



Figure

Date

1200-1500

Medium

Terracotta

Description

Crude figure in reddish-brown terracotta. It has a rectangular body with the impression of a head, arms and feet. It has breasts and scored lines on the chest. Found in a tomb in Colombia. Probably a crude Quimbaya ceramic. It looks very much like examples found in Costa Rica. The people inhabiting the hills and valleys of the middle Cauca River during the centuries before the Spanish conquest in the 1530s made distinctive ceramic figures known familiarly as slab figures. They can be solid or hollow, male or female, although most are male. They range in

height from four to twenty inches. Square or rectangular slabs of clay make up the head and body and heavy coils of clay are attached for arms and legs. The neck is usually a deep groove with little further modelling. Slab figures were included with ceramic vessels and metal ornaments as offerings in burials in shaft and chamber tombs. They may have been considered guardians or companions for the deceased.