



Necklace Currency in Package

Date

mid 20th Century

Medium

Kina shell (*pinctada maxima*), bark cloth and leaf, fiber and raffia

Description

This currency package was collected in the Highland area of Papua New Guinea and dates back to the mid-20th

Century. The package consists of and iridescent white kina shell necklace with a woven dark red neck band inside a presentation package. The package consists of dark brown bark cloth and raffia stitches and thread. Kina shell necklaces are highly prized throughout Papua New Guinea. They can function as everyday adornments or as valuable currency and exchange items. Those that are worn as adornments are similar to this piece in that they are small and they lack the red pearlized coloring that attributes value to the kina. The process of creating such a pendant is quite time consuming and involves various tools. The small holes that adorn the upper lip of this example were made with a drill. The two large holes at each side were at one time strung with a fibrous string so that the pendant could be worn around the neck.

Dimensions

8 × 7 1/2 × 1 1/2 in. (20.3 × 19.1 × 3.8 cm)