



Female figurine

Not on display

Title/Description: Female figurine

Object Type: Figure

Materials: Stone

Technique: Carving, Incising

Measurements: h. 51 x w. 17 x d. 10 mm

Accession Number: 575c

Historic Period: Neolithic (c. 4500-3500 BC)

Production Place: Europe, Greece, Thessaly

Cultural Group: Neolithic

Credit Line: Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1978

This small stone figurine has been made into a pendant or amulet by drilling a hole in the face. However the face is damaged: was it damaged when drilling the hole? Or was it decided to turn the figurine into a pendant after the face was first damaged? Either is possible.

The most prominent features of the figurine, apart from the head, are the pubic triangle at the front, and the buttocks at the rear, placing a focus on the middle part of the body. The face is at present featureless, although initially some facial features may have been represented. The arms are perhaps just barely represented by the carving of the torso, but only on close inspection.

The figurine is black on the rear and white at the front, which may have been caused by burning, or perhaps by the circumstances of deposition.

The artefact was probably made in Greece in the Neolithic period, but without secure contextual associations we cannot be sure (it is said to have formed part of a group found in a grave in Thessaly, but this is not secure).

Michael Boyd, April 2022

Further Reading

Tomkins, P., 'Neolithic antecedents', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Bronze Age Aegean*, ed. E. Cline (Oxford University Press, 2012), 31-50.
