

KNOT

KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS:
REASSESSING THE INDIGENOUS
AMERICAN HERITAGE IN ITALY

Galleria Estense

Largo Porta Sant'Agostino, 337, 41121 Modena (MO)

Form compiled by: Anna Maria Piccinini (art historian), in collaboration with Davide Domenici.

Introduction

The collection of the Galleria Estense in Modena preserves a single but very rare Indigenous American artefact. It is an incised gourd of Peruvian origin, dating to the seventeenth century.

Cultural Areas (tags)

Central and Southern Andes

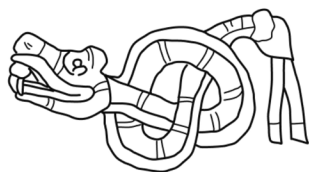
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| Collection name | Peruvian Collection |
| Collector | Unknown |
| Cultural areas | Central and Southern Andes |
| Ethnic group / community / cultural sphere | Quechua (Peru) |
| Description of the | Bottle made from a gourd (<i>Lagenaria siceraria</i>), with |

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| collection | spheroidal body and tall vertical neck (form known as chucula), dried and incised (Inv. 2449). Height 43 cm; diameter 19 cm. The neck is decorated with geometric motifs with a twisting pattern, while on the body one sees the view of a port city, with complex architecture and vegetation. The city faces the sea, where boats and sailors are depicted, one of whom appears to be saving from a sea monster a man who has fallen into the water. The decorative technique corresponds to the typical Andean practice of mate burilado (“gourd incised with a burin”), with the addition of polychrome painting. |
| History of the collection | The gourd-bottle was first documented in the Galleria Estense in 1662 by Giovanni Donzi as “Una zucca di legno lavorata col bolino alla todesca”; it also appears in the inventory drawn up in 1751, where it is described as “fiasco di terra o sia zucca d’orto”. The dating before 1662 makes the Estense example particularly ancient and therefore of great rarity and importance. |
| Online database | |
| Web page | |
| Bibliography | Sirocchi, S. 2021. “Manifattura peruviana. Bottiglia”. In <i>“Stravaganze e bizzarie”. La collezione di arti decorative della Galleria Estense</i> . Modena: Gallerie Estensi-SAGEP. |

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