

Basic Detail Report



Anthropomorphic bowl

Date

1100-400 BCE

Primary Maker

Unidentified artist

Medium

Earthenware

Description

Squat Chorrera bowl with incurving sides and round center opening; bowl in the shape of a helmeted person lying supine on back with foreshortened head, pointed tail, blunt, rudimentary arms and legs. Helmet, arms, legs, and tail have burnished red slip decoration; body of vessel is tan and unburnished. Shape of vessel may be intended to evoke an overturned turtle with a human head. Vessel is intact and unbroken with some erosion of painted surface. Zoomorphic (animal) motifs were commonly employed on a wide range of Pre-Columbian artifacts, including pottery, textiles, and metalwork. Pre-Columbian works of art depict both wild and domesticated animals, creatures commonly encountered in everyday life, and creatures found rarely--or not at all--in the natural world. Aspects of many different animals can be found in Pre-Colombian art, often mixed with human attributes in what may appear to us to be startling fantasy combinations. Many artworks feature animals such as the great cats (jaguars or pumas), said to be full of spiritual power, which were key elements of Pre-Colombian religious traditions. This squat ceramic Chorrera bowl has incurving sides and a round center opening. The bowl is in the shape of a helmeted person lying supine on its back with a foreshortened head, pointed tail, and blunt, rudimentary arms and legs. The helmet, arms, legs, and tail have a burnished red slip decoration; the body of the vessel is tan and unburnished. The vessel shape may be intended to evoke an overturned turtle with a human head.

Dimensions

8 7/16 × 6 1/8 × 2 3/4 inches (21.4 × 15.6 × 7 cm)