

OBJECT of the **month**

November 2022

BEGIN TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to the Dayton Art Institute's 'Object of the Month' presentation. I am Rick Hoffman, a Museum Guide and I would like to share with you a remarkably interesting piece of pottery that I discovered in the Shaw Foundation Gallery for Art of the Ancient Americas. It is a double spouted bottle created by an artist of the Nasca civilization who lived in south coastal area Peru between about 1-350 CE.



What's the first thing that you notice? I will bet it is the unusual handle with a spout on each side of it. Let's examine our bottle even closer. I see assorted colors used on its surface. The base color of the bottle is a dark red and the handle is black. There are birds on branches represented several times around the bottle with each bird's beak going into a flower blossom. The birds are outlined in a black. Their capes are gray and their chins are a lighter shade of red. They have a white ring around their black eyes. All of them have three toes on each foot which are black and wrapped around curved branches which are white.

The bottle itself is a smooth and round vessel. To make one of these unique bottles, they used techniques including coiling, (a tube of clay that was coiled around a base) and drawing raw clay into a form, (also called modeling or direct shaping). The container and the double spout were made separately. X-ray investigation of these bottles has revealed that they were formed as two bowls, then joined together to make a closed vessel. The upper half of the joined container was perforated so that the tubes for the spout could be inserted and fixed in place. Finally, it was painted and then placed in a kiln to be fired.

The Nasca civilization also created some geoglyphs on top of the desert and one of them matches the bird on our bottle. Created between 500 BCE to 500 CE, geoglyphs are depressions in the desert floor by removing pebbles and leaving different colored dirt exposed. They are located 250 miles south of Lima Peru. Current theories suggest that this symbolism was connected to water and used as part of a ritual to bring much needed rain.

DAYTON ART INSTITUTE

I encourage you on your next visit to the Dayton Art Institute to visit the Harold W. and Mary Louise Shaw Foundation Gallery for Art of the Ancient Americas and see this pristine piece of ancient pottery from Peru. Check back soon for next month's 'Object of the Month' presentation.

END TRANSCRIPT

Click [here](#) to access the video presentation.

FEATURED ARTWORKS*

"Peru Nazca Lines Geoglyphs Spiral 1-5-2" taken by Berkeleyhomes.com, July 10, 2019. © Ira Serkes.
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QUESTIONS? edu@daytonart.org