



Ceremonial Bowl

Date
1931

Primary Maker
Artist Unknown

Medium
wood, paint and nautilus or conus shell

Description
The carvers of Owa Riki are famous for their large ritual bowls, like this one in the form of a bonito canoe. Personal bowls such as this and larger communal bowls are used in commemorative feasts honoring selected deceased relatives and personal tutelary deities. The inlay comes from either the nautilus shell or the conus shell, depending on the thickness. It is held in place by putty made from oily local fruit. The bowl is painted with a resin-based black stain. The patron cannot pay the carver in currency because that would offend the tutelary deity to whom the bowl will be dedicated. The larger communal bowls are kept in canoe houses with the sacred bonito canoes.

Dimensions
Overall: 13 5/8 x 33 3/8 x 5 in. (34.6 x 84.8 x 12.7 cm)