



Standing female figure

On display

Title/Description: Standing female figure

Object Type: Figure

Materials: Pigment, Terracotta

Measurements: h. 105 x w. 60 x d. 25 mm

Accession Number: 709

Historic Period: Formative (early) period (1200-900 BC)

Production Place: Mesoamerica, Mexico, Puebla, The Americas

Cultural Group: Olmec

Credit Line: Purchased with support from the Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Trust, 1979

Small, solid ceramic figurines are found in greater numbers at Formative period sites than the larger hollow figures (see nos. 1-2), yet some of the small figurines share certain traits with the larger figures, such as the use of fine kaolin clays. This delicately-modelled figure, most likely female, has the down-turned mouth associated with the Olmec style. The incised element on the figure's head may represent an ornament or 'hairlock' (MacNeish *et al.*, 1970:136-7), and has been found on several other figurines and larger works at San Lorenzo and elsewhere (Coe and Diehl, 1980:266,306-7; Bernal, 1969: pl. 23). The arms and head were broken off and have been re-attached in modern times. As with the larger whiteware figures, figurines of this type have been found both in household middens and in burials. At Tlatilco in the Basin of Mexico, as many as sixty figurines were found interred with a single individual (Tolstoy, 1989; Romano Pacheco, 1987).

Ted J. Leyenaar, 1997 & Joanne Pillsbury, 1997

Entry taken from Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection 3 volume catalogue, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997).

Provenance

Purchased by the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia from John Stokes, New York in 1979 out of funds provided by the Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Trust.

