

Revive Exhibition – 2022-23

Object Description

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The open form bears a flat, flanged rim that encompasses the total width of the vessel and curves into its body. The body spans about two-thirds of the form's total height, and sharply tapers at the start of the foot, creating a rounded, bowl-like edge in its transition. The body's walls above that are straight overall. The stem between the body and the base is smaller than both sections, widening slightly at each joint. The foot of the vessel is shaped like a puck that flares towards the base. The connecting stem sits on the top flat area of this base.

The vessel has two handles that start halfway up the height of the body. Viewing the form directly, the handles appear to extend out at a 45-degree angle before turning up where the handle arches. From the side, the handles look horseshoe-shaped, where the distance between the joints is smaller than the length of its top section. The handle is not incredibly curved, with its arch creating a flatter top. Each handle is externally decorated with black slip, although its inside area exposes the terra cotta underneath.

The vessel appears to have no major textural incisions, with a smoothed-out surface and is overall decorated with black slip. Its main patterns and narrative features, however, are shown in its original terra-cotta color. The foot is mostly black with a straight, terra-cotta band around the top edge, about a fifth of the surface height. Its top flat part is also black and has a thinner band around the connecting body stem. Black slip continues up the vessel and meets a repeating geometric spiral band that stretches horizontally above the bottom curve of the body. This pattern does not go around the entire form, stretching only through the center of the profile and acting like the bottom frame of the area created between it and the top rim vertically, and the two handles on either side. The pattern is made up of eight square spirals across its width, each spiraling twice inward in a counterclockwise direction before transitioning to the next one.

The center space on the surface of the body depicts a narrative scene with two terra-cotta figures on the black slip background. One figure sits nude on the left of the scene, showing their right facial profile with their torso twisted right towards the viewer. They are depicted with short black hair that appears curly with a faint light beige mark across the head, resembling a headband or wreath. They are slim but are muscularly defined at the chest and torso. Their legs extend forward towards the base spiral decoration. Their left leg is bent slightly higher at the knee than the right leg. The figure sits on a draped stool-like form with a skirt and wider undulating layer that mushrooms over the edge of the seat. The figure's right arm rests behind their body, slightly bent with their palm resting on the seat. Between the fingers of their right hand, the figure holds a long thin branch that curves lightly toward the vessel's left handle. There are thirteen leaves on the branch shaped like small circles. The leaves start past the figure's back to the end of the stem in an alternating pattern, with seven leaves on its top side and six on the other.

To the left of the figure is a free-standing terra cotta mark, like a long staff. Its height spans the same distance between the bottom of the seat's skirt to the level of the figure's shoulders. It is approximately the same width as the figure's arm at each of its ends, but becomes thinner towards its center, about the same level as the figure's right elbow.

The figure's left hand holds up an open terra cotta box in the direction of the other figure, just slightly to the left of the center of the vessel. Their left arm is extended softly, using their elbow

to carry the weight of the box. The box is depicted with short legs. The back left corner leg is hidden by the figure's arm as they hold it from its bottom. The outward face of the box is painted with a black rectangle at its center. The shape is outlined with a thinner black edge. The area above the black rectangle is decorated with lighter, almost translucent, white dots across. The box's lid is open at an angle, almost like a rhombus shape attached to the box. Its bottom left edge of the lid is flushed to the top left edge of the box. The lid's bottom right edge extends about four-fifths of the box's top edge. The lid's highest points extend almost 45 degrees from its bottom, attachment points.

Another figure stands on the right of the space facing the seated figure, showing their left facial profile with their body twisted left towards the viewer. They are depicted with black curly hair in a bun-like, conical updo and tied in a wide terra-cotta colored wrap around their head. The figure wears a draped gown that comes together at two points, or buttons, on either shoulder, creating a bowed neckline across. The gown drapes towards the center of their chest and swoops beneath their left breast. The gown appears tied at the waist with a thin string that creates a small bow under their right breast. The skirt of the gown flows almost straight down to the figure's ankles. Their feet are pointed towards the seated figure as well, with their right foot positioned beneath their right breast, and their left foot extended back, putting their weight on the balls of their foot and lifting the hem of the gown slightly.

Their right hand holds up a flat object (like a large plate or drum) to the seated figure. Their elbow remains close to their torso, with their forearm appearing parallel to the ground and lifting most of the object's weight. Held from its center, the object is shown from its side edge (so not from its largest area) and has translucent white dots across its side surface, similar to those on the box. The figure's left arm extends backward holding a long plant that stretches from the figure's back left foot to the edge of the top pattern on the vessel. The reed is depicted as a thin line with two leaves that emerge on each side past the height of the figure's arm. At the top, its seeds are formed like a rounded, inverted triangle.

Both of these figures appear to be in the middle of an exchange, although the premise is vague. It is also unclear what the relationship between each figure could be. Facing each other, the items they hold stretch out in a kind of gift or offering. Seeing that both figures also hold different types of branches, or plant shoots, could point to a time of harvest.

The pattern beneath the width of the rim is decorated with a leaf-like pattern of interlocking, elongated heart shapes (like two connected leaves merging to a point, and the point then locking into the center of the next two connected leaves) and contained by two flat terra-cotta bands on each of its side (one right under the lip of the form and one at the curve between the rim and the body).