



## Bakwas "Cockle-hunter" Mask

### Date

1870-1880

### Primary Maker

Heiltsuk (Bella Bella)

### Medium

Wood (alder -possibly), paint

### Description

Heiltsuk (Bella Bella) and Kwakiutl cultures have a mythical character, Bakwas, that represents a wild man of the woods. Sometimes translated as the “cockle hunter” in English, the name describes the creature's fond habit of scraping the beaches to find and eat the meat of sweet-tasting mollusks. The Bakwas is shy and has poor

eyesight, often entering backwards half-timidly into the dance house, peeking over his shoulders from one side to the other.

### Dimensions

Overall: 11 × 8 1/4 in. (27.9 × 21 cm)