

Basic Detail Report



Vessel

Date
18th Century

Primary Maker
Paiwan

Medium
Clay

Description

This style of pottery was traditionally made by the Paiwan people of southern Taiwan from the Neolithic era up until the technique was lost before recorded history. Their mysterious origin has given rise to a Paiwan mythology of ancestors rising from them. There were three distinct styles of pottery vessel made by the Paiwan, each of which corresponds to gender: male, female, and neutral. Two pairs of snakes on the body of the vessel indicate that it is a male vessel. The snake is an important motif in Paiwan art as it was believed that the Paiwan were descended from the viper, further establishing the ancestral connection. Different vessels could be used to present offerings to gods, as wedding gifts, and for storing food or drink. Despite these different uses, the prestige of these objects ensured they could only be owned by tribal chiefs and nobility.

Dimensions

15 × 11 1/2 in. (27.3 × 29.2 cm)