



Flute Stopper (Wusear)

Date

late 20th Century

Primary Maker

Biwat

Medium

Wood, feather, fiber, shell, (turtle shell?) and possibly copper

Description

Flute Stopper also known as a wusear from the Biwat people in the Lower Sepik River region, East Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea, Melanesia. This piece dates back to the late 20th century. This flute stopper was carved out of dark wood into a figure wearing a mask attached to a feather and fiber headdress. This figure also has arms, legs and male genitalia. The features on the oval shaped mask consist of downward narrow mother-of-

pearl shell eyes, long forehead, large bird-like nose, small straight lips and ears. The ornaments hanging from the ears consist of rope, tortoise shell, leather and shell slices. It also has a headband before the headdress consisting of leather string woven through small white shells. The mask is perforated around the edge.

Dimensions

27 3/8 × 17 1/2 × 18 in. (69.5 × 44.5 × 45.7 cm)