



Female Figure

Date

ca. 800-1200

Primary Maker

Gran Chiriquí

Medium

pottery

Description

This small figure from the Chiriquí province is a well-crafted example of a female form. Although she may appear male at first glance, her subtle anatomy indicates she should be classified female, which reflects the degree to which physical anatomy was used to classify sex in Chiriquí society. Like many other Chiriquí figures, she too appears to have a slight smile. Her ears have been pierced along the lobe, where she may have been adorned with jewelry. The smooth texture and symmetrical form of this figure shows great care on behalf of the artist. Her exaggerated facial features give her a distinctive quality. The care put forth to create such anthropomorphic figures by the Chiriquí indicates a high

level of meaning and most likely shamanistic significance. Although the medium of art has changed over time, traditional shamanistic figures are still crafted in Panamá today by the Guna using woodcarving techniques.

Dimensions

Overall: 4 3/4 x 3 3/8 x 1 1/2 in. (12.1 x 8.6 x 3.8 cm)