



Shrine Figure (Ikenga)

Date

not dated

Primary Maker

Nigeria, Igbo people

Medium

wood

Description

This distinctive small ikenga, or personal shrine, from the Ahoada region, are sometimes called okoba after the name of a town in the area. Okoba consist of a head emerging from a stool-like base and have, instead of horns, wing-like extrusions rising on either side of the head. This example also has carved forms framing the face that are probably intended to represent, at least in

part, braided hair, but which appear as profile human figures when the object is viewed frontally. In spite of its unusual form, this okoba served the same purpose as a regular ikenga as a shrine belonging to an individual man, to which he could pray for assistance in any undertaking.

Dimensions

Overall: 7 3/8 x 6 x 4 5/8 in. (18.7 x 15.2 x 11.7 cm)