



Betel Nut Mortar (Dap Dap)

Date

20th Century

Medium

Wood

Description

This betel nut mortar, vernacular name known as Dap Dap, is from Papua New Guinea and dates to the 20th century. The carving of this mortar depicts back-to-back male and female figures standing on a circular base. The mortar bowl rests atop their heads. Betel nut, when mixed and chewed with lime powder, becomes a mild stimulant. Chewing betel is a special occasion ritual that occurs at weddings, funerals, births and settlements of disputes; it is present in less formal situations such as a welcoming offer to guests; and on a daily basis as it is habit forming. Beautifully decorated mortars used to crush the nut are found throughout New Guinea. Some are traded widely and some are presented as bride price.

Dimensions

11 1/4 × 2 1/2 × 1 3/4 in. (28.6 × 6.4 × 4.4 cm)