

MOM'S JOY ROOM

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CERTIFICATE OF DESCRIPTION & VALUATION

Vintage 17" Bahia Brazil Soft Cloth Doll (1940s)



MARKET VALUE

\$85 – \$175

*Based on recent comparable sales of early regional mid-century
Brazilian folk art.*

ESTIMATED WORTH

\$175 – \$300

*Reflects scarcity premium for exceptional 1940s preservation and rare
quill hand work.*



Authentic 17" Bahian Doll with Quill Hands

*"An elegant embodiment of Bahian grace,
carrying the quiet dignity and vibrant
spirit of Afro-Brazilian heritage."*

VINTAGE 17" BAHIA BRAZIL SOFT CLOTH DOLL

HISTORY

This rare 17-inch cloth doll represents one of the most culturally significant and exquisite mid-century folk art traditions of South America. Originating from Salvador, Bahia—the historical and vibrant heart of Afro-Brazilian culture—the doll depicts the "Baiana" (woman of Bahia), an iconic figure associated with the proud, entrepreneurial Afro-Brazilian women who operated street stalls selling traditional foods (like *acarajé*) in northeastern Brazil. The Baiana is closely linked to the Candomblé religious tradition—indicated by her layered dress, beads, and protective headwrap—and remains celebrated as a foundational icon of samba music and carnival culture.

Handmade during the 1940s, a period marked by a national cultural renaissance in Brazil and growing international appreciation for regional folk arts, this doll represents a high-water mark of one-of-a-kind textile creation. Rather than the simplified souvenirs of later decades, this piece demonstrates the meticulous techniques of early folk doll-makers. Crucially, it features natural quill work on the hands—a rare and intricate porcupine quill embroidery technique where natural quills are painstakingly prepared, dyed, and hand-stitched into the cloth hands to represent delicate fingers. This labor-intensive craft detail is exceptionally scarce, elevating the doll from a tourist keepsake to a museum-grade ethnographic textile artifact.

NOTABLE INFORMATION

- ◆ Size: 17 inches tall (a substantial, highly desirable early scale)
- ◆ Face & Hands: Fine black cloth face and hands, meticulously stuffed and hand-sewn
- ◆ Facial Details: Hand-painted, striking red lips and elegant expressive features

- ◆ ◆ Earrings: Hand-stitched orange earrings, echoing traditional Bahian adornment styles
- ◆ ◆ Blouse: White cotton lace blouse featuring delicate, period-appropriate vintage embroidery and collar
- ◆ ◆ Skirt: Vibrant red floral print cotton skirt, layered to match regional dress styles
- ◆ ◆ Head Wrap: Colorful, authentic purple and floral print turban head wrap
- ◆ ◆ Hands Detailing: Notable quill hands construction featuring rare hand-stitched quill finger representations

COLLECTOR'S NOTE

Authentication & Rarity: The presence of intact **quill hands** is an extraordinarily rare diagnostic feature that distinguishes this doll from typical mid-century textile souvenirs. Finding these fragile natural elements well-preserved places this piece in an elite class of Brazilian folk art. While later 1950s and 1960s tourist dolls were simplified and mass-produced, this 1940s doll represents authentic, one-of-a-kind ethnographic craft, carrying a substantial historical premium for its age, scale, and exceptional workmanship.