

Basic Detail Report



Trophy Head

Date

ca. 1000-1550

Primary Maker

Central Highlands/Atlantic Watershed

Medium

basalt

Description

The Atlantic Watershed area is known for stunning stonework and this carved head is a stone representation of a ritual practice known as the “cult of the trophy head.” This was a custom in which prisoners were sacrificially decapitated in rituals to ensure the fertility of the ruling group’s lands. Carved as a head and neck only, this free-standing object was meant to be displayed in the burial

goods of a powerful chief. Unique hair styles distinguish each trophy head rather than facial features, which are muted to signify the powerlessness of the dead.

Dimensions

Overall: 6 3/4 x 5 x 6 in. (17.1 x 12.7 x 15.2 cm)