

19th century Lwalu Ngongo - Initiation mask, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Sold



Description

Ngongo (Initiation Mask) by the Lwalu people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The masks created are worn by masqueraders, during nighttime performances and in groups of ten, to celebrate the circumcision of the young initiates. In the past, when humans were still sacrificed during the initiation, the masked dancers were also said to pacify the spirits of victims and to obtain their assistance as intermediaries between the living and the spirit realm. Some sources state that ngongo masks are also danced to ward off misfortune during the hunt.

This is one of part of a collection purchased from the estate of a collector of original tribal artefacts.