

Sculpture

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Collections / sculpture



Carving of a small herd of five belugas (white whales: qilalugaq, plur. -it) in ivory and musk ox horn (musk ox: ummimaq), for the one in front of the group, set on a caribou antler base.

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Period 20th century

Materials antlers, caribou, horn, musk ox, ivory, walrus

Measurements 3 x 21 x 3,5 cm

Historical context

Sculpture depicting a herd of five belugas (*Delphinapterus leucas*) swimming at equal distances. The beluga (in Inuit: qilalugaq) is a highly social marine mammal that lives and hunts in groups. The stage is mounted on a rod that extends lengthwise over a base made from a portion of caribou plume sliced longitudinally to create a relatively flat, stable surface. Four of the miniature white whales were carved from walrus ivory, while the largest specimen, at the head of the herd, was carved from a more translucent piece of muskox horn. Despite its representations of a wide variety of beluga whale swimming postures, this simple work is unsigned and lacks the specific features that would confirm its attribution to a particular artist.



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Photo by Victor Diaz Lamich