

Basic Detail Report



Tapa Cloth (Siapo)

Date

mid 19th - early 20th Century

Primary Maker

Samoaan

Medium

Bark and pigment

Description

Siapo is the general term for tapa cloths from Samoa. Tapa cloths are found throughout the Pacific. The design and construction of Samoan tapa cloths were quite influential throughout the Pacific as siapo were traded

frequently. Siapo are made by removing a piece of tree bark and then separating bast from the bark. This bast is scrapped and beaten and eventually becomes long strips of fiber. These strips are joined together to make sections of cloth. The cloth is then decorated with traditional and local imagery. The methods used to add designs to the tapa also vary, but generally speaking, two popular methods are to hand paint designs and to transfer designs onto the cloth from a design tablet.

Dimensions

56 × 51 1/2 in. (142.2 × 130.8 cm)