



Parrying Shield (Qauata)

Date

19th Century

Medium

Wood

Description

Used to block or deflect attack by spear, parrying shields also functioned as striking weapons. The wide blade shape represents a diving fish; the raised ridge down its center terminates into a representation of a sharp-winged frigate bird. The combination of animal and / or human representations in Solomon Islands art amplifies the power of spirit that is inseparable from nature. Additionally, qauata are reported to have the ability to deflect evil spirits away during male initiation rituals.

Dimensions

58 × 16 1/2 × 7/8 in. (147.3 × 41.9 × 2.2 cm)