



BEMBE HELMET MASK

\$8,680

c. 1900 • Democratic Republic of Congo • Paint, Wood • Collection #CAA0963

W: 6.5" D: 9.5" H: 12.5"

This 20th-century Bembe helmet mask would have been worn by an adolescent boy as he completed a prolonged initiation process designed to foster strength and courage. Made of painted, hand-carved wood, this haunting example depicts an otherworldly face with an oversized mouth and eyes that recall the features of an owl. Symbolizing a boy's death as a child and rebirth as a man, the mask was worn in a ceremony that celebrated the initiate's return to village life and marked this important transition into adulthood.



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