Basic Detail Report



Isanuk, the Walrus Spirit (Asveq)

Date
c. 1900

Primary Maker
Central Yup'ik

Medium
Cedar wood, cedar bark, seagull feathers, old squaw duck feather and ptarmigan feather, reed, black, red, white pigment

Description
In 1900 the original collector of this mask identified it as Isanuk, the Walrus Spirit. Such identifications are rare as few stories have survived with the masks. It is only through the stories that the identity of the mask is known. The upturned mouth as well as the small black stroke between the eyes, representing the snow goggles of the hunter, identifies the inua or soul spirit of this mask, as male. McIntyre described the plume of the old-squaw duck feathers topped with ptarmigan feathers as a butterfly design. It is an old style of treating the feathers. McIntyre located several tiny holes on the masks which over the years had become compact with dirt. He cleared out the holes and added seagull feathers.

Dimensions
Overall: 14 3/4 × 6 × 7 1/2 in. (37.5 × 15.2 × 19.1 cm)