



Mask

Date

20th Century

Primary Maker

Bena Biombo

Medium

Wood, paint and feather

Description

Bena Biombo Helmet Mask, Zaire. Wood, polychromed, red, white and black. Half-closed, heavily lidded and protruding eyes with rectangular holes pierced beneath each. Eyebrows arch over, and encircle the eyes, extending around the face to create the edges of a flat plane from which the narrow elongated nose and geometric mouth are elevated. Incised geometric designs across the cheeks and chin indicate scarification. A diamond-shaped pendant bridges the nose and connects to the tight-fitting cap atop the head. Cap repeats the

geometric triangular pattern found on the cheeks and chin, and is crowned by three tube-like protuberances. A woven support of reed encases the back of the mask, to provide a secure fit for the wearer's head. A neck ruffle of grass extends from the back of the meshed reed around to the front of the mask. Formerly in the collection of Jan Baum and Iris Silverman.

Dimensions

Overall: 15 1/2 x 12 x 5 7/8 in. (39.4 x 30.5 x 14.9 cm)