Basic Detail Report



Bag

Date
c. 1840

Primary Maker
Red River Metis

Medium
Caribou hide, glass beads, silk thread, woolen yarn, cotton

Description
This type of bag is popularly called an "octopus" bag because of the four long, fabric fingers that hang down each side at the bottom, like the eight tentacles of an octopus. They are referred to by scholars, however, as “fire bags” because they traditionally held a man’s fire-making apparatus, a flint and steel. Today they are used mainly as regalia for dances, pow-wows, or other special occasions. The fine floral quillwork, different on each side of the bag, is typical of the work done by the Metis during this period.

Dimensions
Overall: 18 1/2 × 9 1/2 in. (47 × 24.1 cm)