



Float Basket

Date

c. 1910

Primary Maker

Nuu-chah-nulth (Nootka)

Medium

Bear grass, cedar bark, dye, glass float probably from Japan

Description

Japanese glass fishing floats were used by fishermen to suspend nets and were known to wash up on the shores of the Northwest Coast. A talented Nootka weaver covered this float with finely woven basketry, depicting major symbols of Nuuchah-nulth (Nootka) culture. The most prominent image is the thunderbird, a supernatural

being that hunts whales. Several small Nuuchah-nulth (Nootka) canoes carrying hunters on their quest are depicted near the top of the float. Basketry floats were not used in whale hunting but rather honor the tradition. On this float, the phrase "Made in Canada" serves as a memento for travelers and tourists, while the imagery celebrates one of the defining elements of Nuuchah-nulth (Nootka) culture. Large basketry floats such as this one are very rare.

Dimensions

Overall: 12 × 12 1/2 in. (30.5 × 31.8 cm)