



Gable Mask

Date

20th Century

Primary Maker

Abelam

Medium

Wood and paint

Description

This gable mask was collected from the Abelam people living in the Maprik area of the Prince Alexander Mountains in Papua New Guinea. It dates to the 20th century. Ceremonial yams from the Abelam people are displayed during The Yam Festival. A man's status in the community is judged by his ability to grow large yams. Yams as long as twelve feet have been recorded. The yams are often decorated with flowers, fruit, leaves, and masks that represent humans. Once the yam has reached its premium length the mask is placed and the yam then becomes a yam "man" that can symbolically take on real human traits of behavior.

Dimensions

41 × 15 × 12 1/2 in. (104.1 × 38.1 × 31.8 cm)