



Stool

Date

not dated

Primary Maker

Bamana people

Medium

wood and brass tacks

Description

The powerful, abstract forms of this fine, old stool are quintessentially Bamana. The female human figure is reduced to bold, sharply angled geometric volumes, with a powerfully compacted body below massive breasts. The placement of large brass tacks on the forehead and other parts of the body including the throat is typical. The erosion of the surface, especially on the breasts, suggests the presence at one time of ritual materials. The top surface, though badly worn on the edges, still retains traces of an incised cross pattern. The Bamana initiation

societies, Jo and Gwan, most frequently mentioned as the ritual context for these stools, deal with fundamental principles of nature, the ancestors, and the fertility of crops and women.

Dimensions

Overall: 14 3/4 x 9 1/8 x 9 5/8 in. (37.5 x 23.2 x 24.4 cm)