



JULIA WALTER, GERMANY

Title: lei niho-palaoa, material of necklace: hemp, coral, metalchain, material of shell: silicon Price: € 920,-

lei niho-palaoa, Hawaiian traditional necklace.

The highest ranking chiefs wore lei niho palaoa-necklaces with a pendant made from the tooth of a sperm whale and braided human hair collected from family members. The ivory tooth was carved in the shape of a tongue, which signified the absolute authority of the wearer to speak. The lei provided the wearer with mana, or power, from his or her ancestors. Traditional Pacific jewellery, or traditional native jewellery in general, fascinates and affects me because of the pure and naive way in which the material is treated and because of its strong faith in the power of the elements. Today I still see the extrovert showing and wearing of trophies to indicate the special rank of the wearer. Someone wearing a Rolex watch on his wrist today does not seem any different to me from a native king wearing a big sperm whale tooth around his neck. These two trophies will provide their wearer with the power and the self-assurance of my ancestors. I have got Hawaiian ancestors and live in Europe.

