



Seated Maternity Figure

Date

early to mid 20th Century

Primary Maker

Yoruba

Medium

Wood and pigment

Description

Although most humanesque figures represent the Shango and other Orisha deities of the Yoruba religion, some figures depict figures in the natural world. Typically natural world figures are carved with large heads, bulging eyes, flat and protruding mouths, and stylized ears. The heads are typically enlarged and sometimes conical to emphasize the importance of the head in Yoruba religion. Many cults exist within Yoruba territory and some sculptures of natural life may be attributed to such cults, such as the Gẹ̀lẹ̀dẹ̀ belief which pays homage and tribute

to elderly women, typically carving sculptures of such people. The most common cult of the Yoruba is the twin cult, called the Ibeji. The rich blue pigment on the elaborate coiffure is symbolic of the Yoruba ideal of composure.

Dimensions

14 5/8 × 4 1/4 × 6 in. (37.1 × 10.8 × 15.2 cm)