



## Breastplate

### Date

c. 1870

### Primary Maker

Shoshone

### Medium

Bone hair pipes, glass and metal beads, German silver, brass, wool yarn, hide thongs

### Description

Available in abundance these bone tubes were used in the creation of chest ornaments by the Plains Indians, particularly popular on the central and southern Plains. German silver ornaments hanging from the center bottom of such breastplates are often visible on pictures of southern Plains Indians. Most of these pectorals were manufactured by white traders, who probably derived the idea from Mexican horse trappings. They were referred to as "cloud shaped ornaments," often with crescents as

pendants and engraved on the front with a star-like floral design. This design is inlaid with brass on this example, reinforcing the suggestion of non-Native manufacture. Yarn tassels on strings of beads add some extra color. Feder, Norman. "Plains Indian Metalworking." *American Indian Tradition* Vol.8, no.2, (1962). Ewers, John C. "Hair Pipes in Plains Indian Adornment." *Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology. Bulletin* 164, 1957.

### Dimensions

Overall: 19 1/2 × 10 1/4 in. (49.5 × 26 cm)