

Basic Detail Report



Earrings

Date
20th Century

Primary Maker
Yao

Medium
Silver

Description

Similar to silver ornamentation among other southern Chinese minority groups, these Yao earrings were primarily reserved for festivals and other social occasions. In addition to being an indicator of wealth and social standing, silver was believed to protect one’s body and soul against maladies. Every Yao child wore a silver necklace to protect themselves from evil spirits. Silver ornaments were often decorated with auspicious symbols and motifs. The 12 spirals on these earrings date back to Neolithic Chinese pottery. Though now they are mostly employed as aesthetic motifs, they originally symbolized the never-ending cycle of life.

Dimensions

a: 5 3/4 × 3 1/2 × 3/8 in. (14.6 × 8.9 × 1 cm) b: 5 3/4 × 3 1/2 × 3/8 in. (14.6 × 8.9 × 1 cm)