



## Dance Axe

### Date

early to mid 20th Century

### Medium

Wood, metal, wicker and marsupial fur

### Description

Dark brown wooden axe collected from Mount Hagen in the Southern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea. The object dates from early to mid-20th Century. The axe has a smooth reddish-brown handle. There is a large silver metal blade on one end and a smaller wooden blade on the opposite end. Between these two blades and holding these blades is thick woven wicker. Attached to the surface of a portion of the wicker is a band of blackish brown marsupial fur, possibly Cus Cus. This fur band is behind the silver blade. Axes were often used for just their practical applications and often favored in war combat. However some axes, such as the one presented here,

were used for ritual practice. A dance axe was crafted and given to a young bachelor to use during a dance ritual. These types of axes were then used in bride price exchange. In the Mt. Hagen area the bride price axe was much larger than normal axes and their long thin handle made for better use in ceremonial ritual.

### Dimensions

23 5/8 × 18 3/8 × 2 1/4 in. (60 × 46.7 × 5.7 cm)