### Case 6-Afr-Benin-Plaque-Copper alloy-Mid-16th to 17th century

### LARGE OLD BENIN WALL PLAQUE -ROYAL PROCESSION - MUSEUM QUALITY .

**A ROYAL PROCESSION SCENE**

**NIGERIA**   
**16 in. TALL x 12 in. WIDE**

**The kingdom of Benin came to an abrupt end when the British invaded them in 1897. We also know that thin castings were made before the lucrative slave trade began. This casting is very  heavy. The rise of the very old kingdom of Ife can be traced back to the 11th century. Their bronze casting skills were well known and it was their craftsmen that, by mutual arrangement, taught the younger Kingdom of Benin the art of casting bronze by what is known as the "Lost Wax Method". The Benin kingdom was founded by the son of an Ife king in the early 14th century AD. The art of bronze casting was introduced around the year 1280. The kingdom reached its maximum size and artistic splendor in the 15th and 16th century. Following the bloody British punitive expedition to Nigeria in 1897, about three thousand brass, tusk and wooden objects were consigned to the Western world. The numerous brass heads and figures cast by Benin metal workers were created for the royal palace, where a new oba would dedicate an altar to his predecessor. The majority of everyday Benin objects were made for and associated with court ceremonies. During the British punitive expedition, more than 1,000 brass plaques were appropriated from the oba’s  palace. Dating from the 16th and 17th centuries, these plaques were secreted in a storage room. It is thought that they were nailed to palace walls and pillars as a form of decoration or as references to protocol. They show the oba in full regalia along with his nobility, warriors and Portuguese traders. The most elaborate ones display a procession of up to nine people, while others depict only fish or birds. Despite the disappearance of the Benin kingdom, the Yoruba people living on its territory continued to produce artwork inspired by   
the great royal art of Benin.**

**Almost all Benin art was created to honor the king , or Oba, who has reigned, with his ancestors, from the 15th century. Styles have changed over the years. Although similar to many older works, these are all 20th C. pieces. Each is still sculpted by hand, then cast in bronze by the lost wax process. The plaques were mounted on the walls of the Oba's Palace and record the history of the Benin kingdom. Most depict the king or warrior chiefs.  
Cast pieces are copper alloys, bronze (copper and tin) or brass (copper and zinc).The alloys are not always pure and pieces historically labeled "bronzes", often are not.**  
**This is a much sought after museum quality collectors piece.**

there is a similar one in the British museum

VALUE $ 4,500.00