



Nose Ornament (Bipane)

Date

mid 20th Century

Primary Maker

Asmat

Medium

Cymbium shell and beeswax

Description

Nose ornament collected from the Asmat people in the Papua Province of Indonesia. The Asmat are well known for their elaborate body ornamentation and the bipane is one of the most typical forms of adornment among males in the tribe. The bipane is meticulously carved out of shell with each curved end representing the tusk of a boar or tail of a cuscus. The adornment of the bipane symbolically represents a well and successful hunt. The piece is worn through a hole pierced through the nasal septum and hangs down around the mouth, simulating the look of tusks. This accessory appears often in other carved art forms by the Asmat as a shorthand reference to the men who wear it.

Dimensions

2 1/8 × 2 1/8 × 1/4 in. (5.4 × 5.4 × 0.6 cm)