

Janger dancer bust

Southeast Asian Collection

Accession Nr.: 7134 

Type: wooden sculpture; carving

Date of production: circa 1930

Place of production: Bali, Indonesia, Southeast Asia

Materials/Technique: wood, carved

Dimensions: height: 37 cm

This meticulously crafted bust depicts a Balinese janger dancer in traditional costume. The wood has been dark stained and the delicate, aestheticised design has Art Deco features. These busts became very popular in the 1930s, providing a good source of income for Balinese artists and craftsmen. After the Second World War, many Dutch and British soldiers took home such carvings as souvenirs.

While the pieces from the 1950s usually show the breast and have a more openwork decoration on the head (Indonesian: gelunga bunga mas), the earlier ones are more closed.

The janger is a dance drama created around the 1920s, largely involving young dancers. The dancers perform various welcome dances, usually divided by gender, and then follow the main performance in a circle.

