



Ceremonial Mace Head

Date

ca. 1-500

Primary Maker

Greater Nicoya

Medium

limestone

Description

Ceremonial mace heads were likely status markers that represented hereditary ties or clan membership by affiliation with a powerful animal, human, or geometric form. Like most mace heads, this one does not show signs of use, such as having been mounted on a staff or used in battle, and it was probably made to accompany the burial of a powerful individual. The jaguar iconography of this piece and the very fine white limestone from which it was made suggest that the owner was seen as strong, cunning, and powerful – the symbolic characteristics most often associated with felines – though it may have been his extended family, rather than physical or mental attributes, that was seen as strong and powerful.

Dimensions

Overall: 3 7/8 x 4 1/4 x 5 1/8 in. (9.8 x 10.8 x 13 cm)