

Dragon and Lion Dance Figurine

Date

ca. 1958

Medium

Paper, fiber, glass, wood

Description

Handheld "puppet" of a lion-dragon on two bamboo sticks. Lion-dragon's head is mostly pink, the body is mostly yellow with orange and teal details, and has green beard and red pompom tongue. Likely created as a souvenir celebrating Taiwanese dance traditions, the figurine on view is a hybrid form, combining the body of a dragon with the head of a lion. In Taiwan, dragons are powerful symbols of strength, nobility, protection, and good fortune. They are often associated with celestial origins and divine authority, making them enduring figures in storytelling and visual art. The lion dance, by contrast, is a vibrant and energetic performance traditionally seen during Lunar New Year celebrations, temple festivals, and grand openings. It is meant to bring good fortune and ward off evil spirits. Characterized by acrobatic stunts, rhythmic drumming, and colorful costumes, the dance highlights Taiwan's rich blend of Chinese cultural heritage and local artistry. The lion's movements are believed to drive away negative energy, and each performance serves as a captivating display of coordination and symbolism. As a tribute to this cherished tradition, miniature lion dance figurines are common souvenirs in Taiwan.

Dimensions

Overall: 14 x 14 3/4 x 3 1/16 in. (35.6 x 37.4 x 7.8 cm)