



## Mask (Matua)

### Date

20th Century

### Medium

Wood, shell, plant fiber, and pigment

### Description

This vibrant mask, known as a matua, was collected from the Malagan people of New Ireland in Papua New Guinea. The inhabitants of the New Ireland are known for their elaborate visual art forms, known as malagan carvings, prepared primarily for the numerous ritual ceremonies that portray the culture's view of life progression. Similar to tatanua masks, the crest on these masks is made from either an orange or reddish-brown fiber that roughly mimics a hairstyle worn by men in mourning. The wood often comes from lime trees and is lightweight enough that it is ideal for dance masks. Sea snail shells are exclusively used for the eyes of these masks and

sometimes as ornaments decorating the remainder of the mask.

### Dimensions

30 3/4 × 22 × 17 in. (78.1 × 55.9 × 43.2 cm) Mask (Component A): 15 × 7 × 17 in. (38.1 × 17.8 × 43.2 cm) Ear panels (Components B & C): 30 3/4 × 7 1/2 × 1 in. (78.1 × 19.1 × 2.5 cm)