



Seated figure

On display

Title/Description: Seated figure

Object Type: Figure

Materials: Pigment, Terracotta

Measurements: h. 45 x w. 40 x d. 35 mm

Accession Number: 848

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

Production Place: Mesoamerica, Mexico, Puebla, The Americas

Credit Line: Purchased with support from Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1983

This small figurine depicts a barrel-chested individual seated cross-legged with elbows on knees and the right hand placed close to the ankle. The left hand has been broken off, although traces of the fingers remain on the right thigh.

In Mesoamerica, ceramic figurines are a common feature in the archaeological record from the Formative period until the time of the Conquest. By the Classic period (ad 300-900), however, most were mould-made and show considerably less variation in type and delicacy of execution than the Formative period figurines which were sculpted by hand. This example of the latter shows that, even in the smallest figures, the details are very finely rendered to convey an image of mass and strength. In this sense, the figurine shows affinities with the much larger 'wrestler' from Santa Maria Uxpanapa (Bernal, 1969: pl. 27).

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 David Bramhall, New York, on the advice of Robert Sainsbury in 1983 out of income from the Sainsbury Purchasing Fund.
