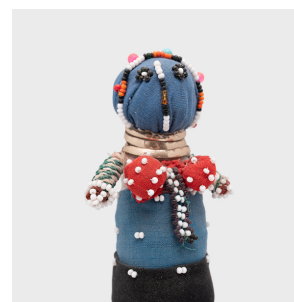

PAGODA RED



NDEBELE BEADED CEREMONIAL DOLL

\$228

c. 1950 • Cotton, Bead, Mixed Materials, Fabric • Collection #CFC555E

W: 4.5" D: 2.5" H: 15.5"

A rare imported commodity, glass beads have been a symbol of wealth and importance in south African cultures for centuries, and were exclusively distributed by the region's oba (king). As beads become gradually more accessible throughout the 19th century, they began to displace the organic materials used in traditional art and attire.

This colorful example of African beadwork is a ceremonial doll of the Ndebele people of South Africa. These dolls are made with tall, cylindrical wooden bodies, wrapped in cotton and highly decorated with various fabrics, metal rings and cascading beadwork. Continued...



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PAGODA RED

NDEBELE BEADED CEREMONIAL DOLL

Wrapped around the neck and legs are silver bangles, an old Ndebele tradition used to symbolize a woman's bond and faithfulness to her husband.

One of several dolls used in Ndebele culture to commemorate transitional phases of life, a ceremonial doll such as this is used as part of courtship traditions. To indicate that he's ready for marriage, a young man will place the doll on his partner's doorstep. If she accepts his proposal, she'll return the doll to his home.

From the collection of Frances and Gary Comer.

