

Basic Detail Report



Club

Date
late 19th Century

Primary Maker
Kanak

Medium
Wood, pigment, cloth and fiber

Description

Some of the best known clubs from New Caledonia are those that feature stylized bird heads. While these clubs were used for ceremony and prestige, this example was used for warfare. While specifics of its use are not documented, many resources note warriors and chiefs holding both spears and clubs. This club has a distinctive phallic design. Other war clubs from the area are noted to have mushroom or star shaped heads. It is suggested that clubs such as this could be used ceremonially, specifically for chiefly rites. The fiber wrapped around the base of the club likely provided a man with a better grip on the club. The most frequently used materials for this wrapping were coconut husk, cotton or pandanus. It was common for clubs to feature designs in a herringbone pattern towards the top of the club. Chunam, a lime-like material from shells and coral, was likely used to color these designs.

Dimensions

29 1/2 × 5 × 5 in. (74.9 × 12.7 × 12.7 cm)