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For Immediate Use
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“Fowler in Focus: Monochrome Ceramics from Ancient Mexico” Opens Sept 12 at the Fowler Museum at UCLA



The sculpted, carved, and incised vessels in *Fowler in Focus: Monochrome Ceramics from Ancient Mexico*—on view at the Fowler Museum from Sept 12, 2010–January 23, 2011—testify to the rich ceramic history of ancient Mexico. In stark contrast to brilliantly painted Mesoamerican ceramics, the makers of these objects seem to have deliberately rejected color in favor of an aesthetic valuing the sculpted form. Since many of the works were contemporaneous with polychrome ceramic styles, they are understood to reflect a conscious artistic choice to stand apart from the colorful arts of Mesoamerica.

Ranging from the Preclassic to the Postclassic periods, these styles reveal intercultural connections, such as between Teotihuacan, the great Classic urban center in Central Mexico, and the Maya region. This fine display of thirty-five monochrome ceramics—including elegant jars shaped as calabashes, vessels expertly sculpted to represent various animals, and bowls carved with figural scenes or fantastic creatures—highlight how ceramic styles were shared, appropriated, and transformed at specific historical moments in ancient Mexico.

The ceramics on display are grouped by region, with works from Colima in West Mexico, Teotihuacan in Central Mexico, and the Maya in Southern Mexico, along with two cases of effigy jars used by different cultures in ceremonies.

This exhibition commemorates the bicentennial of the Mexican War of Independence and centennial of the Mexican Revolution by showcasing the pre-Columbian heritage of Mexico. The diverse indigenous cultures of Mesoamerica fundamentally shaped what became the Mexican nation and continue to enrich Mexico’s culture today.

Fowler in Focus: Monochrome Ceramics from Ancient Mexico is curated by Kim Richter, the Fowler Museum’s assistant curator of arts of the Americas, and will be on view in the Fowler in Focus gallery, the central space within the long-term exhibition *Intersections: World Arts, Local Lives*. Fowler in Focus is dedicated to rotating installations of new acquisitions, sub-collections, and particular artistic genres in the Fowler’s permanent holdings.

The Fowler Museum at UCLA is one of the country's most respected institutions devoted to exploring the arts and cultures of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and the Americas. The Fowler is open Wednesdays through Sundays, from noon to 5 p.m.; and on Thursdays, from noon until 8 p.m. The museum is closed Mondays and Tuesdays. The Fowler Museum, part of UCLA Arts, is located in the north part of the UCLA campus. Admission is free. Parking is available for a maximum of \$10 in Lot 4. For more information, the public may call 310/825-4361 or visit fowler.ucla.edu.

Related Event:

Thursday, September 16, 12 pm

Culture Fix

Assistant curator Kim Richter marks Mexican Independence Day with a discussion of the ballplayer iconography depicted on a carved Maya vessel on view in *Fowler in Focus: Monochrome Ceramics of Ancient Mexico*.

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