



Seven combs (one of seven)

Not on display

Title/Description: Seven combs (one of seven)

Born: 1800 c. - 1980 c.

Object Type: Implement

Materials: Fibre, Gum, Shell, Wood

Measurements: l. 222 x w. 64 x d. 10 mm

Accession Number: 426g

Historic Period: 19th century, 20th century

Production Place: Malaita, Oceania, Pacific, Solomon Islands

Combs from the Solomon Islands are notable for their variety and colourful appearance. They were worn as hair ornaments by both men and women, and are in most cases made from slivers of wood which are shaped, bound and gummed together. Those decorated on one side with pearl shell segments set into *Parinari* 'putty nut' gum were made on San Cristobal or one of the smaller neighbouring islands. The coloured examples, bound in natural yellow and dyed red fibres, are from the interior of Malaita, whence they circulated by exchange to other parts of the group.

The three-pronged comb comes from Rennell, a 'Polynesian outlier', so called because, although it is administratively part of the Solomon Islands, it (along with several other islands in the Western Pacific) is inhabited by Polynesian peoples who are more closely related to the Samoans (see Birket-Smith, 1956).

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. 67.
