



## Drum (Kundu)

### Date

20th Century

### Primary Maker

latmul

### Medium

Wood, raffia and pigments

### Description

This is a drum made by the latmul culture of Papua New Guinea's Middle Sepik River. Instruments were important along the Sepik as a mode of communication and for playing music on varied ceremonial occasions. The spines along one side of the drum are representative of crocodiles. The animals play a central role in the art and culture of the latmul people, as the motif is often associated with strength, power, and manhood. According to an latmul creation myth, the Earth was initially covered by an ancient ocean, and the crocodile would dive to the

bottom and bring back mud masses on its back which became an island when it surfaced. The land of the island would grow and harden, continuing to rest on the back of the crocodile. Traditionally latmul men practiced scarification to give their backs the appearance of crocodile scales.

### Dimensions

24 × 8 × 6 1/4 in. (61 × 20.3 × 15.9 cm)