



Hunchback Figure

Date

ca. 300 BCE-300 CE

Primary Maker

Colima

Medium

pottery and slip paint

Description

Elegance and exquisite manufacture are qualities that make Colima ceramic vessels attractive to the modern eye. The beautiful finish of this crouching hunchback figure makes it a remarkable example of the Colima tradition. Red slip paint was applied when the piece had

air dried, after which it was carefully burnished for hours with a soft stone before finally being fired. The misshapen body of the figure is marked by a prominent hump on the back and a blade-like deformation of both tibia bones. He has a long nose, thin lips and eyes, and pierced ear lobes, and his head is covered by a tightly fitting skull cap. The abdominal muscles, umbilicus, and sexual organs are also depicted. In the West Mexican tradition, hunchbacks were believed to have magical or shamanic powers. They lived apart from the rest of society and were cared for by attendants.

Dimensions

Overall: 11 x 10 1/4 x 10 3/4 in. (27.9 x 26 x 27.3 cm)