

Basic Detail Report



Bowl

Date

18th to 19th Century

Primary Maker

Yi

Medium

Leather, lacquer, and pigment

Description

Yi polychrome bowl dating from the 18th to 19th centuries and made in the Liangshan Area of the Sichuan Province in China. The Yi people of China have created lacquer objects for up to 1,400 years. Where they live *Rhus verniciflua*, commonly called the Chinese lacquer tree, is readily available and the sap of which can be harvested and mixed with pigments to create smooth polychrome designs. There is a lot of symbolism to both the pigments used and the designs themselves: black pigment made from wood ash symbolizes nobility in Yi culture; red symbolizes bravery and yellow symbolized brightness. Though they appear geometric, the designs are stylizations of a lot of the flora, fauna and environmental conditions that Yi people would come across on a daily basis. The core material for this bowl is almost certainly leather from a yak or water buffalo hides. Wood was sometimes used as well.

Dimensions

2 3/8 × 6 in. (6 × 15.2 cm)