

# Beating Tapa

Tongatapu, Tonga, 1890s

## Tapa Manufacture by Toto'a Fagai

Western Samoa, 1980

- (a) Toto'a bites around the bark of a paper mulberry sapling to free the bark for stripping
- (b) The soft inner bark or bast is pulled away from the stiff outer bark.
- (c) Scraping the bast on a sloping board with a seashell to remove any outer bark remnants.
- (d) Beating the bast on the *tutua* or wooden anvil.
- (e) A strip of bast after beating is completed.
- (f) Rubbing the sheet on a wooden *upeti* with an arrowroot tuber. The pattern gradually emerges with the tapa cloth.
- (g) Lifting the tapa from the *upeti* with the pattern imprinted onto the cloth where it was touching the board, leaving the grooves uncolored.

## CEREMONIAL ADZE

Cook Islands, Mangaia Island

wood, basalt, coir lashing

Bishop Museum exchange, 1943 (219.1)

Mangaia is noted for its traditional production of ceremonial adzes. Each part of these adzes—the haft, basalt blade, and lashing—is an elaboration of utilitarian forms. Because they are never used for utilitarian purposes, it is thought by some scholars that the axes are symbols of Tane, the patron god of craftsmen.

## ANCESTOR FIGURE WITH SKULL

Papua New Guinea, Middle Sepik, Iatmul people  
wood, skull, shells, human hair

Gift of the Persis Corporation, 2002 (11,913.1)

The skull on this ancestor figure would have belonged to a highly respected clan member and relative. The image was believed to be inhabited by a protective spirit who, through a medium, could be called upon for advice on such things as hunting, war, or assistance in fighting off diseases. Figures with hooks at the bottom, such as this, were stored in the men's house. During special occasions, including funerary ceremonies honoring the ancestors, food and flowers were offered to the spirit and the image was decorated and displayed.

## MASK (*tapuanu*)

Federated States of Micronesia (Caroline Islands), Satawan Atoll  
Mortlock Islands

wood, lime and soot

Gift of Mrs. Thomas Litaker in memory of her husband, 1976 (4436.1)

The *tapuanu*, meaning "sacred spirit," are the only masks produced in Micronesia. They were created and cared for by members of the *poutapuanu* secret society. Used in beach side and ceremonial house dances, they represent a protective ancestor spirit. The *tapuanu* spirit was thought to safeguard the land and trees against typhoons, thus guaranteeing the continuation of the islands' main food

source.

Older masks were very large, made of heavy wood, and used as gable masks. Smaller *tapuanus* such as this one, were worn in ceremonies. The carving is simple, flat, and painted with soot and white lime. Eyes are narrow slits; the eyebrows resemble wings of a sea bird and form a "T" shape with the nose.



## DRUM (*pahu*)

Hawai'i wood,  
shark skin, sennit  
Purchase, 1932 (3464)

Large, temple drums (*pahu heiau*) were used in religious ceremonies, while the smaller *pahu* are some of the most important instruments used to accompany the hula. They are made from a mature, coconut tree trunk, hollowed at both ends.

The

drum head is covered with shark skin held taut by sennit cords.

According to legend, the *pahu* was introduced to Hawai'i centuries ago by a navigator called La'a, who brought the drum from Tahiti and instructed Hawaiians in its use. La'a is a form of the name Laka, the name for both a god or goddess of forest growth and patron or patroness of hula.

## YAM CULT FIGURE (*mindja*)

Papua New Guinea, Upper Sepik River region, Warasei people  
carved, blackened wood with earth pigment, soot, and lime  
Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Leo Fortess, 1977 (4455.1)

The inhabitants of this region are agriculturists who place great importance on the production of yams. Ceremonial activities follow the growth cycles of the yams. After the harvest, rituals are held in honor of the guardian spirits which are embodied in the yams. During the ritual cycle, called *mindja-ma*, large flat boards (*mindja*) with a human face in the center are displayed in the ceremonial house. Only men of the highest grade (those who had taken heads in battle) were allowed to create the images. The painted triangular shapes are thought to represent banana leaves and the carved loops in the lower part of board depict a snake, the head of which is visible at the bottom.

NIGHT MASK (*kavat*)

Papua New Guinea, Gazelle Peninsula, New Britain

Baining people

Bark cloth, bamboo, pigment

Purchase, 1988

Baining bark cloth masks are worn in day and night ceremonial cycles that celebrate fertility, death, and initiation. The daytime rituals commemorate the role of women in procreation, the harvest, and the deaths of villagers. Masks are ornamented with designs of plants, symbols of growth and fertility. Nighttime masks

represent spirits of the bush, which are associated with the male domain. Night dances are supervised and promoted by the men's society. At a specific age, young males are taught to make and dance with these masks for their initiation ceremonies. They are an important part of the young men's initiation and mark their entrance into a higher grade level. The *kavat* masks represent wild bush spirits and refer to such things as animals, insects, birds, trees and leaves. Large sheets of bark cloth are stretched over a bamboo framework and then painted. The masks rest on the dancer's shoulders, allowing him to see clearly through the open mouth.

## ANCESTRAL HOOK FIGURE

Papua New Guinea, Prince Alexander Mountains, Abelam people  
carved wood, earth pigments  
Purchase, Academy Volunteer Fund, 1989 (5807.1)

The Abelam and their neighbors had a special relationship with birds in their environment. Creation stories attribute the first people to the union of a man and the cassowary ancestral mother, who could transform herself into a human. The full faced, anthropomorphic features seen in this ancestral figure are associated with

the Abelam avian ancestors.

The men's house society was responsible for the initiation of young males and the continuation of the yam cults. There were eight levels of initiation, each requiring the creation of elaborate sculptures such as this hook. At the culminating celebration of a man's elevation to a higher level, the carvings were often exhibited and stacked in crowded men's house displays. Traditionally, the ancestor image would have been brightly painted and decorated with special plants. The exact ritual significance of this hook seems unclear, but the unique sculptural style featuring sets of opposing hooks extending from the body relates to the ceremonial hooks found in the neighboring Middle Sepik men's houses.

### MALANGGAN FIGURE

Bismarck Archipelago, Northern New Ireland  
carved wood with earth pigments, soot and lime  
Purchase, 1976 (4373.1)

Northern New Ireland artisans are recognized as some of the most prolific and talented in the South Pacific. The art is created for elaborate ceremonies that combine funerary rituals and boys' initiation rites. The term *malanggan* refers to both the ceremonial cycle, and the figures and carvings. Clan animals and design motifs are associated, through rights of inheritance and tradition, with the particular social group that sponsored the event. Much time, money and effort went into staging a *malanggan*. Special areas were constructed which were the center of all activities, including feasts, dances and public display of art works. When the

ceremony concluded, the area was abandoned and carvings left to rot. This *malanggan* image depicts a clan ancestor with a beard and an elaborate coiffure or headdress. It is carved from one piece of wood and painted in typical red, white and black. The white round disc on the chest is a *kapkap*, a shell ornament worn only by initiated men. The prominent animal totems on this image are stylized birds or flying fish. The figure stands on a base that probably represents a tridacna (giant clam) shell.

### CANOE PROW, SPLASH BOARD (*rajim*) AND END PANEL

(*tabuya*)

Papua New Guinea, Massim Region, probably Trobriand Islands  
wood, carved in relief  
Gift of International Market Place, 1977 (4542.1)

The *rajim*, or canoe splash board, is attached to the prow of an outrigger canoe to deflect spray. Canoes are used for fishing and everyday transport, while larger versions are made for overseas trading expeditions. The ornamentation of a trading canoe is extremely important, as "beauty" is believed to make the traders irresistible to people of the host island. Magic rituals are performed throughout the construction of a canoe, including installation of the splash board. Spells are recited to increase the canoe's speed and protect the sailors from danger. The human figure on this splash board represents the god-hero, Tokwalu, believed to live at the bottom of the sea. Used in this composition, his figure represents all of humanity. Other images included in the *rajim* are the frigate bird, squid, sea snake, unfurling fern fronds and shellfish.



## CEREMONIAL WATER DRUM

Papua New Guinea, Chambri Lakes Area

Carved wood; natural pigments, inlaid cowrie shells

Gift of Barbara Smith, 2002 (12,192.1)

Men's ceremonies often involve dramatic and secret presentations. This drum's sound replicates the voice of the ancestral crocodile spirit. It is used behind an enclosure, hidden from women, children and visitors. The drum has no membrane; it is held under the figure's head and plunged down into six inches of water. Pulling the drum straight up produces the sound. The hollow area within serves as a resonating chamber, creating a "plopping" or "belching" sound when the suction bubble collapses.

### SPIRIT BOARD (*gopi*)

Papua New Guinea, Papuan Gulf, Elema People  
carved wood, traces of pigment. lime  
Gift of Anna Rice Cooke, 1932 (3570)

Boards such as this are generally found in the men's house hung between skulls of humans and sacrificial pigs. The oval shaped boards have a humanoid face in the center surrounded by geometric designs which originally represented clan symbols. Some boards commemorate a specific ancestor and a descendant might use it as a medium to communicate with the ancestor's spirit. Not all *gopi* boards represent ancestors; some might be appear in initiation ceremonies, or even serve as decoration.

### RED FEATHER CURRENCY BELT

Santa Cruz Islands

bark base, red honey eater feathers, Pacific pigeon gray feathers, fiber band, pearl shell, cowrie shells.

Purchase, 1982 (5038.1)

Red feather currency, made only in the Santa Cruz Islands, is used in traditional exchange and never worn as a garment. Each belt has a negotiable value based upon the quality of its feathers and construction. Belts serve as the only acceptable currency for the purchase of brides, pigs and certain services among the widely scattered, racially and linguistically varied groups of people in the area.

Many specialists, including bird snarers, feather platelet makers, and binders are required to produce the belts. The size is an indication of the labor involved in preparation. The belt's value is determined by the color and the quantity and quality of the down used, and depreciates as the color fades and the belt suffers from the inevitable insect damage, mold and abrasions. Eventually the belt becomes valueless, and is discarded.

SLIT GONG (*tam-tam; tingeing*)

Vanuatu, North Ambrym

wood

Purchase, 2003

With heights up to twenty feet, *tingeing* are some of the largest and most distinctive drums in the Pacific Islands. The drums serve several purposes within their communities. They are used for ceremonies and rituals, and may act as ancestral guardian figures for important occasions. Their beat warns of approaching people; a sort of bush telephone between neighboring villages. The inside of a drum is hollowed out so that one side is thicker than the other. This gives different tones when played, either by beating on the side or running the stick up and down along the narrow opening. Individual drum styles vary. The large abstracted face and rounded eyes are surrounded by rows of notches depicting hair. The finely carved coils below the face represent the much-valued boar's tusks necklaces and symbolize the high status of the drum's owner.

### ANCESTOR FIGURE (*uli*)

Central New Ireland, Papua New Guinea  
wood, lime and pigment  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Henry B. Clark, 1990  
Purchase, 1990 (6032.1)

Following the death of an important leader, the people of Central New Ireland present a cycle of memorial ceremonies, some of which could last as long as a year. The cycle includes multiple honorific feasts hosted by neighboring villagers paying their respects to the deceased. To secure political alliances with the previous leader's clan, the host villages distribute gifts and pigs to the family and participants.

*Uli* are memorial carvings which commemorate a deceased leader and provide a temporary home for his spirit. Carved from a single block of wood, the anthropomorphic figures have disproportionately large heads reminiscent of a human skull. A combination of male and female sexual traits, the *uli* is also representative of the life force.

Unlike the *malanggan* images of Northern New Ireland, which were destroyed after a single ceremony, *uli* are kept in the men's house, brought out for display and ceremonies, after which they are returned to storage.

### ANCESTRAL POST CARVING

Papua New Guinea, Romkiun Area, Middle Ramu River  
wood; natural pigments  
Gift of the Persis Corporation, 2002 (12,191.1)

Male initiation and instruction was one of the major priorities of the men's house cults. The young initiates were presented as adult members of the community after the completion of their initiation. The area around the men's house was highly

decorated for the presentation celebration which lasted several days.

This type of post adorned the presentation enclosures adjacent to the men's house. It illustrates the positive characteristics of the male ancestors and their clan totem. It features facial details associated with the *missingi* ancestral figures from the Middle Ramu River area. The Academy's post was probably stone-carved. The weathering is a result of long exposure to the elements.

### ANCESTOR FIGURE

Papua New Guinea, Keram River

carved wood

Gift of the Persis Corporation, 2002 (11,922.1)

The sculpture of the Keram river, Lower Sepik and Ramu river regions shared stylistic characteristics, possibly due to similar environmental and habitation locations. This figure resembles the *missingi* figures, found in the neighboring Middle Ramu River area. Figures of this size were personal pieces used in ceremonies commemorating an important ancestor.

## ANCESTOR FIGURE

Papua New Guinea, Lower Sepik River

blackened wood, shell, sennit, raffia, human hair

Purchase, Academy Volunteers' Fund, 1985 (5105.1)

Ancestor figures from the Lower Sepik River region are identified by two distinct types. The first type is a human figure which represents a recently deceased ancestor. The second is an anthropomorphic image characterized by an excessively elongated nose. This feature symbolizes the male creative energy and

the male role as a guardian of the clan's power and fertility.

This figure appears to be the first type of sculpture, commemorating the death of a close male relative. It represents a highly honored ancestor, by whose name it was addressed. Larger sculptures were stored in the men's house while smaller ones such as this were kept with their owners. The figure would be used in the same type of men's house cult ceremonies, as the *tumbuan* dance mask.

SLIT GONG DRUM (*garamut*) FINIAL

Papua New Guinea, Iatmul people, Middle Sepik River region  
carved wood

Gift of Mrs. W. Thomas Davis, 1989 (5863.1)

An Iatmul creation narrative states that in the beginning there was only the sea. The land was formed by the ancestral crocodile father. He swam to the bottom of the sea and returned with mud on his back to form the first islands and deltas. The crocodile still bears the island on his back and, when he moves an earthquake

occurs.

The huge *garamuts* are used in ceremonies and for communication. Their sound can carry for over five miles. In boy's initiation ceremonies, the *garamut* sound represents the voice of the ancestral crocodile father. This finial, or end piece, of the drum shows the head of the ancestral father and three human forms. The father carries a small person in his mouth, mimicking the way in which crocodiles carry their young, thus symbolizing protection of the current generation. The two additional faces on the finial are ancestors—the Iatmul's first sons—while the sea creature refers to the primeval period when water dominated the environment.



FIGURE (*тино*)

Federated States of Micronesia, Caroline Islands, Nukuoro Atoll  
(Polynesian Outlier Island)

wood

Bishop Museum Exchange, 1943 (4752)

Sculpture in human form is found in the islands of Polynesia and Melanesia, but not in Micronesia. The only exception is one tiny atoll called Nukuoro. The *тино* is thought to represent a god, or the spirit of a beneficial ancestor. *Тино* were kept in the spirit house (*amalau*), where they were placed upon a circular base and decorated with flowers and floral headdresses.

HOURGLASS SHAPED HAND DRUM (*kundu*)

Papua New Guinea, Lower Sepik Estuary

wood

Gift of the Peris Corporation, 2002 (11,920.1)

HOURGLASS SHAPED HAND DRUM (*kundu*)

Papua New Guinea, April River Region

wood; natural pigments

Gift of the Persis Corporation, 2002 (11,921.1)

*Kundu* is the Melanesian pidgin name for hand drum. These instruments were used in social and ritual ceremonies by both men and women. Carved and decorated by men, they feature totemic animals and/or distinctive clan designs. The early *kundu* bodies were hollowed out through a slow burning process. Hot coals were placed in the center of the log end and kept at a high temperature until the area to be cleared was soft and crumbly. The April River *kundu* was probably cleared through this process while the Lower Sepik pieces were cleared and carved with steel tools. The people in these areas used the stomach skin of the crocodile for drum heads.



TWINED POUCH (*bilum*)

Papua New Guinea

woven, pleated and braided fibers; dog's teeth

Gift of the Persis Corporation, 2002 (11,843.1)

Men and women produce and use bilums for both utilitarian and ceremonial purposes. Women make large work bilums for carrying produce and children. Small decorative bilums like these were made by men for personal ceremonial ware.

TREASURE BOX (*waka huia*) c. 1900

New Zealand, North Island, Rotorua District, Maori people  
wood

Purchase, 1930 (2995)

The Maori are exceptionally skillful carvers and noted for elaborate ornamentation such as we see in the *waka huia*. The form suggests a canoe or vessel (*waka*) and *huia* refers the valuable feathers of the *huia* bird which were stored in these boxes and to precious objects in general such as *hei-tiki* and other personal ornaments. As the pieces of personal adornment held a portion of the their owner's *mana*, it was important to store these items in a safe place away from strangers. This finely carved *waka huia* would have been suspended from the rafters of its owner's house.

### FISHING GAFF

New Zealand, North Island, Rotorua District, Maori people  
wood; mother of pearl inlay  
Purchase, 1930 (2994)

Maori society was highly stratified. Objects belonging to high ranking persons were highly decorated, regardless of their use. This gaff illustrates this concept; it features a *koropepe* - a sea serpent type creature often found on articles belonging to high ranking Maori.

### CULT HOUSE BOARD (*garra*)

Papua New Guinea, Upper Sepik River region; Bahinemo people  
carved wood, earth pigments, soot and lime  
Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Leo Fortess, 1977 (4454.1)

*Garra* is the term used to designate sacred flutes and boards; however, the boards may also be given individual names. This board is composed of a centrally painted face located between two sets of opposing hooks. The face may be a symbolic representation of the spirit believed to inhabit the board. The Bahinemo people use the board to communicate with the spirit and ask for guidance in personal or collective enterprises. The hooks were probably receptacles for food offerings intended to activate the spirit power of the *garra*. *Garra* are hung on the walls in the men's house and are also used in the instruction of initiates.

### MASK (*kavat*)

Papua New Guinea, Gazelle Peninsula, New Britain  
Baining people  
Bark cloth, bamboo, pigment  
Purchase, 1988

Imagine a dance taking place at night in the dark forests of the Baining Mountains in New Britain. Giant masks with huge round eyes painted red and black glow in the firelight. Night dances are part of an initiation ceremony for young men who, upon reaching a specific age, enter into a different grade level.

Learning to make masks is part of initiation. The *kavat* masks represent wild bush spirits and refer to such things as animals, insects, birds, trees and leaves. Large sheets of bark cloth are stretched over a bamboo framework and then painted. The masks have an open mouth which allows the dancer to see. The

dancing lasts until sunrise when the villagers chase the masked spirits back into the bush.

YAM CULT FIGURE (*mindja*)

Papua New Guinea, Upper Sepik River region, Warasei people  
carved, blackened wood with earth pigment, soot, and lime  
Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Leo Fortess, 1977 (4455.1)

The Warasei place great importance on the production of yams. Ceremonial activities follow the growth cycles of the plant. After the harvest, rituals are held in honor of the guardian spirits, which are embodied in the yams. During the ritual cycle called *mindja-ma*, large flat boards (*mindja*) with a human face in the center are displayed in the ceremonial house and by presentations of stacked tubers. Only men of the highest grade (those who had taken heads in battle) were allowed to create the images. The painted triangular shapes are thought to represent banana leaves and the carved loops in the lower part of board depict a snake, the head of which is visible at the bottom.





## HAND DRUM

West Paua, Southwestern Coastal Region, Asmat people

wood, lizard skin, rattan and resin

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Henry B. Clark, Jr., 1979 (4755.1)

The Asmat are an agricultural people who traditionally engaged in headhunting, a practice that is reflected in the design motifs of their drum handles along with representations of ancestors. The handle on this drum is composed of 'S' forms that symbolize the human body, alternating with ancestor heads. Drum making was a laborious process of hollowing out a log into an hourglass shape. The length and diameter determined the pitch. The head of the drum was made by stretching lizard skin over the rim that had been rubbed with lime, ground mussel shells and human blood. The drum was tuned by warming the skin by the fire and tightening the head by the addition of small beeswax knobs. Drums were played as a group at ceremonies and other festivities.

MASK FOR YAM CEREMONY (*babatagwa*)

Papua New Guinea, Maprik, Abelam people, Nuku Village  
woven rattan of yam vines, mud, clay, pigment and lime  
Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Henry B. Clark, Jr., (4723.1)

Ceremonies to encourage the successful growing and harvesting of long yams are important activities of the Abelam people who live in the Maprik Mountains area of New Guinea. The yams, which can reach four feet in length, are thought of as human, given special names, and cared for throughout the growing cycle. Harvested yams are displayed, traded, and presented to visitors from other Abelam villages. Ancestors and clan spirits play a part in yam cult ceremonies. Boys are initiated into manhood, and traditional stories and knowledge of the Abelam people are passed down to a new generation.

During the yam ceremonies “spirits” appear wearing helmet masks with colorful costumes made of shredded leaves from the sago palm and garlands of flowers and fruit that completely cover the body. The costumed spirits act as contacts between the upper world of the dead and the lower world of the living. Called *baba*, like the masks, they are aggressive. In the past they went to war and attacked people. Now their goal is to gain the support of the upper world to ensure abundant yam crops and good harvests.

CANOE PADDLE (*mon*)

Papua New Guinea, Buka Island, North Solomons Province  
wood, pigment  
Purchase, 1936 (4192)

The motif and paddle design associates this piece with the *mon* war canoes. One side of the paddle features a small spirit figure called *kokorra*. This protective spirit also decorated the sides of the canoe.

CEREMONIAL CANOE PADDLE

Papua New Guinea, Massim Region, Trobriand Islands or Murua  
polished dark wood with incised designs filled with lime  
Gift of Mrs. C.M. Cooke (3172)

This elegant ceremonial canoe paddle would have been used for special occasions such as the launching of a new canoe or a trading expedition. The dark wood has been highly polished and carved with incised designs of low relief. The carvings are filled with lime designating this paddle for ceremonial use. The design pattern is easily recognizable as the stylized frigate bird motif, typical of

much of the art of the Trobriands. These large, wooden leaf shaped paddles served as rudders for canoes under sail.

#### CANOE PADDLE

Papua New Guinea, Trobriand Islands, Muwa Island  
wood with lime inlay  
Gift of Anna Rice Cooke, 1932 (3574)

#### CEREMONIAL CANOE PADDLE (*hoe*) c.1880-1890

New Zealand, Maori people  
*kauri* wood with *paua* shell inlay  
Purchase, 1976 (4397.1)

The decoration features a *koruru*, or owl motif at the tip of the handle and the head of a polymorphic creature, the *manaia*, bird-man, both important totems among the Maori.

#### "BIRD-HEADED" WAR CLUB

New Caledonia, Kanak people  
wood  
Purchase, 1936 (3442.1)

#### SPEAR POINT

Papua New Guinea, Manus (Admiralty) Islands, Manus people  
wood, bamboo, obsidian, shells, red and white pigment  
Gift of Anna Rice Cooke, 1932 (3557)

Manus Island was the major source of obsidian for the Western Pacific. These spear tips were traded throughout the area.

#### WAR CLUB ("PADDLE CLUB") *Fa'alaautalinga*

Western Samoa, Samoan people  
wood

Bishop Museum exchange, 1943 (215.1)

HAND CLUB (*patu mere*) c. 1884

New Zealand, Maori people

nephrite

Gift of Anna Rice Cooke, 1932 (3347)

CLUB

Papua New Guinea, Trobriand Islands, Trobriand people

stone cut wood, lime pigment

Gift of Anna Rice Cooke, 1932 (3558)

STAFF CLUB (*u'a*)

Rapanui (Easter Island)

toromiro wood

Bishop Museum Exchange, 1943 (217.1)

*U'a* served as a weapon, as a parade staff for chiefs, and a baton of office. This staff club is carved with a head on both sides. The face is thought to portray a male ancestor with supernatural eyes.

PARRYING SHIELD

Solomon Islands

wood with lime inlay

Gift of Anna Rice Cooke, 1932 (3171)

This shield was used to fend staff and weapon blows through a series of fluid movements. They were also used in ceremonial choreography, producing an exciting series of dances. Early National Geographic newsreels featured these dances in a silent film.

CLUB (*u'u*)

French Polynesia, Marquesas Islands

wood

Purchase, 1976 (4396.1)

The Marquesans were fierce fighters. The art of warfare was taught to young boys as preparation for manhood, and a successful warrior was believed to possess great *mana*. Weapons such as the *u'u* (oo-oo) were used in fighting, in ceremonial war dances, and for display. As items of prestige and power, they were very elaborately decorated. The large eyes, with radiating lines, are related to a tattoo motif known as "bright eyes." The top of the club widens to fit under

the armpit so the *u'u* could be used to lean on as well. The shiny black finish on the heavy ironwood club is created by first soaking it in a taro swamp, and then polishing with coconut oil.

FIGHTING STAFF (*taiaha*) c. 1850  
New Zealand, Maori people  
wood with *paua* shell inlay  
Bishop Museum Exchange, 1943 (0220.1)

These staffs were part of a high ranking male's regalia. They were employed in formal oratory to stress a point and in ceremonial displays, such as the *haka*. The *taiaha* was primarily used for parrying and sparring in hand-to-hand combat. This particular weapon was reportedly used in a battle with a chief around the turn of the century. The carved image on the terminal of the shaft has two *paua* circlet eyes and an exaggerated, protruding tongue, a symbol of Maori defiance.

BELAUAN STORYBOARD, 20th century  
wood, pigment  
Micronesia, Caroline Islands, Belau

Large men's houses (*bai*) were once found in every Belauan village. *Bai* were profusely decorated with relief-carved gable fronts and interior house beams that illustrated important events or legends. Although few *bai* remain today, relief-carved boards, such as those once a part of the *bai*, are still created for tourist trade.

This storyboard illustrates how gigantic stone disks (Yapese money) quarried in Belau, were once taken to Yap by sailing canoes.