



## Cuirass with Neck Guard

### Date

19th to early 20th Century

### Primary Maker

I-Kiribati

### Medium

Coconut fiber, wood and human hair

### Description

The horrific wounds inflicted by shark tooth weapons were largely mitigated by the elaborate armor worn by Kiribati warriors. A full set of armor consisted of a loosely woven coconut fiber full body suit, the more densely woven coconut fiber and human hair cuirass with attached head guard on display here, and a largely ornamental helmet made from a dried porcupine fish. Given that killing a foe often involved settling a debt by paying land to the family of the deceased, heavy sets of armor ensured that most combats ended in non-fatal wounds.

### Dimensions

39 1/2 × 19 3/4 × 13 in. (100.3 × 50.2 × 33 cm)