



Unidentified Inuk Artist

Seal Tupilak

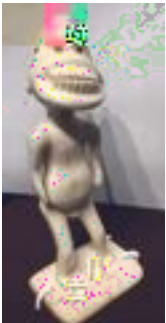
sperm whale tooth

4 1/8 x 2 x 3/4 in. (10.48 x 5.08 x 1.91 cm)

Gift of John P. Kline, on loan from The Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum

Although the concept of a tupilak has varied across Greenland Inuit cultures and throughout their long history, it consistently refers to an evil spiritual being in animal or human form. Suppression of magical practices by Christian missionaries in the eighteenth century resulted in the minimalist, almost abstract form of tupilak shown here. However, despite changes in their cultural usage, the distorted and chimeric figures preserve the culturally essential Inuit concepts of supernatural animation and transformation in an ambiguous combination of metaphor and magic.

Dezsö's work and the tupilak figures share a common engagement with the duality of visual experience and the complexity of bodies, providing a cultural space for considering the relationships between the body, power, and nature. What does the image of the body reveal or conceal about the being? What power does the body provide, and to whom? How does visual experience affect the relationship between humans and nature?



Unidentified Inuk Artist

Standing Tupilak

sperm whale tooth

4 1/2 x 2 1/4 x 2 in. (11.43 x 5.72 x 5.08 cm)

Gift of John P. Kline, on loan from The Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum



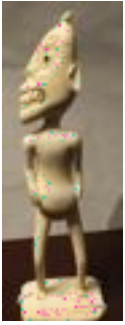
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Standing Tupilak Figure

sperm whale tooth

5 3/8 x 1 5/8 x 2 1/4 in. (13.65 x 4.13 x 5.72 cm)

Gift of John P. Kline, on loan from The Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum



Unidentified Inuk Artist

Standing Tupilak

sperm whale tooth

6 x 1 1/8 x 3/4 in. (15.24 x 2.86 x 1.91 cm)

Gift of John P. Kline, on loan from The Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum

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Baby Bear Tupilak

sperm whale tooth

3 x 1 3/8 x 1 1/8 in. (7.62 x 3.49 x 2.86 cm)

Gift of John P. Kline, on loan from The Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum



Unidentified Inuk Artist

Standing Tupilak with tusks and facial lines

sperm whale tooth

6 1/4 x 1 3/4 x 7/8 in. (15.88 x 4.45 x 2.22 cm)

Gift of John P. Kline, on loan from The Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum



Unknown Artist

Jointed Female Doll

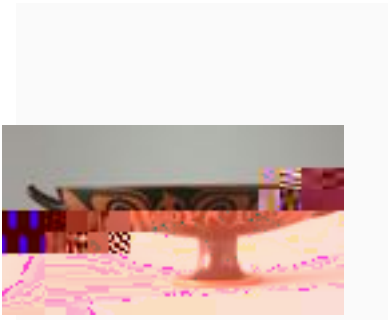
molded clay

5 7/8 in. (15 cm.)

Gift of Edward Perry Warren, Esq., Honorary Degree, 1926

1923.22

This undated terracotta doll depicts a female figure with separate arms and legs attached at the joints, white slip painted on the body, castanets in the hands, and bands around the hair. Although the rough shaping and construction of the body is more typical of the fifth century BCE, the delicately rendered Hellenistic face is unlikely to have been made before the third century BCE. The doll's association with childhood defined the Greek and Roman ritual use of such "toys" as symbolic objects, which were placed in children's graves or devoted to gods before adulthood or marriage. As with the other objects selected for this exhibition, the stylized abstraction of this natural figure underscores the potential to represent aspects of living beings that are indefinite and internal, yet broadly present in our own cultural realities and those of others.



terracotta

5 5/16 in. x 16 3/16 in. (13.5 cm x 41.12 cm)

Gift of Edward Perry Warren, Esq., Honorary Degree, 1926
1913.2

Originally used for communal drinking at an Athenian symposium, this cup features athletic figures and palmette motifs, painted in the later red-figure style. The eponymous eye designs on the sides of the cup were understood to provide protection from evil. The ear-like curved handles and mouth-like open base produced a playful but dramatic mask when the cup was raised to the mouth, and the drinker took on the appearance of a woodland spirit. Dezsö selected this piece due to its exploration of the fluid connection between mythical reality and familiar life.



Unknown Artist

Stylized Bird Carving

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polychromed wood

14 3/4 in. (37.46 cm.)

Gift of Harold M. Sewall
1898.75

This painted wooden carving of a bird-like creature is an ornamental mouthpiece, often fitted in a mask during ritual dances in traditional cultural practices from the New Ireland province in Papua New Guinea. Such bird figures are consistently featured in the carved objects used in malanggan, communal ceremonies for a variety of social and spiritual events, such as death, adulthood, and transfers of property and status. These carvings are broadly regarded by people of New Ireland as powerful and even dangerous objects.



Unknown Artist

Water Jar

ca. 1880

terracotta

10 in. x 13 in. (25.4 cm. x 33.02 cm.)

Gift of Mrs. Herbert E. Hawkes
1970..

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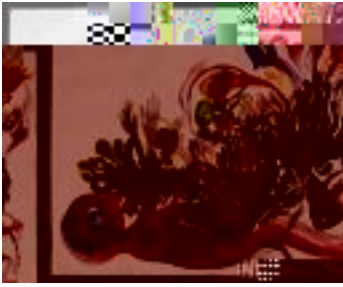
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Andrea Dezsö

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2016

vinyl paint, markers and ink on paper



Andrea Dezsö

American, born in Romania, 1968

Neuron People (Shingles Paintings)

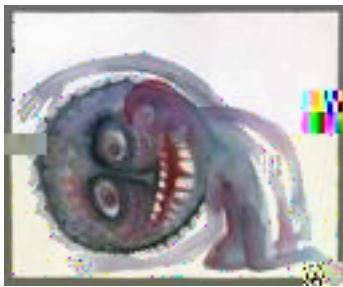
2019

watercolor on Awagami Hakuho paper

17 x 20 1/2 in. (43.18 x 52.07 cm)

Courtesy of the Artist

The uncanny figures in the Shingles Paintings express an intrusion of the unfamiliar during Dezsö's struggle with the shingles virus. Diverging from her practice of carefully layered compositions, these raw and turbulent watercolors translate the unsettling feeling of being invaded with invisible pain and internal distress into a language of images. The distortion and doubling of recognizable bodily forms, disordered interactions between colors and shapes, and ambiguous space of the stark background all express ways in which the experience of self in the body and the mind is vulnerable to the disruption of unknown and unseen forces. How do we experience ourselves as embodied? What control do we have over our bodies? What separates or connects our bodies from or to the world around them? Can we experience our bodies as something other than ourselves? How can experiences of the body redefine the self?



Andrea Dezsö

American, born in Romania, 1968

Big Head (Shingles Paintings)

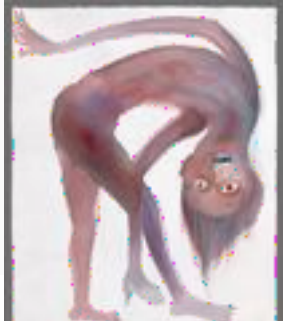
2019

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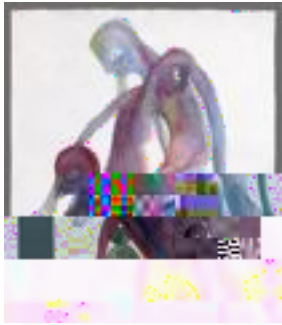
2019

watercolor on Awagami Hakuho paper

20 1/2 x 17 in. (52.07 x 43.18 cm)

Courtesy of the Artist

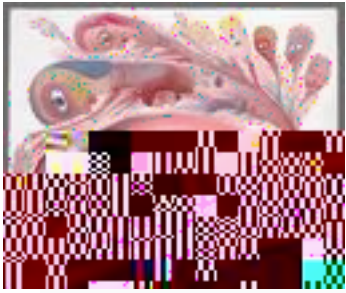
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Andrea Dezsö

American, born in Romania, 1968

~~How can we experience our bodies as something other than ourselves?~~



Andrea Dezsö

American, born in Romania, 1968

Ten-Headed Pain Tree (Shingles Paintings)

2019

watercolor on Awagami Hakuho paper

17 x 20 1/2 in. (43.18 x 52.07 cm)

Courtesy of the Artist

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Andrea Dezsö

American, born in Romania, 1968

Pain and Joy Beings (Shingles Paintings)

2019

watercolor on Awagami Hakuho paper

17 x 20 1/2 in. (43.18 x 52.07 cm)

Courtesy of the Artist

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American, born in Romania, 1968



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