



Miniature head

On display

Title/Description: Miniature head

Born: 1800 - 1899

Object Type: Figure, Head

Materials: Walrus ivory

Measurements: h. 29 x w. 13 x d. 15 mm

Accession Number: 117

Historic Period: 19th century

Production Place: Alaska, North America, The Americas

Credit Line: Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

This miniature carving is an example of the visual punning of which Alaskan Inuit artists were particularly fond (see Nelson, 1899: 61; Fitzhugh and Kaplan, 1982: fig. 56). One view reveals a female head with hair parted and typical chin tattoos; turned over, the neck becomes the shoulders and head of a wolf-like creature. The neck is grooved for binding. Nelson collected a related example of a head/bird from Cape Vancouver (Collins et al., 1973: fig. 94).

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. 255.

Provenance

Purchased by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury from K. J. Hewett in 1972.

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