



Float Plug with Tattooed Face

An very fine uaqtaq, or plug carved for an avataq, the traditional sealskin hunting float. The float is made of one complete sealskin and fitted with wooden plugs on its ends. Intermediary holes are plugged used custom carved sealing plugs made of walrus ivory and decorated with either animal or human faces. The float is attached to the harpoon point by a long line and helps to slow the animals escape and keep the prey from sinking.

This example is wonderfully carved with great attention to detail and offering a very sensitive rendition of a woman's face showing her chin tattoos.

Thule culture, Alaska/Canada. Walrus ivory (*Odobenus rosmarus divergens*) and soot with a superb patina of age and usage. Ø : 4,7 x 2 cm. 18/19th century.

Literature:

Ref.

Crossroads of continents : cultures of Siberia and Alaska. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 1988

<https://www.avataq.qc.ca/fr/>