



Woman's ear ornament

Not on display

Title/Description: Woman's ear ornament

Born: 1800 - 1850

Object Type: Ornament

Materials: Ivory (?), Shell, Wood

Measurements: h. 51 x w. 23 x d. 23 mm

Accession Number: 195

Historic Period: 19th century - Early/Mid

Production Place: Marquesas Islands, Oceania, Pacific

Credit Line: Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

Small ear ornaments (*taiana*), often carved with tiny figures, were worn by women in each earlobe with the Conus shell cap facing forwards. This example is for the left ear, and the whale ivory section is pierced vertically near the cap for a peg to hold it firmly in place when being worn (see von den Steinen, 1928: III: BP, BR). The feet of the two figures on the shaft are chipped. Marquesan men and women wore a variety of ornaments made from wood, shell, bone, whale ivory, seeds and feathers and the men were renowned for their full body tattoo.

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. 28.

Provenance

Acquired by the Sainsbury Family in 1961. Donated to the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia in 1973 as part of the original gift.

