

Sculpture

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Steatite sculpture of a seated woman holding a qulliq (oil lamp).

Accession Number 2022.18.164

Artiste / Auteur Kiatainnaq, Aasivak Mary

Period 20th century

Materials stone, soapstone

Measurements 7 x 10 x 7 cm

Historical context

Soapstone sculpture depicting a seated figure. The figure is an Inuit woman wearing an amautik (woman's parka) with the hood pulled down over her shoulders. Sitting on the ground, she holds a qulliq (oil

lamp) in her clasped hands, which she has placed between her legs, stretched out in front of her. Given her seated position and the fact that she is dressed warmly, she is probably preparing to light the lamp in order to cook or boil water and provide light and warmth in the illu (igloo) or tupiq (tent).

This work, with its rough, barely polished but highly evocative forms, was created by a woman. The piece is signed in syllabic characters ᐱᐱᐱ (Mary). A stylistic analysis has revealed that this sculpture, which takes a simple approach to the daily life of Inuit women in the past, can be attributed to Aasivak Mary Kiatainnaq (1957-) from Kangiqsujuaq, Nunavik.

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Photo by Victor Diaz Lamich