

Kamluzu

(A female night mask from the Mua area)

Themes

1) Marriage, preparation & instructions

Etymology

Kamluzu means, 'the small whistle'.



Description

The mask (15 cm.) consists of a small piece of skin, on which two round eyes and long nose made of vegetable fibres have been attached. The dancer (one of the initiators) wears a man's shirt and a kilt made of tatters. She has leglets and armbands borrowed from the members of *gule wamkulu*. Women feature this character during the vigil of their *chinamwali* ceremony. **Kamluzu** dances accompanied by the *chisamba* rhythm. The main movement consists of the rotation of the pelvis followed by a sexual movement. The womenfolk sing together: "*The penis has whistled! Men make marvels! The penis has whistled!*" Through this song, the women celebrate the power of fertility, which is perceived as coming from the male organ. The organ features on the face in the disguise of a long nose. The **Kamluzu** mask is one of the visual aids women use for instructing the initiates about the prospect of marriage. The mask provides an instruction with regard to male anatomy and function. Ejaculation is compared to a faint whistle that is difficult to hear but that has a tremendous power, that of allowing a new human being to come to life.

Song

"Yaimba mluzu mbolo! Amuna achita kulaula! Yaimba mluzu mbolo!"

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Source

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