



## End-blown horn

### Date

1900-1925 ca.

### Description

This instrument is made of a water buffalo horn that has been hollowed and embellished with copper and silver with inset coral and turquoise stones. The sea dragon (makara) is made of silver repoussé in stunning detail. Chased scales adorn the entire head of this open-mouthed mythical beast, complete with turquoise eyes. The copper cuffs and bell include Buddhist auspicious symbols. The neku horn is crucial to rituals associated with death, the afterlife and rebirth within Newari Buddhist and Hindu worldviews. The Newar people, also referred to as Nepami, traditionally inhabited the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal. Proximity to the cultural and religious (as if these could be distinguished) influences of Hindu and Buddhist traditions have resulted in a syncretic system of beliefs, which also likely includes elements of pre-existing traditions from the region. According to Greene (2002), "the neku is played primarily, although not exclusively, as both a ritual duty and a privilege of neighborhood-based communities of Manandhars." This

caste in Newar society has the occupation of oil pressing. In particular, the playing of the neku solo or in ensembles made up of a variety of sizes (based on the animal from which the horn comes - buffalo, goat or sheep) is associated with the holy month of Gunla.

### Dimensions

Length: 460 mm