



## Ancestor Figure (Hampatong)

### Date

c. 1930

### Primary Maker

Dayak

### Medium

Ironwood

### Description

Hampatong is a general term used to describe sculptures of various size that protect villages, fields, community spaces and other important locations from dangerous spirits and ill will. The sculptures are carved to depict ancestors or guardians and typically possess antagonistic facial features and staring eyes. This particular example is unusual as it includes a figure, likely a venerated ancestor, who is surrounded by many animals. While Dayak sculpture usually includes one or two animals, the

number of animals seen here enhances the figure's power and status within the community. This sculpture features a water buffalo, a human head, a turtle, what appears to be a crocodile, a bunch of bananas, a snake and botanical motifs around the base. The figure also has two simian-like creatures on its arms. Of particular note is that the creature depicted on the figure's outstretched arm resembles a human baby. Hampatong are carved out of ironwood. The exceptional strength of this hardwood allows the sculptures to last for centuries. As time progresses, hampatong develop grooves as the wood wears away at its softer points.

### Dimensions

67 × 48 × 30 in. (170.2 × 121.9 × 76.2 cm)