



Necklace Currency (Bagi)

Date

20th Century

Medium

Spondylus shell, oyster shell, seed and fiber

Description

This object is a piece of shell currency (Bagi) in the form of a necklace from Misima Island in Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea, and it dates to the 20th century. Made of a long string of rare and precious shells, these highly valued necklaces are an important component of the circular kula trade system. Vibrant color, length, age, and quality of the carved and smoothed shells add to the worth of each strand. Traditionally the strands are worn by women whose strides are accentuated by the sound of the dangling shells.

Dimensions

81 in. (205.7 cm)