



## Shrunken Head (Tsantsa)

**Date**  
early 20th Century

**Primary Maker**  
Shuar

**Medium**

Human head, fiber and wood

### Description

The taking and shrinking of enemy heads is a practice of the Shuar people that has been outlawed by the Ecuadorian government since the 1940s. The heads were taken from slain warriors of neighboring tribes during periodic outbreaks of hostilities. When circumstances did not permit the taking of a human head, a substitute sloth or monkey head was acceptable. Warriors' heads were stored carefully, displayed prominently and highly revered as they conveyed the power of the deceased to the owner.

### Dimensions

5 3/8 × 7 3/8 × 10 3/4 in. (13.7 × 18.7 × 27.3 cm)