



Head

Not on display

Title/Description: Head

Born: 1900 - 1999

Measurements: h. 35 x w. 20 x d. 14 mm

Accession Number: 220

Historic Period: 20th century

Production Place: Africa

Credit Line: Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

The Baule produced sculptural works as much for aesthetic appreciation as for ritual purposes. This ivory pendant portraying a head is reminiscent of the cast gold pendants in the form of a human face. Important men and women wore pendants as hair ornaments, suspended them from necklaces, or attached them to caps. This example has a suspension loop at the base of head. The most consistent feature of Baule art and one expressed across a wide variety of objects is a kind of peaceful containment (Vogel.1997:28). Characteristically, sculpture shows downcast eyes and a mouth, carved as a closed boxy form (Ibid). The Baule continue to cherish these pendants as family heirlooms and wear them on significant occasions, such as the installation of a chief, and at receptions for local and foreign dignitaries.

The Baule' came to the territory they now occupy in the eighteenth century, an area previously the home of the Guro; traces of the original Guro style can be found in many Baule' works, especially in the mask.

Entry written for VADS website (<https://vads.ac.uk>)

Provenance

Note in the Sainsbury Centre archives suggesting the object was excavated at Kongoti Village, near M'Bayakto.

Formerly belonging to Mariange Ciolkowski, Paris.

Gift from K. J. Hewett to Robert and Lisa Sainsbury in 1962.

Donated to the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia in 1973 as part of the original gift.
