

Basic Detail Report



Box

Date

not dated

Primary Maker

Kuba people

Medium

wood and redwood pigment

Description

The Kuba are famous for a vast array of beautifully carved prestige objects such as this lidded box, which held a supply of camwood powder that would be mixed with palm oil to form a paste used as a body cosmetic and emollient. The lavishly carved geometric patterned surfaces suggest the practice of wrapping prestige objects in woven and embroidered raffia cloth; the bulge in the middle of the front side portrays cowrie shell embroidery as seen on masks, drums and other objects used by royals and highly titled individuals. The ram's head carved in relief on the lid also identifies this as a royal box; only the nyim (king) and other royals could own sheep.

Dimensions

Overall: 3 1/2 × 9 1/2 × 5 7/8 in. (8.9 × 24.1 × 14.9 cm)