

Basic Detail Report



Incense Burner

Date

ca. 400-650

Primary Maker

Maya (archaeological culture)

Medium

pottery, iron pyrite and paint

Description

Large ceramic urns such as this one have rarely been excavated in context so their exact function is debated. They are believed to be associated with tombs and other funerary offerings and, in some cases, were filled with resin incense that was offered to the gods during a

funerary ritual. This example represents a high-status individual, probably a priest or ruler, emerging from the mouth of a leaf-nosed bat. This bat may be a protector spirit tied to the family of the individual depicted. A very similar urn is in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Dimensions

Overall: 19 5/8 x 18 1/8 x 17 3/8 in. (49.8 x 46 x 44.1 cm)