



Model Totem Pole

Date

1860-1880

Primary Maker

Simeon Stilthda

Medium

Wood (yew)

Description

This richly polished totem pole was likely a model for a full-sized memorial pole. At the top is a human figure, possibly a chief, in a shamanic trance or deceased, so implied by his closed eyes and the formal position of the hands upon his stomach. His feet rest upon the head of a sea lion-like figure. It may represent the shaman's

guardian spirit, via which he travels the unseen worlds. Positioned upside down, another human-like face smiles broadly, possibly representing the spirit of the deceased or entranced. At the bottom, a bear sits upright on its haunches. His human hands hold a most unusual creature against its chest. This figure has the hind legs of a frog, but the head and narrow snout suggests a small rodent such as a shrew.

Dimensions

Overall: 25 1/4 × 4 3/8 × 3 in. (64.1 × 11.1 × 7.6 cm)