



Rattle

Date

1840-1860

Primary Maker

Tsimshian

Medium

Alder or birch, paint, seeds, skin cords

Description

Globular rattles are associated with the practice of shamans on the Northwest Coast, and especially those from the Queen Charlotte Islands, the British Columbia mainland, and south to Vancouver Island. Their similarity to the human cranium, as a symbol of the inner spirit world, is thought to be related to the shamanic realm. These rattles have also been employed by ritualizers who function as attendants to ceremonial dancers, using the soft sound of the rattle to effect positive spirit presence and maintain calm in those dancers susceptible to spirit possession.

Dimensions

Overall: 11 × 5 1/4 × 4 1/4 in. (27.9 × 13.3 × 10.8 cm)