the mask's ancient polychromy and its prolonged use.

Around the mask, the border of braided fibers, decorated with cowrie shells, testifies to its ritual importance. Cowrie shells, in West Africa, symbolize prosperity, fertility and spiritual protection, thus underlining the value of this mask within the community. An authentic piece with proven ritual use

The pronounced wear of the patina and the visible traces of use confirm its antiquity and real use, unlike contemporary productions intended for the art market. This mask was worn and handled during ritual ceremonies, reinforcing its ethnographic and historical interest. Condition and conservation

- o Traditional wear, consistent with its antiquity and ritual use.
- o Beautiful black patina, with marks of time on the contours and the mouth.
- o Traces of red pigments on the mouth, with slight losses due to time and ritual use.
- o Original braided fibers, presence of some period cowries.

Dimensions
Height: 24 cm Delivery via DHL Express only!