

Finch & C^o



A RARE AND FINE NAYARIT SEATED 'BALL PLAYER'
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TERRACOTTA, POLYCHROME

PRE-COLUMBIAN / MEXICO

100 BC TO 250 BC AD

SIZE: 48CM HIGH - 18¾ INS HIGH

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LITERATURE

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BEFORE THEIR ARRIVAL IN THE NEW WORLD, THE SPANISH HAD NEVER BEFORE SEEN GAMES PLAYED WITH BALLS OF RUBBER, A SUBSTANCE UNKNOWN IN EUROPE. UPON THEIR ARRIVAL IN CENTRAL MEXICO, THEY WERE SO ENAMOURED WITH THE AZTEC BALLGAME THAT THEY SENT A TEAM OF INDIGENOUS PLAYERS TO SPAIN TO PLAY BEFORE THE COURT OF CHARLES V. THE GAME THE SPANISH WITNESSED IN THE AZTEC REGION WAS JUST ONE MANIFESTATION OF A LONG-LIVED AND WIDE-RANGING BALLGAME TRADITION IN MESOAMERICA. CULTURES THROUGHOUT MESOAMERICA PLAYED GAMES USING RUBBER BALLS, THE TRADITION EXTENDED TO THE CARIBBEAN AND THE SOUTHWESTERN UNITED STATES. MESOAMERICAN PEOPLES PLAYED MANY TYPES OF BALLGAMES, WITH DIFFERENT RULES AND STYLES OF PLAY.

THE SEATED FIGURE IN OUR EXAMPLE SITS WEARING MULTIPLE EARRINGS AND NOSE RINGS, AND IS DECORATED WITH POLYCHROME 'SLIP' OF RED, BLACK, WHITE AND YELLOW. CLASPING A BALL BETWEEN HIS CUPPED HANDS IN FRONT OF HIS CHEST.

PROVENANCE

STANLEY J SEEGER COLLECTION, USA

SOTHEBY'S, LONDON, 5TH MARCH 2014

EX PRIVATE UK COLLECTION