

# Range

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Wooden-handled fan with metal eyelet to hold closed, half-circle of black fabric with painted flowers.

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Accession Number 2009.16.3

Materials fiber, paint, wood

Measurements 21,8 cm

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## Historical context

A variety of shapes, functions... and messages! The fan is an object with a long history, whose origins are lost in the mists of time. We imagine a large leaf, the perfect tool for stoking the fire, keeping insects away or... fanning ourselves. In ancient times, in Asia, Egypt, Greece and Rome, different types of fan were recognized as signs of power and social status. The folded version is thought to have been invented in Japan in the 7th century.

Introduced to Europe during the Renaissance, the fan became a highly refined ornament reserved for nobility and royalty. Made of silk, feathers, lacquer, leather, paper, embroidered, painted, adorned with pearls, stones and gold leaf, over the centuries it became a sumptuous object of decorative art. Its manufacture involves many specialized trades in European workshops. Associated with the game of romantic love, the fan is also an object of feminine seduction, very useful for camouflaging, observing, revealing, signaling...

During the 19th century, the fan became more widely used as a fashion accessory. They were even found in Montreal department stores, imported from Europe and Japan. This sober fan resembles the cockade-shaped fans commonly sold in North America at the time. Sometimes they were decorated with simple floral motifs designed by the ladies themselves.