

Basic Detail Report



Drum (Damaru)

Date

19th Century

Medium

Human skull caps, silver, leather, and cloth

Description

Two-sided skull hand drums, known as damaru, are one of the many ritual objects used in the practice of Tibetan

Esoteric Buddhism. Traditionally made from two skull caps mounted in silver and capped with animal skin, damaru are played by Buddhist monks by grasping them at their narrow center, holding them aloft, and rotating them back and forth so that the beaded tassel which hangs from them swings and hits the drumhead, producing a rhythmic sound. Other forms of damaru are made of wood rather than skull caps. It is generally agreed that these instruments reached the Himalayas in the 8th century and have been a part of Tibetan Buddhist practice ever since. During meditation, damaru are believed to aid an individual in overcoming the problems they face on their path to enlightenment.

Dimensions

6 1/4 × 3 1/8 × 4 3/8 in. (15.9 × 7.9 × 11.1 cm) Strap and Tassel: 43 in. (109.2 cm)