



Xipe Totec

Date

ca. 450-650

Medium

pottery and slip paint

Description

This magnificent ceramic sculpture of Xipe Totec, “our lord the flayed one,” is one of the most beautiful and striking pieces in the Lowe’s collection. The inherent visual impact of Xipe Totec figures has been skillfully recreated here using a combination of traditional iconography from Central Mexico with visual and technical elements of local Veracruz ceramic traditions. The incredibly naturalistic style is even more remarkable given the medium of clay; hollow ceramic sculpture of this quality is rare, especially in such an excellent state of preservation. This Xipe Totec priest is shown with the traditional human skin covering his body. The eyes are mostly closed and the mouth of the priest can be seen through an opening in the flayed skin. His hands and feet emerge from sleeves of human skin. The impersonator wears large ear ornaments, which are a common symbol of self-sacrifice in the ceramic sculpture of Veracruz. This type of Xipe Totec representation is a precursor of the much later Aztec versions in stone, one of which is

included in this exhibition.

Dimensions

Overall: 22 x 10 1/8 x 9 7/8 in. (55.9 x 25.7 x 25.1 cm)