



Kapkap ornament

On display

Title/Description: Kapkap ornament

Born: 1900 c. - 1999 c.

Measurements: h. 53 x w. 53 x d. 5 mm

Accession Number: 514

Historic Period: 20th century

Credit Line: Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

This type of ornament is generally called 'kapkap', a term deriving from a New Ireland language which is now used widely by Europeans for Melanesian ornaments of this kind. They are usually worn as neck pendants on ceremonial occasions, but also function as valuables in local exchanges.

The white disc is ground from clam shell, while the filigree overlay is made from a thin piece of turtle shell. Both are pierced through the centre for suspension or attachment. Reichard (1933) illustrates a large selection of museum specimens.

Stephan 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. 65.

Provenance

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