



Paddle Finial

Date

20th Century

Medium

Wood

Description

Canoe paddles with decorated anthropomorphic finial elements were used to navigate bodies of water surrounding the Sepik River. Examples with semi-similar characteristics, including the conical headdress elements, are seen in the Ramu River Delta. These figures also existed as independent charms. Despite having certain animal characteristics, these finial elements tended to represent people, most often mythological ancestors.

Dimensions

14 1/2 × 1 3/4 × 1 1/2 in. (36.8 × 4.4 × 3.8 cm)