



Bowl with legs

Not on display

Title/Description: Bowl with legs

Born: 1800 - 1850

Object Type: Bowl

Materials: Mountain-sheep horn

Measurements: h. 115 x w. 65 x d. 43 mm

Accession Number: 124

Historic Period: 19th century - Early

Production Place: North America, Northwest Coast, The Americas

Cultural Group: Haida

Credit Line: Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

This delightful bowl is a good example of the imaginative use of form and proportion which distinguishes many of the best Northwest Coast sculptures. It is as if what interested the artist were the formal properties of a sculpture, and proportion and anatomical arrangement were modified to

suit the general form of the object, whether it was a mask, mortuary post or bowl. The legs on this bowl are clearly human, but the arms and face have frog characteristics. Frogs, or, more properly, toads, appear frequently on carvings and in myths (see Jonaitis, 1986: 76).

Comparable material is scarce. The Haida of the Queen Charlotte Islands were expert horn carvers and the famous Haida anthropomorphic wood bowl in the British Museum, collected by Dixon (King, 1981: no. 49), has some features in common, but a precise attribution is not possible. The material is dark and has the general appearance of wood, but exposure to bright light shows it to be translucent and therefore made of horn. It may have served as a cup or dipper; there are deposits of oil. Two holes in the rim were for suspension cords and the eyes were probably once inlaid with abalone shell.

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. 284.

Exhibitions

'Empowering Art: Indigenous Creativity and Activism from North America's Northwest Coast', Sainsbury Centre, Norwich, 12/3/23 - 30/7/23

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.
