



## Shield (Klebit Bok)

### Date

late 19th to early 20th century

### Primary Maker

Kayan Dayak people

### Medium

wood and paint

### Description

Kayan shields are typically painted in red, black, and white, with three images of fearsome, round eyed, fanged demons (antu) squatting in a posture described as “displayed monster.” The shields were used in headhunting raids and in the ceremonies celebrating a successful raid. The staring, displayed antu are believed to be both protective to the shield bearers and dangerous to their enemies. The tendrils that surround the figures may, in addition to being decorative filling devices, refer to the longhaired bodies of the demons as described in mythology. Other Dayak, neighbors of the Kayan, actually attach real hair to areas of the shields. The Kayan also paint these glaring images on the facades of mortuary houses to protect the body within from tomb robbers and from more spiritual dangers.

### Dimensions

Overall: 52 1/4 x 11 5/8 x 2 1/4 in. (132.7 x 29.5 x 5.7 cm)