



### **Amulet/Applique Representing a Large Bow Head Whale**

An exceptionally fine amulet or applique representing a large Bow Head whale (*Balaena mysticetus*) as if seen from above floating on the surface of the sea. The gigantic beast is perfectly portrayed with a remarkable anatomical realism showing the correct proportions and positioning of the whale's body features. The amulet is pierced through the center of the object with a large diameter hole intended for attaching the figure to a box or a bucket with a peg. Effigies of this type can be found on the massive communal feast-bowls that are used in group ceremonies and celebrations, and on beautifully decorated freshwater buckets used in the whale hunting ceremonies when the spouse of the whaling captain pours fresh water into the whale's air vents asking it pardon for the hunt.

Saint Lawrence Island, Bering Strait, Alaska.

Punuk Culture, circa 500-1000 AD

Mineralized walrus tusk with a superb patina due to prolonged burial in the tundra.

8,9 x 3,7 x 1,4 cm

### **Literature:**

For comparison see the massive whale-fat container decorated with whale effigies : MEG Inv. ETHAM 025851 and the superb whale-hunters water-bucket : MEG Inv. ETHAM 025852 both from the Alaskan Thule culture of the 19th century now in the Musée d'Ethnographie de Genève.