



Reclining female figure

On display

Title/Description: Reclining female figure

Object Type: Figure

Materials: Pigment, Terracotta

Measurements: h. 70 x w. 110 x d. 75 mm

Accession Number: 786

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, 1981

Formative period figurines are characterised by a broad thematic range. Ballplayers, mothers with children and other subjects are represented in ceramic effigies. The range of body positions is similarly broad and often enigmatic, as is the case in this figure of a reclining female shown with her legs bent and her right arm supporting her head. Michael Coe (1965: no. 199) illustrates a comparable reclining figure, but in that example the figure appears to be male, and the position of the left arm is across the chest.

The coiffure of this figure is rendered as a crest framing the face, with detail indicated by striations and the application of red pigment. The back of the head is plain. Red pigment, which may have been added or augmented when the piece was restored in the 20th century, has also been applied to the lips, hands and other parts of the body.

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 A. Stokes Jnr., New York, on the advice of Robert Sainsbury in 1981 out of income from the Sainsbury Purchasing Fund.
