



Mask

On display

Title/Description: Mask

Born: 1850 - 1899

Object Type: Mask

Materials: Wood

Measurements: h. 222 x w. 188 x d. 70 mm

Accession Number: 110

Historic Period: Late 19th century

Production Place: Alaska, North America, Point Hope (?), The Americas

Credit Line: Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

In 1939, Rainey and Larsen obtained a cache of some fifty masks during their archaeological research at Point Hope (Rainey, 1959:11). These had been discovered by an old woman under the floor of a dancing house which was estimated to date from the late nineteenth century. Several of those masks are similar to this example (see Meldgaard, 1960: pl. 35), which almost certainly comes from the same region.

The eyes, nostrils and mouth are pierced and the eyebrows are grooved. There is a hole made by a nail through the chin. The mask is thin and light, and the irregular features give an animated, even humorous, appearance, a quality often desired in masks for winter festivals.

Steven Hooper, 1997

Entry taken from *Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection, Vol. 2: Pacific, African and Native North American Art*, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997) pp. 252-253.

Provenance

Formerly in the Halifax Museum, Yorkshire.

Acquired by K. J. Hewett from Halifax Museum as part of an exchange in 1949.

Purchased by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury from K. J. Hewett in 1962.

Donated to the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia in 1973 as part of the original gift.
