

WHAT ANIMAL DOES THIS MASK REPRESENT?

Mukenga Mask

Kuba Kingdom

Democratic Republic of the Congo

20th century

Decorated with cowrie shells and the iconic symbol of an elephant's trunk, this mask is the most important of the Kuba royal masks and emphasizes the wealth and power of the nyem (king). The elephant trunk shape on the top of this mask symbolizes an elephant's strength and majesty, representing ideal characteristics for a king to embody. This mask is performed with two other masks that show the Kuba kingdom's creation story and each person's role in Kuba society.

