



## **Reclining ballplayer**

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**On display**

**Title/Description:** Reclining ballplayer

**Object Type:** Figure

**Materials:** Pigment, Terracotta

**Measurements:** h. 170 x w. 130 x d. 140 mm

**Accession Number:** 672

**Historic Period:** Formative period (c. 1000 BC)

**Production Place:** Guerrero, Mesoamerica, Mexico, The Americas

**Cultural Group:** Xochipala

**Credit Line:** Purchased with support Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1977

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This ceramic figure is among the oldest known representations of a hip-ballplayer. His position, reclining with one hand on the ground, is typical for a hip-ballplayer playing *por abajo*, low over the ground, although he is represented in a resting pose (*cf.* Leyenaar and Parsons, 1988: fig. 31). His hip is protected by an open-ended *yugo*, and his right knee is covered with a pad for protection. The figure wears ear ornaments and a head-dress with avian imagery. Jones (1991: 172) suggests that the bird represented is an eagle rather than an owl as proposed by Gay (1972:32-5, figs. 22a-b; 1979: 46-7, fig. 19), although the beak shape is not unlike that of a parrot. Evidence of breakage on the chest indicates that at one time the figure probably wore a large chest ornament or protective device. Traces of red pigment are visible around the neck and ears.

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

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## Provenance

Purchased by the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia from David H. Bramhall, New York in 1977 out of funds provided by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury.

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