

Basic Detail Report



Model Canoe

Date

20th Century

Medium

Wood and plant fiber

Description

Outrigger canoes from Wuvulu and its neighboring island of Aua are distinguished by their sleek, pointed profile and

equally sharp spurs rising vertically from both bow and stern. They are carved from breadfruit trees in multiple pieces and assembled with complex joinery rather than caulking. The smallest one-person fishing canoes are just over 10 feet, and the largest 60-foot-long vessels can carry up to twenty people. On long-distance voyages, large canoes were lashed together with their outriggers facing outwards and covered with planks and mats to create a temporary living space. Island Oceania is divided into Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia, but trade and migration have created a great deal of commonality among these cultural and geographic subregions. Despite being only 100 miles away from the coast of New Guinea, the center of Melanesian culture, most individuals on the island of Wuvulu are of Micronesian descent. Some of the earliest theories about the island's connection to Micronesia were surmised from the use of similar shark tooth weapons to those used in the Gilbert Islands. To this day the unique functional and decorative objects produced on Wuvulu show influences from both Melanesia and Micronesia.

Dimensions

a: 12 1/8 × 50 1/4 × 6 7/8 in. (30.8 × 127.6 × 17.5 cm) b: 1 3/4 × 6 3/4 in. (4.4 × 17.1 cm)