



Face Mask (Akuma)

Date

not dated

Primary Maker

Jukun people

Medium

wood and stain

Description

The Jukun are best known for being the only ethnic group in the Benue River area to have formed a centralized state in the seventeenth century. Akuma cult masks are found in pairs with the male masks made of wood and the female masks of netted fiber. The male Akuma mask is worn at an angle above the top of the dancer's head. It seems to be a part of a very widespread West African tradition of using horizontal, horned masks in an anti-witchcraft capacity. In addition, for the Jukun, Akuma masks are used in connection with harvest celebrations. An unusual feature of this mask is its third horn; most Akuma masks only have two.

Dimensions

Overall: 26 3/8 x 12 3/4 x 8 1/8 in. (67 x 32.4 x 20.6 cm)