



Model Outrigger Canoe

Date

before 1944

Medium

Wood, twine, and paint

Description

This Model Outrigger Canoe was constructed using wood, twine, and paint. It is hand-carved, with various eye-like symbols painted along its hull. This type of single outrigger canoe is known as a wa, which is a traditional form of canoe used along the coast of New Guinea. According to the Hudson Museum at the University

of Maine, model outrigger canoes were a common trade object produced by local people for foreign visitors to collect on their travels. This particular model was acquired by the donor's father, along with a Carved Lizard (2022.11.2), which is also held in the Wellin's collection, and various other objects, while he was serving in the US Navy during World War II. We know that the donor's father bartered with people from a local village to acquire these objects while he was stationed in New Guinea on September 28, 1944, because he related the news of his purchases to his wife in the US in a letter written on that date. Objects like this demonstrate how local people in places like New Guinea created objects for a market of military personnel who were looking to purchase souvenirs of their time away from home during World War II .

Dimensions

Overall: 6 1/2 × 21 × 18 in. (16.5 × 53.3 × 45.7 cm)