

# Basic Detail Report

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## Metate

### Date

4th to 7th Century

### Medium

Volcanic stone

### Description

The jaguar imagery seen on this 4th to 7th century metate made of volcanic stone represents the soul of a

shaman, who has shape-shifted to take on the form of a jaguar. The legs of the metate are composed of upside-down parrot heads, one atop the other. The placing of the parrot heads upside down is a reference to the underworld, where everything is said to be upside down. The interlocking geometric elements at the top of the jaguar's head are a reference to the shaman's control and power over the dualistic forces of nature. One of the roles of a shaman was to guide and protect the soul of the dead in its journey through the underworld.

### Dimensions

12 3/8 × 11 5/8 × 30 1/4 in. (31.4 × 29.5 × 76.8 cm)