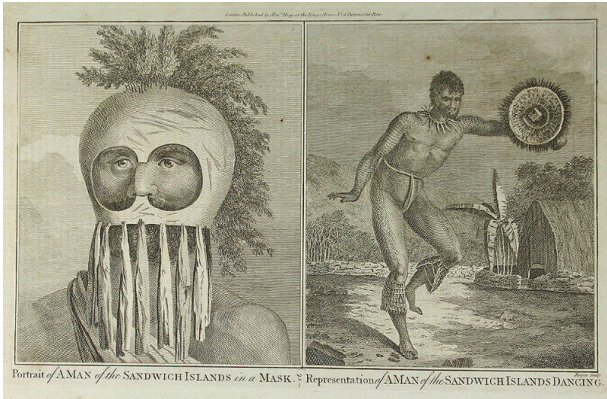


Basic Detail Report



Portrait of a Man of the Sandwich Islands in a Mask and Representation of a Man of the Sandwich Islands Dancing

Date

1784-1786

Primary Maker

Royce

Medium

engraving

Description

The man on the left wears a gourd helmet with fern fronds attached at the top. Webber sketched the portrait in Hawaii, but neither the mask nor its ceremonial usage is mentioned in any of the voyage journals. James King (English, 1750-1784), an officer who also served as editor of Cook's account of the third voyage, described it as, "... a kind of mask, made of a large gourd, with holes cut in it for the eyes and nose. The top was stuck full of small green twigs, which, at a distance, had the appearance of an elegant waving plume; and from the lower part hung narrow stripes of cloth, resembling a beard. We never saw these masks worn but twice, and both times by a number of people together in a canoe, who came to the side of the ships laughing and drolling with an air of masquerading." Webber made several sketches of a Hawaiian dancer he observed in February of 1779, but painted a watercolor for the original engraving by Thomas Cook (English, 1744-1818) and Charles Grignion (English, 1717-1810) after his return to England. As with the masked figure, the dance was described not in the voyage journals but by King: "He held in his hand an instrument [a rattle] ... some bits of sea-weed were tied round his neck; and round each leg, a piece of strong netting, about nine inches deep, on which a great number of dogs' teeth were loosely fastened, in rows. His style of dancing was entirely burlesque, and accompanied with strange grimaces, and pantomimical distortions of the face...."

Dimensions

Sheet: 9 3/4 x 14 1/4 in. (24.8 x 36.2 cm)