



# Limestick

---

**Not on display**

**Title/Description:** Limestick

**Born:** 1800 - 1899

**Object Type:** Stick

**Materials:** Shell, Wood

**Measurements:** h. 689 x w. 20 x d. 20 mm

**Accession Number:** 167

**Historic Period:** 19th century

**Production Place:** Eastern region, Oceania, Pacific, Solomon Islands

**Credit Line:** Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

---

The custom of 'betel chewing' was practised widely in the Solomon Islands, and special limesticks were used for the powdered lime which was chewed with crushed areca nut and betel leaves. This example, in glossy black hardwood, has an unusually long shaft which narrows to a fine point; the finial is carved as a male figure with shell ring eyes and a distinctive quatrefoil design on top of its head. Its precise origin is not known.

Waite (1983a: 128-9) discusses a comparable example and tentatively attributes it to the San Cristobal or Guadalcanal area, from where this piece also probably originates.

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) p. 72.

---

## Exhibitions

'Power Plants: Intoxicants, Stimulants and Narcotics', Sainsbury Centre, UK, 14/09/2024-02/02/2025

---

---

## **Provenance**

Acquired by the Sainsbury Family in 1967. Donated to the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia in 1973 as part of the original gift.

---