A000-MEX-Olmec-Were Jaguar- Plaque-Openwork-Steatite-1100 BCE





Olmec-Plaque-Openwork-Steatite-1100 BCE

**Case no.: 14**

**Accession Number:**

**Formal Label:** Olmec-Plaque-Openwork-Steatite-1100 BCE

**Display Description:**

This openwork plaque may have been part of a jaguar transformation mask which emphasized feline wrinkles around the nose, upcurving lips and bared teeth. As part of a transformation mask it would have been the frame for the right eye since there are five drilled holes that would have secured it to some type of leather or textile. The wearer would have assumed a new identity, perhaps that of the were-jaguar ancestor, because the Olmecs believed that, in the distant past, a union between a woman and a jaguar produced an earlier race of were-jaguars.

The Olmecs worked mainly in stone and used serpentine to suggest the dark aspect of the were-jaguar conversion.

**LC Classification:**

**Date or Time Horizon:**

**Geographical Area:**

**Map:**

**GPS coordinates:**

**Cultural Affiliation:**

**Media:**

**Dimensions:**

**Weight:**

**Condition:**

**Provenance:**

**Discussion:**

**References:**