

Involuntary Catalogue

Images: Selena Kimball

Text: Alyssa Grossman



Inventory number: 1915.02.0014p

General catalogue number: 15244

Searchword: Stone; stone fragment

Material: Lithic; stone

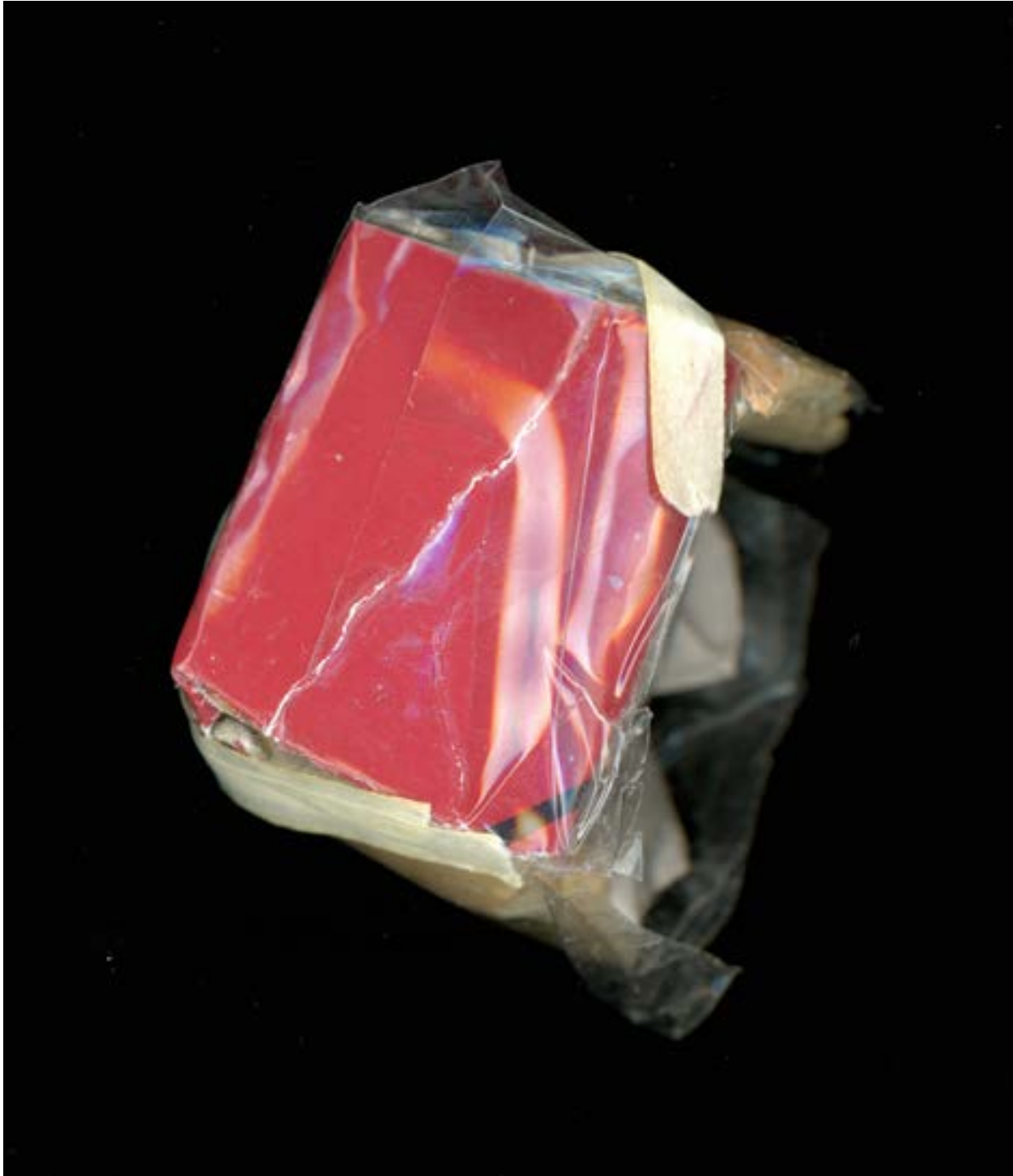
Length: 3 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Chilón (17° 58' 60S; 64° 35' 60W), northeast of Pérez, Mizque Valley, southeast of Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Bolivia (South America)

Description: This rock looks like it could be made of amber or some kind of pollen-colored resin, though I don't think it actually is. It is small, trapezoidal, with a flat bottom. If you set it down on its base, it looks like a miniature mountain, with its peak lightly squashed by a giant's thumb. The left side of the mountain is a bit more opaque and yellow than the rest of it, with faint scratches and scrapes. It could possibly pass for a dried-out lump of rubber cement.



Inventory number: 1915.02.00161

General catalogue number: 15266

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 4 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Bought in Chilón, exact location unknown (17° 58' 60S; 64° 35' 60W), northeast of Pérez, Mizque Valley, southeast of Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Bolivia (South America)

Description: Another very red rock. Another one that fits in the palm of my hand. It is roughly the shape of a pentagon. Its sides are smooth, and they slope out towards the bottom like a pyramid. The top consists of layers that look like a crumbling wall—red giving way to grey around the pentagon's edges, a thin mustard-yellow line peeking through on one side. For some reason I take a sniff of this rock, and find that it has a strong smell. I can't explain why I am tempted to smell it. None of the other rocks seem to give off any scent, but this one does. I am sitting here in the library sniffing and sniffing the rock. What does it remind me of? A basement, maybe. Damp stairs leading down into a damp basement.



Inventory number: 1915.02.0017o

General catalogue number: 15286

Searchword: Stone; stone fragment

Material: Lithic; stone

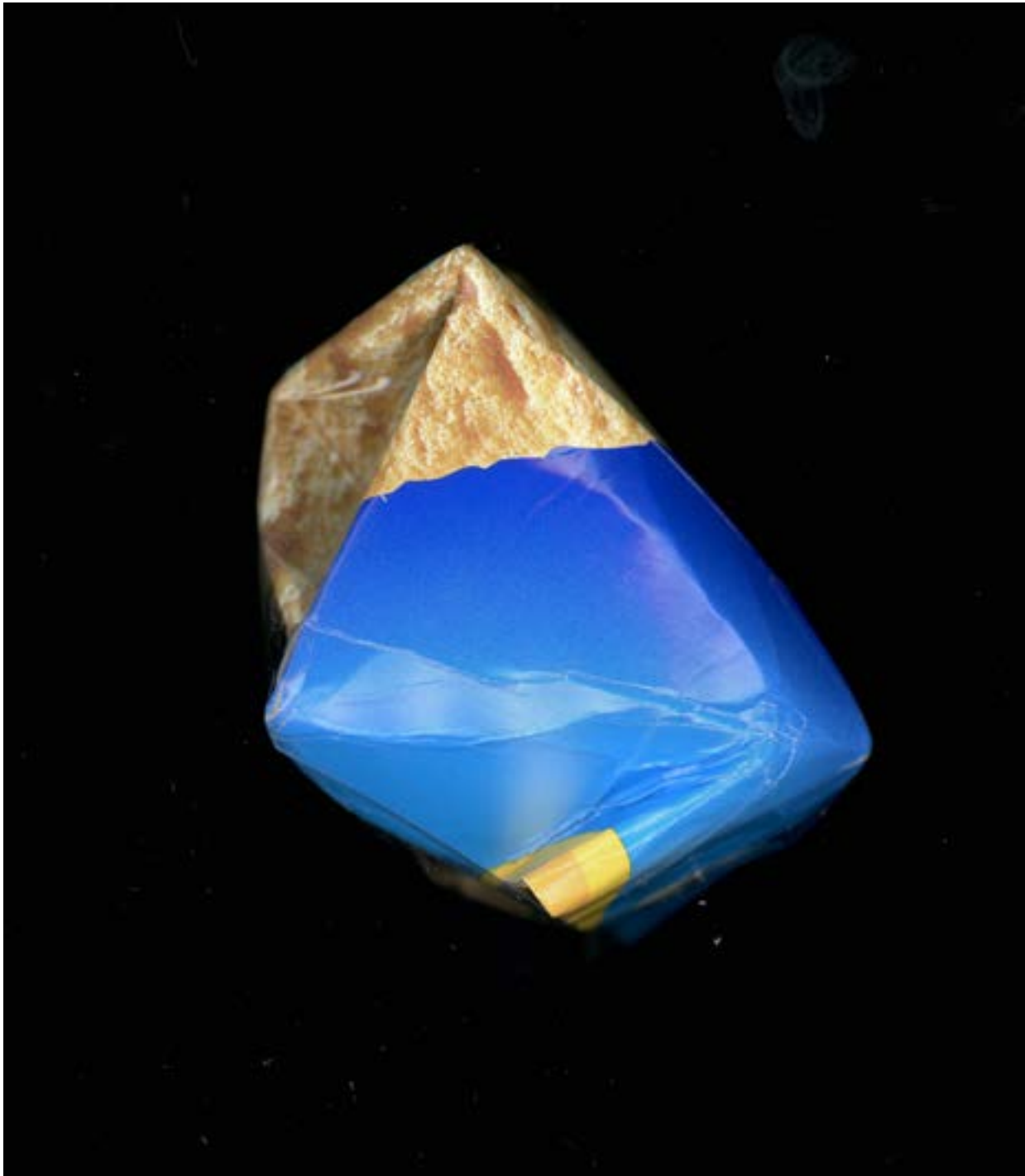
Length: 2.2 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Holquin (18° 13' 00S; 64° 10' 00W), north of Valle Grande, Mizque Valley, Santa Cruz, Bolivia (South America)

Description: This rock is nearly black. It is very small. It looks like it has been chipped from a larger piece of stone. It has a vaguely trapezoidal shape. Its surfaces have notches and scratches, as if someone had taken a miniature chisel to the top layer and marked out three separate angular gouges. The underside has very thin lines scratched into it that almost look like hieroglyphs or cuneiform letters, but I don't think they were intentionally made.



Inventory number: 1915.02.0017s

General catalogue number: 15290

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 5.6 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Holquin (18° 13'00S; 64° 10'00W), north of Valle Grande, Mizque Valley, Santa Cruz, Bolivia (South America)

Description: I am attracted to this rock. Its colors are subtle but rich. It has a tortoise-shell look, with multiple warm shades of brown that make it resemble a scuffed leather shoe. It has the shape of a raindrop, but a slightly flattened raindrop that someone pressed just a little with their palm. Its underside looks like it has been left for too long on a fire—charred and burnt, crisscrossed with lines and scratches.



Inventory number: 1915.02.0017t

General catalogue number: 15291

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

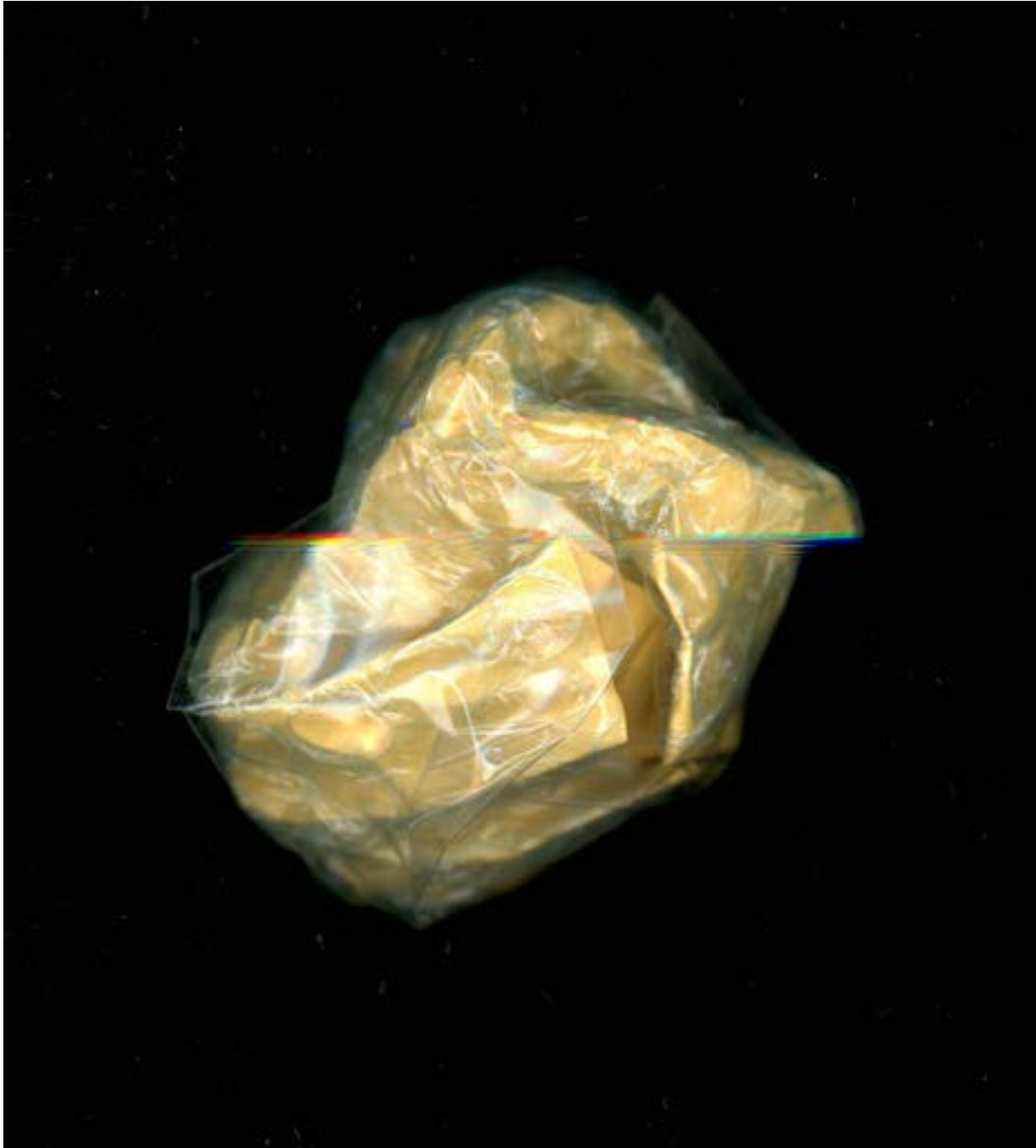
Length: 3 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Holquin (18° 13' 00S; 64° 19' 00W), north of Valle Grande, Mizque Valley, Santa Cruz, Bolivia (South America)

Description: This rock is brick red, rectangular, small enough to be completely covered when I close my fingers around it. It doesn't look like it's been polished, but its surfaces are smooth, flecked with faint notches and scratches. Actually, the rock is more of a parallelogram than a rectangle. There is a slight bulge along one of its longer sides. There are two minuscule sparkles on one of its faces, barely visible, embedded in the stone's outermost surface. The sparkles look like tiny faraway stars.



Inventory number: 1915.02.0021i

General catalogue number: 15456

Searchword: Stone; stone fragment

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 2.5 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Pulquina (18° 06' 00S; 64° 25' 00W), east of Pérez, La Franca, Mizque Valley, southeast of Cochamba, Santa Cruz, Bolivia (South America)

Description: This rock is in the shape of a semicircle, a sunrise. It is an ever so faintly translucent grey color, scattered with shiny flecks and dull notches. The front side is more opaque, but the back is smooth, almost glowing. This might be because the rock has broken open and the back could actually be the inside of the rock's flesh, made visible. It feels unprotected and exposed.



Inventory number: 1915.02.0021j

General catalogue number: 15457

Searchword: Stone; stone fragment

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 4 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Pulquina (18° 06' 00S; 64° 25' 00W), east of Pérez, La Franca, Mizque Valley, southeast of Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Bolivia (South America)

Description: This stone is dark, the color of polished walnut. At one end, its underside appears as if someone pressed their thumb into a piece of wet clay and left behind a little indented nub. If you rubbed off the very outer layer of the rock, the whole thing might be dark red underneath—there are subtle cracks of this red showing through. Its surface is smooth and swollen, with some bulges. It looks extremely fluid for something that is actually so solid, like it could have been underwater for a long time.



Inventory number: 1915.02.0039p2

General catalogue number: 16000

Searchword: Stone; stone fragment

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 4 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Incahuasi, Chuquiasca, Bolivia
(South America)

Description: This rock is small, and is shaped like a generous wedge of pie. It is a dark red-brown color, and the black catalogue number is hard to make out on its surface. The right hand corner of the wedge, where the pie's crust would be, has chipped off, so it is not an evenly cut piece. There are tiny marks and indentations throughout. It looks like it could use a good scrubbing.



Inventory number: 1915.02.0040h1

General catalogue number: 16037

Searchword: Stone; stone fragment

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 3 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Zapatera, north of Yacuiba, Tarija, Bolivia (South America)

Description: This rock is really tiny. Its stratified layers resemble a diagram of the earth's crust that you might find in a geology book. Its layers form wavy lines of grey, pink and lilac. In profile, it almost looks like a little pig's nose. The underside of the rock shows similar striations, with a ridge made from a chip that covers its top half. So many details in such a small bit of stone.



Inventory number: 1915.02.0040i1

General catalogue number: 16038

Searchword: Stone; stone fragment

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 2.8 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Zapatera, north of Yacuiba, Tarija, Bolivia (South America)

Description: This looks like a rock chip. It is thin and oval shaped, with a slight bulge on the lower right side, a bit like a cartoon speech bubble. The left part of the rock is a dark tan color, and then about two-thirds of the way across, it abruptly changes to a reddish brown. The contour of this rock looks like a drawing of an island on a map, with delicate ridges marking the edges of its coastline.



Inventory number: 1915.02.0040j1

General catalogue number: 16039

Searchword: Rejection; stone reject

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 2 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Zapatera, north of Yacuiba, Tarija, Bolivia (South America)

Description: This rock is slightly arrow shaped. It could have been a chip that came off a larger piece, when the larger piece was being made into something functional. All of its edges are sharp. The back is smooth, slightly concave, with no chips or dents. Aside from one striated edge, it is a nearly uniform pearly mauve color.



Inventory number: 1915.02.0089b

General catalogue number: 16301

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 8 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1913-1914

Provenance: Found in Grave 1, Guaraca, above Parapiti, southern Bolivia (South America)

Description: This rock has a slightly wavy ridge along the top right corner like a line traced by the arc of a compass. It is a dirty lavender color, with a scratch on its bottom front face, and a piece chipped off along the top edge. Its back surface is fairly smooth but not shiny, with some thin, scuffed-away patches in the shape of a lumpy backwards L.



Inventory number: 1916.12.0020

General catalogue number: 18419

Searchword: Color stone

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 4 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1908

Provenance: Ihuitihuembe (?=Iboitihuemba - 19° 46' 60S; 63° 23' 60W), Caipipendi Valley, northeast of Camiri, Santa Cruz, Bolivia (South America)

Description: I chose this rock because it was red and vaguely shaped like a heart. (Those were my actual criteria for this one.) What seems to be its logical front face has a few scrapes on the top left side, revealing a deeper brick color through its chalky surface. On the left part of the back face is a patch where a distinct layer of stone has chipped off, revealing a lighter shade of red underneath. It almost seems like you could peel away the rest of the heart's outer layer, like the prickled hull of a chestnut.



Inventory number: 1927.06.0161b1

General catalogue number: 34219

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

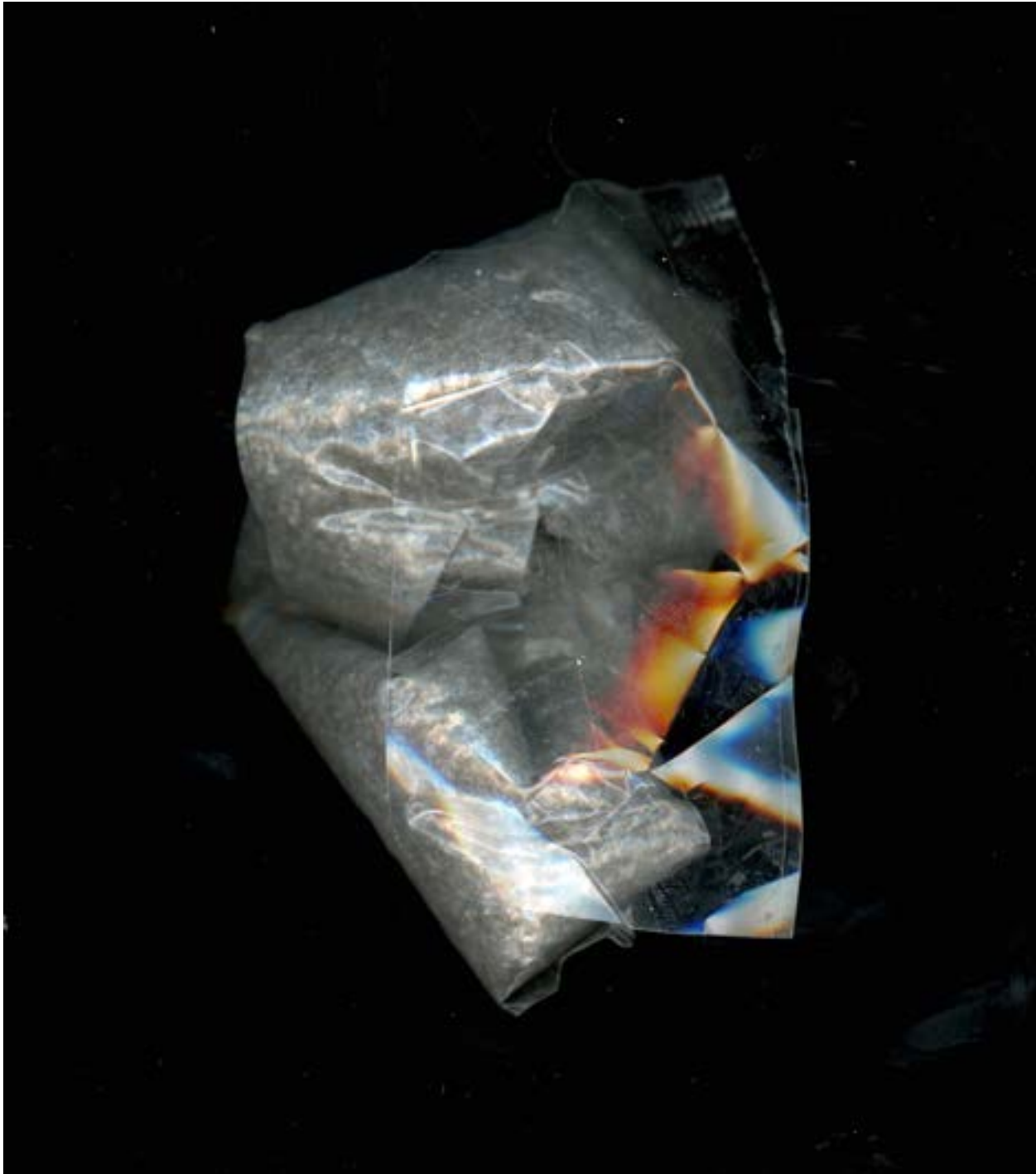
Length: 5 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1927

Provenance: Bruceville Mound, Cosumnes River, Lodi, California (USA)

Description: The base of this rock is the shape of an isosceles triangle, and it rises into a slightly pyramidal, though rounded, structure. The top layer of the pyramid seems to have an orange tinge to it. The left face has a chip along the edge, which is greenish underneath. There is a nick at the place where the tip of the pyramid should be. The stone has an aura of dull smoothness.



Inventory number: 1927.06.0161m

General catalogue number: 34202

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 7cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1927

Provenance: Bruceville Mound, Cosumnes River, Lodi, California (USA)

Description: This rock is larger than any of the other rocks I have seen so far, but it is still small enough to fit in my hand. It is heavy and solid, and has a cubic shape, though some of the faces of the cube are irregular and uneven, a bit crumpled. The other faces are smooth and straight. The rock itself is grey, with undertones of green or oxidized bronze. If the outer layer of the rock were scraped off, or if the rock were polished, you might find a pale olive color underneath.



Inventory number: 1927.06.0161o

General catalogue number: 34204

Searchword: Cooking stone; cooking stone?

Material: Lithic; stone

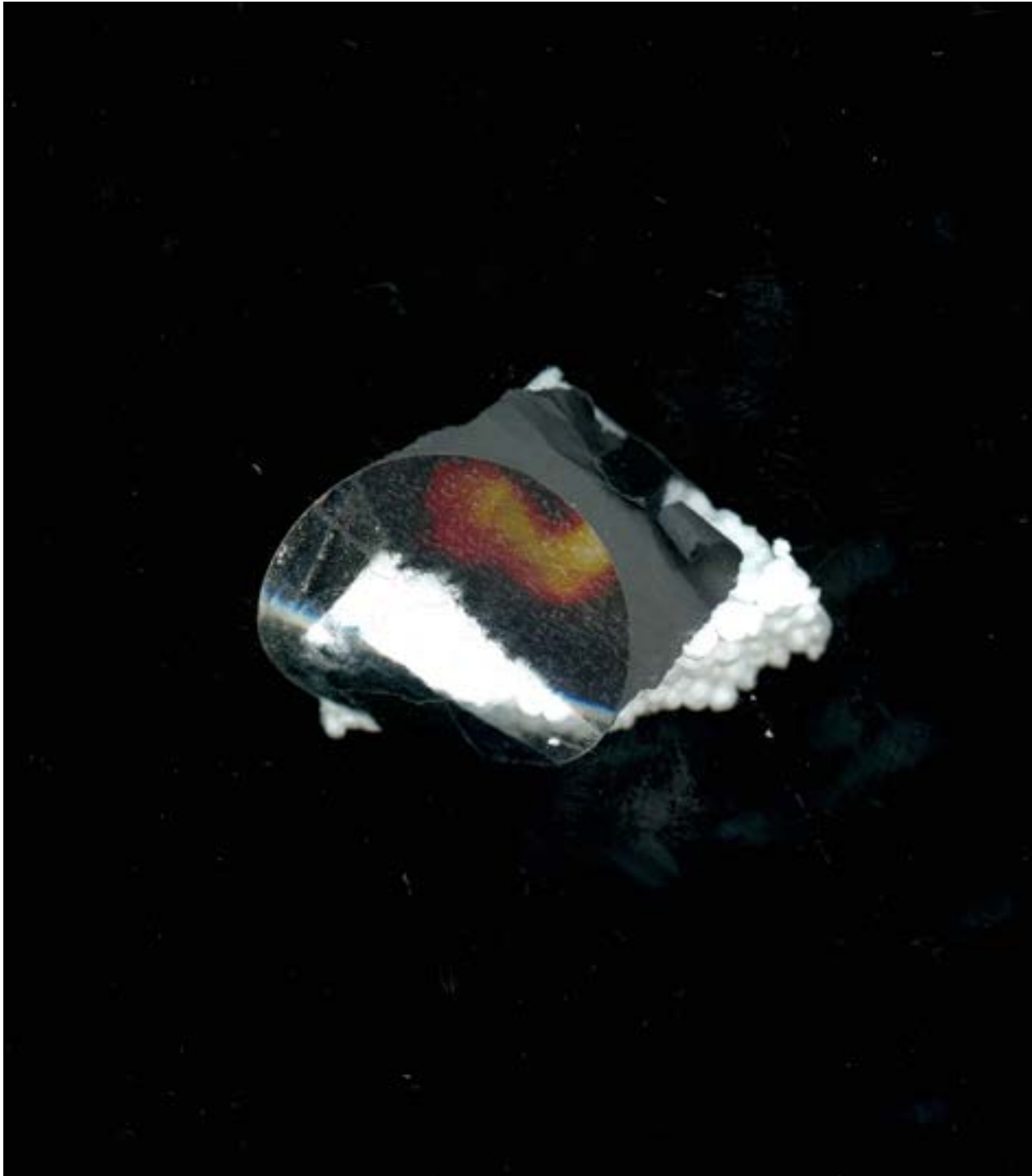
Length: 6.5 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1927

Provenance: General surface, Bruceville Mound, Cosumnes River, Lodi, California (USA)

Description: This rock also has a slight basement smell. It is the size and the shape of a ladyfinger cookie. Its surface is light brown, like wood or dusty bark. Its texture is like the dried-out remains of an old bar of soap. On one end, some layers have chipped off, and you can see pink strata in the stone's composition. If I were to put my fingernail underneath one of these layers, I could probably pry off a large part of the rock. I stick my left (ungloved) thumbnail under the crack and exert some pressure. It moves. What if I were to pry it right off? What would the stone look like underneath? Would it be smooth, or show evidence of other layers? Maybe the inside of the rock has more pink in it. When I rub it, some grey powder is left behind on my gloved fingers.



Inventory number: 1927.06.0161t

General catalogue number: 34209

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 6 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1927

Provenance: Bruceville Mound, Cosumnes River, Lodi, California (USA)

Description: This is a tricky one to describe. It's got a flat bottom, curved into a crescent. If you were to trace its base on a piece of paper, you would get the top half of a rising sun. The rock stands in a pointy dome shape, a bit like the top of the Taj Mahal. Most of it is a deep and shiny orange-brown color, almost like old wood, marked by darker lines and wrinkles. One of its faces looks like the charcoal burnt edge of a log, rough and uneven.



Inventory number: 1927.06.0161x

General catalogue number: 34212

Searchword: Mortar; mortar fragment?

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 6.3 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1927

Provenance: Bruceville Mound, Cosumnes River, Lodi, California (USA)

Description: This rock has the color and texture of a dirty potato. It leaves traces of brown dust on my pink glove. It looks like a cross-section of a concrete pipeline, but one that is solid inside instead of hollow. It has a fairly clean edge on one side, but on the other side there is a diagonal piece that rises up like a mountain range, a big tooth sticking up a few centimetres from the middle.



Inventory number: 1927.06.0161z

General catalogue number: 34214

Searchword: Rejection; obsidian reject

Material: Lithic; stone

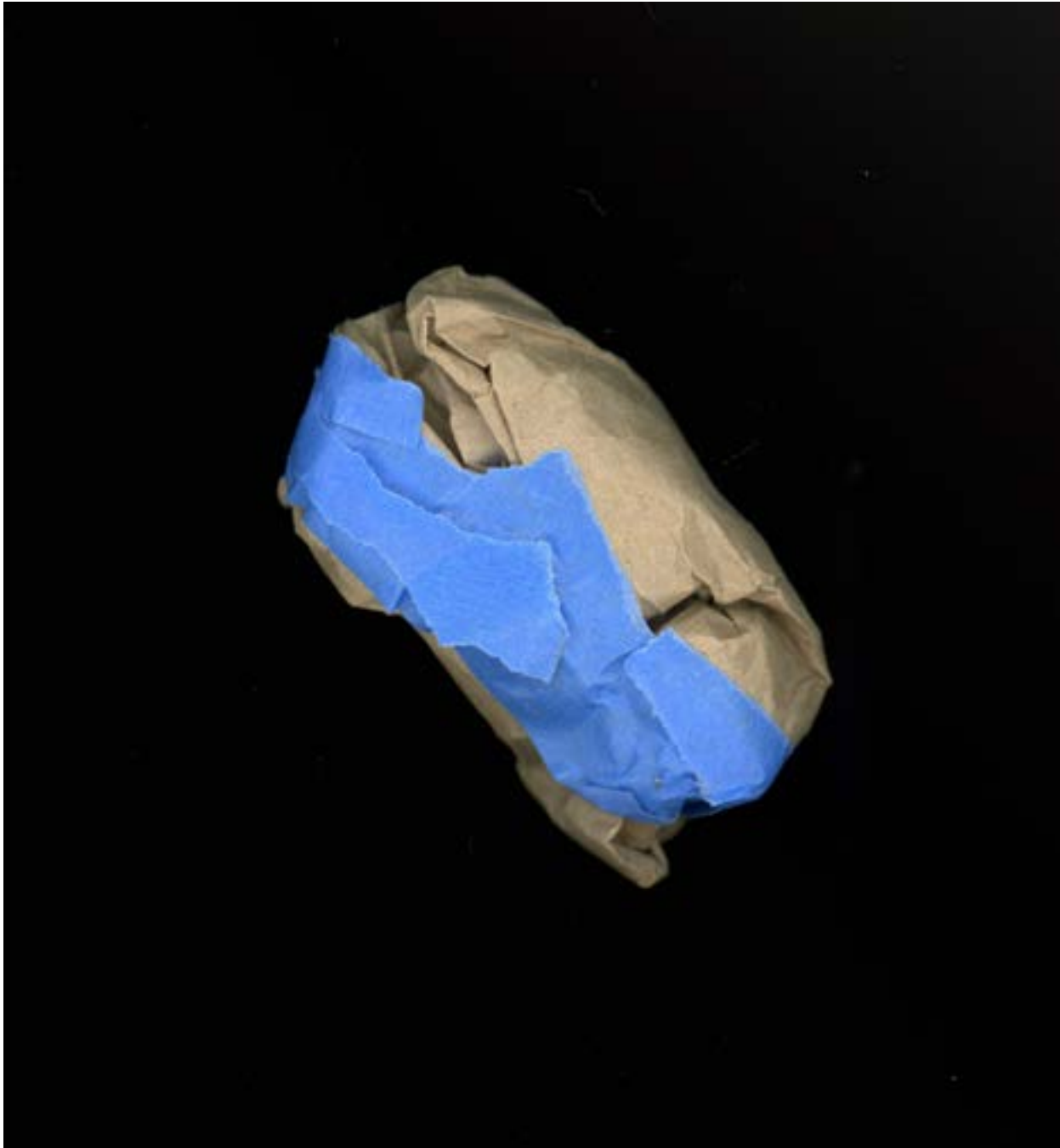
Length: 6 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1927

Provenance: General surface, Bruceville
Mound, Cosumnes River, Lodi, California
(USA)

Description: On one side this rock is a greyish
matte brown, but on the other it is an unex-
pectedly beautiful shiny black, like an antique
ceramic tile. It almost looks like it could be
black glaze on top of clay. What kind of rock
could this be? If you set it down with the black
shiny side face-up, it forms the shape of an
ankle sock, with the foot pointing towards
the right. The texture of this black material is
really remarkable.



Inventory number: 1927.06.0216

General catalogue number: 34465

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 7.5 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1927

Provenance: Bruceville Mound, Cosumnes River, Lodi, California (USA)

Description: This rock could easily be mistaken for a potato. It is the size, shape and color of a small baking potato. It is heavy when I pick it up. It has a fairly flat surface that it naturally rests on. The top is curved like the back of a reclining cat, slightly wider where the cat's rump would be. Its surface is rough (potato-like) and leaves traces of dirt on my blue glove as I roll it around in my hand. I am holding it in my right hand since I am using my left to write these notes. It really does look like a potato that's just been dug out of the earth.



Inventory number: 1927.06.0252

General catalogue number: 34539

Searchword: Crystal; rock crystal

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 5 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1927

Provenance: Bruceville Mound, Cosumnes River, Lodi, California (USA)

Description: This is definitely a crystal. It is colorless and transparent, packed with thin shards of what look like icicles or broken glass or firecrackers. The shards catch the light like a prism, showing flashes of pink and green and yellow when you see them from certain angles. The crystal is a six-sided cylinder, whose sides come together at an angled point on one end, and a blunter point on the other. The blunt end looks like the crumpled edge of a stubbed-out cigarette; it is dirty and opaque and kind of wrinkled.



Inventory number: 1927.06.0333

General catalogue number: 34793

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 10 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1927

Provenance: Bruceville Mound, Consumnes River, Lodi, California (USA)

Description: This stone is oblong, like a thin candy bar with rounded ends. When I hold it in my hand, its rounded tips poke out from either side of my fist. The rock is medium grey, smooth but not shiny, fairly uniform in texture. I am wearing pink plastic gloves today, and the color contrast is striking. On one side of the rock is a barely perceptible thin horizontal line, slightly darker grey, crossing its length. I wonder if this line could have been a ridge that over time has worn smooth. But when I trace it with my finger, it doesn't seem to be raised at all.



Inventory number: 1927.27.0476

General catalogue number: 41457

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 5.2 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1927

Provenance: Baudó River, Chocó (Colombia)

Description: This rock looks like it could be the inside of a geode. It is a creamy amber color, made of tiny compressed crystals. The rock has the shape of an almond or a human eye. Its front face is quite sparkly and shiny. When you flip it over, it gets more three-dimensional and rises up into a dome shape that has a little round indentation, like the iris of an eye. From a bird's eye view, with the iris facing towards you, it resembles a cross section of a volcano, cut off close to its base. The rock is a strange combination of something that is both dull and nearly glowing.



Inventory number: 1927.27.0477

General catalogue number: 41458

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 5.5 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1927

Provenance: Docordó River, tributary of the Docamparó River, southeast of Pizarro, Chocó (Colombia)

Description: This rock is dark and rugged but glossy. It might have some obsidian in it. I can just cover it when I hold it in my palm and close my fingers over it. The outline of the rock looks like a drawing of a mountain. The top part is craggy and rises up to a ridge. It has smooth, differently colored stripes: dark grey, then light grey, then a stripe that is slightly darker, then one that is even darker. The back face of this rock is incredibly complex.



Inventory number: 1938.45.0227

General catalogue number: 60715

Searchword: Stone

Material: Lithic; stone

Length: 6.5 cm

Collector: Erland Nordenskiöld

Date of acquisition: 1938

Provenance: Pisco or Ica, Peru (South America)

Note: Archaeological tool. Unknown use. Artifact acquired by the museum from Erland Nordenskiöld's estate, distributed in September 1938.

Description: This rock is gorgeous. It is shaped like a teardrop. The surface appears to have been polished, and it is mottled like a calico cat, with small dark patches alternating with lighter, nearly whitish-blue patches that look like you could dive into them. The bottom part of the teardrop comes to a rounded point with a very small crack at the tip. Along one side is an indentation about the length of a thumb. The indentation looks like the side of the stone has buckled from the pressure of being held too hard. This stone was meant to be held. It's not heavy but it has heft. It feels special.