



## Miniature mask

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**Not on display**

**Title/Description:** Miniature mask

**Born:** 1850 - 1950

**Measurements:** h. 44 x w. 24 x d. 13 mm

**Accession Number:** 259

**Historic Period:** 19th Century - Late, 20th Century - Early

**Credit Line:** Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

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*Minyaki*, or *ikhoko* (carved things) are ivory miniatures which were worn on a necklet to armlet by men who had undergone the initiation rites of the Mbuya secret society. To some extent, they were protective amulets, but their main purpose was to remind the initiate of his symbolic death and rebirth into adult society and the lessons and obligations that he learned during his period of seclusion in the bush. They were generally worn on a string of red or blue glass beads.

This miniature has a beard, showing that it represents a ruler. A suspension hole is pierced across the head.

Margret Carey, 1997

Entry taken from Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection, Vol. 2: Pacific, African and Native North American Art, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997) p. 191.

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## **Provenance**

Purchased by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury from K. J. Hewett in 1971.

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

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