



Man's Tunic (Gbarye)

Date

ca. 1960s

Primary Maker

Artist not recorded

Medium

Cotton, indigo, alari (casava root)

Description

This gbarye or dashiki-style tunic is sleeveless, featuring front pockets that retain vestigial design elements of slits originally intended to hold reins while riding. The tunic is

constructed from aso oke strips adorned with warp stripes and warp ikat patterns. The threads are dyed with indigo and a natural magenta dye, alari, derived from cassava root. The magenta ikat patterns are prominent, a decorative style often associated with ceremonial textiles. Further embellishments include machine-embroidered knot motifs, referred to as pako (literally, "chewing stick"). The round neck opening and hem are finished with blue cotton lining, adding a refined touch. Ikat patterning, used in both men's and women's textiles, was typically reserved for ceremonial use. The magenta ikat, in particular, was a defining feature of women's marriage cloth (oparo), traditionally presented by the groom's family. However, the practice of warp ikat began to decline after the 1960s.

Dimensions

46 1/16 × 70 1/16 × 3/8 in. (117 × 178 × 1 cm)