



Male Figure

Date

not dated

Primary Maker

Luba people

Medium

wood and stain

Description

Most Luba figures are female because women are stronger spiritually and better able to safely contain in their bodies even the spirits of powerful male ancestors. Women are considered to be superior in matters of the spirit and, at least in the past, were more likely to be diviners than were men. In matters of real life, however, it is men who are chiefs and warriors or hunters. In peripheral Luba areas, male ancestors are revered in their actual male form. This figure appears to be in the style of the Hemba, a people to the east of the Luba core area who, although matrilineal unlike the Luba proper, emphasize male ancestor figures in their sculpture. Their figures are not portraits of specific ancestors but are generic figures with idealized male attributes. The spear is a sign of a hunter or a chief. Luba related people east of the core area sometimes depict the Luba culture hero, Mbidi Kiluwe as a hunting spirit.

Dimensions

Overall: 18 1/2 x 6 1/2 x 6 5/8 in. (47 x 16.5 x 16.8 cm)