

# Basic Detail Report

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## Spear Thrower

### Date

mid 19th - early 20th Century

### Medium

Wood, pigment and fiber

### Description

Spear throwers aid in warfare as they extend the range of a spear. They are also effective when used within the dugout canoes of the Sepik as the movements required to launch a spear via a thrower maintain a man's balance while aboard. A spear is loaded into the hollow shaft of the thrower and is then launched at a target. The abstract bird form on this example serves as a place for a warrior to hold the spear in position with their thumb. These portions of spear throwers are often symbols representing certain clans or are symbols related to spiritual beliefs. Once the warrior's thumb is removed and the spear is launched, it will have a greater velocity and range than a spear thrown without the aid of a spear thrower.

### Dimensions

29 1/2 × 3 1/4 × 1 in. (74.9 × 8.3 × 2.5 cm)