



Potlatch Figure

Date

1880-1895

Primary Maker

Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl)

Medium

Red cedar, paint, iron nails

Description

This representation of an important leader or honored ancestor was prominently displayed at potlatches. These figures affirmed a chief's claims to hunting and fishing rights and his privileges to own prestigious masks and rattles. This figure wears a cedar bark headdress, a symbol of chiefly status, and holds a copper, a item of wealth. His upwardly pointing index finger may imply his elevated status.

Dimensions

Overall: 50 × 13 1/2 × 15 in. (127 × 34.3 × 38.1 cm) Overall (Mounted): 50 1/4 × 18 × 18 in. (127.6 × 45.7 × 45.7 cm)