

Basic Detail Report



Model Canoe (Drua)

Date

19th Century

Medium

Wood and plant fiber

Description

Wooden canoe model with attached outrigger and two paddles. Despite knowing almost nothing about this canoe other than that it was collected in New Guinea, New

Zealand, or Fiji between 1899-1904, it appears from an extremely similar object in the collections of the Museums Victoria that this canoe is Fijian in origin. The primary counterpoint to this is that evidence of houses, masts and sails exist on other examples of Fijian canoe models, but based on the flat board over the larger hull this canoe appears to never have had these characteristic markers. The earliest Fijian model canoes in museum collections date back to the 1830s. European sailors were enthralled by the size and characteristics of these canoes. This interest was caught by word of mouth and eventually many of these canoes were made for export or to present the Fijian Commissioners at International expositions. Whether there was an antecedent for these models in Fiji is unknown.

Dimensions

A: $3 \frac{1}{4} \times 29 \frac{1}{2} \times 11 \frac{3}{8}$ in. (8.3 × 74.9 × 28.9 cm) B: $8 \frac{1}{2} \times 2 \frac{1}{2}$ in. (21.6 × 6.4 cm) C: $7 \frac{1}{8} \times 2 \frac{3}{16}$ in. (18.1 × 5.6 cm)