

***Haniwa* (TOMB SCULPTURE) of a BEARDED MAN**

Japan, Kofun period, late 3rd to early 6th century A.D.
Unglazed clay with red pigment

Bequest of Florence Whitaker, 2003

(12,598.1)

New Acquisition/Lecture

Rare New Face in Japan Gallery

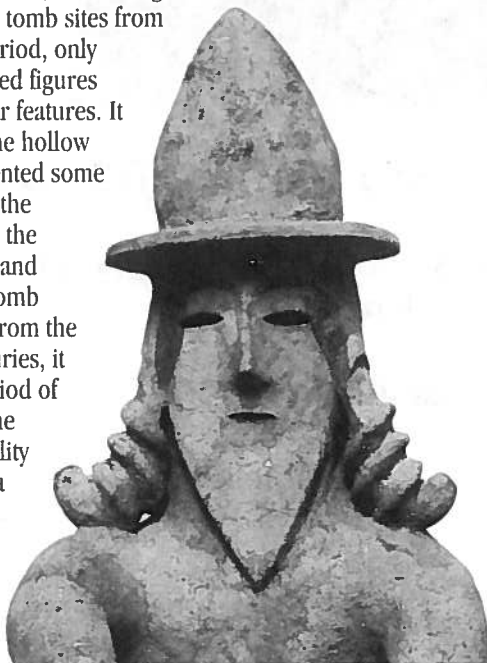
ASIAN ART COLLECTION

The Honolulu Academy of Arts recently acquired a major addition to the early Japanese art collection, through the purchase of a late Tumulus period (late 5th and early 6th century) Haniwa Figure of a Bearded Man. This unusual and rare early example of a full figure is dressed in broad pants, a long cinched tunic and a pointed, brimmed hat. It is further enhanced by original red pigment across the upper face, which is framed by curled pigtails and a pronounced, pointed beard. Other facial attributes include an open, pierced mouth and eyes. All of these characteristics help to identify the figure as very likely belonging to a unique group of tomb figures found at the Chiba Prefectural site of Himezuka. Most of the figures from this site are now housed at the Shibayama Haniwa Museum in Chiba.

Made out of clay, and typically placed around the exterior of a Japanese tomb mound, these compelling images were all found grouped on the side opposite the tomb door, as if to greet a visitor to the tomb. Unlike tomb figures in China, Japanese haniwa were not placed within the tomb, but rather, on the outside, where they would be visible to people passing by the tomb.

What was the function of these intriguing images? It is unclear, but among the 50 or so known tomb sites from the late Tumulus period, only Himezuka has yielded figures with these particular features. It is speculated that the hollow clay figures represented some aspect of the life of the deceased. Although the practice of making and placing haniwa at tomb mounds extended from the 5th to the 7th centuries, it was during this period of late Tumulus that the expressionistic quality seen on this haniwa reached its most impressive form.

—Julia M.
White, Curator
of Asian Art



Haniwa Figure of a Bearded Man
Japan, late Tumulus period (late 5th-
early 6th century)
Unglazed clay with red pigment
H. 50-1/4" W. 15-1/2" D. 6-1/8"
Purchase, 2003