



Tripod Jar

Date

ca. 1-500

Primary Maker

Central Highlands/Atlantic Watershed

Medium

pottery and slip paint

Description

Tripod jars were made throughout ancient Mesoamerica and may have been based upon the typical domestic hearth of three stones with a central cooking pot. In Costa Rica, especially within the Atlantic Watershed region, artists explored the limits of their medium by stretching the legs of the tripod and adding modeled decorations.

This tripod jar in the Ticaban style has an owl added to each hollow leg and small pellets of clay rattle inside. A shell was used while the clay was wet to add rows of small dots to the legs. Being nocturnal animals, owls symbolized darkness, death, and destruction, but they also represented wisdom for their ability to be successful in the threatening nighttime environment.

Dimensions

Overall: 6 1/8 x 5 7/8 x 5 7/8 in. (15.6 x 14.9 x 14.9 cm)