



Souvenir pipe

Not on display

Title/Description: Souvenir pipe

Object Type: Pipe

Materials: Walrus ivory

Measurements: l. 241 x w. 30 x d. 60 mm

Accession Number: 662

Historic Period: Late 19th century

Production Place: Alaska, North America, The Americas

Credit Line: Purchased with support from Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1976

Smoking was introduced to the Alaskan Inuit people from north-east Asia at some time in the seventeenth or eighteenth century. Wooden pipes, similar to those used by the Siberian Chukchi, were used by Inuit people, who also chewed tobacco with the nicotine which collected in the pipe stem.

Walrus ivory pipes of this kind, which imitate the form of the Siberian pipe, were not smoked but were a development of the late nineteenth century to supply the growing demand for curios by visiting Europeans. Many have pictographic engraving, though this example seems to be unfinished. The small seated figure, acting as a plug to the stem cavity, is an unusual and expressive sculpture.

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. 257.

Provenance

Purchased by the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia from K. J. Hewett in 1976 out of funds provided by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury.
