



## Head from a drum handle

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**Not on display**

**Title/Description:** Head from a drum handle

**Born:** 1800 - 1900

**Object Type:** Figure, Head

**Materials:** Walrus ivory

**Measurements:** h. 32 x w. 25 x d. 25 mm

**Accession Number:** 109

**Historic Period:** 19th century

**Production Place:** Alaska, North America, Point Hope (?), The Americas

**Credit Line:** Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

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This head, broken off from an extension at the back, is almost certainly the end of a handle for a drum. The circular frame of the drum would have been fixed into the recess behind the head so that the face showed just inside the rim (see Murdoch, 1892: figs. 384-5; Nelson, 1899:351). There is a double hole in the top of the head, possibly for bead pendants; small blue beads are set into the eyes.

Drums were used during dancing on ceremonial occasions and at shamanic rituals. They were beaten with a wood or ivory beater.

Steven Hooper, 1997

Entry taken from *Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection, Vol. 2: Pacific, African and Native North American Art*, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997) p. 246.

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## **Provenance**

Formerly in the collection of Dr Palmer (acquired circa 1850).

Purchased by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury from K. J. Hewett in 1957.

Donated to the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia in 1973 as part of the original gift.

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