



## **Needle case as human figure**

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**Not on display**

**Title/Description:** Needle case as human figure

**Born:** 1800 c. - 1900 c.

**Object Type:** Figure

**Materials:** Walrus ivory

**Measurements:** h. 98 x w. 26 x d. 18 mm

**Accession Number:** 428

**Historic Period:** 19th century

**Production Place:** Alaska, North America, The Americas

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Sewing equipment was important to every Inuit woman and special tubular cases were used to keep the bone and ivory needles safe. Needle cases in human form are rare.

In this figure a tubular body cavity divides down each leg. Evidence of metal sawing between the legs suggests that the artist used an ancient piece of ivory. The eyes and navel are drilled, but not through to the cavity. The number 31 765 is written in black ink on the back.

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. 248.

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## **Provenance**

Acquired by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury in 1985.

Accessioned into the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia circa 1994.

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