

# GALERIE GOLCONDA

ARCHÉOLOGIE MUSÉALE  
FOSSILES – BIJOUX RARES ET ANCIENS  
CABINET DE CURIOSITÉS DES GRANDES CIVILISATIONS

## CERTIFICATE

### **RARE MAYA FUNERAL URN FROM KAMINALJUYU GUATEMALA, CLASSIC PERIOD (AD 550-950)**

**MATERIAL AND TECHNIQUE:** large, rare Maya urn in pale beige terracotta with traces of reddish-orange and cream-coloured pigment. Cylindrical in form, it widens slightly at the base and at the rim. There is a textured decoration showing a face with wide, round eyes, raised eyelids shown in relief, and a single wavy eyebrow. Its nose is aquiline, the mouth half-open with thin lips. Large serrated ears on either side serve as handles. The domed lid is topped by a seated figure with a disproportionate head carrying a spherical urn, which may have served as a small chimney. The figure has a band around its forehead and an alarming expression with bulging eyes and wrinkled features suggesting old age. It also wears impressive disc-shaped earrings. The lid is ornamented with another smaller urn featuring a human face. This stylised head has highly expressive round eyes with prominent eyebrows, crowned with an ornamental frieze. Four snarling leopard heads are placed at the four cardinal points of the lid.

The cover shows some restoration, visible re-gluing, and some fire-blackened areas from ancient times.

**ORIGIN:** Incense-burners were very important in Maya ritual sacrifice. It was customary to pour blood collected from the tongue of a woman and from the penis of a man over a burning vegetable resin called copal. The resulting smoke was supposed to allow man to enter into contact with the gods.

The Kaminaljuyu site, located in the suburbs of Guatemala City, was at its peak during the Classic period. Its prosperity stemmed from its control of the obsidian mines of El Chayal. It was a hierarchic state, capable of constructing enormous brick pyramids. It is thought that later this civilisation came under the control of Teotihuacan.

**DIMENSIONS:** Height: 47 cm / 18,5" - Diameter: 31 cm approx./ 12,20"

**THERMOLUMINESCENT TEST:** N° QED1415/FP-0202 from the QED laboratory.

**EXPORT LICENCE:** supplied with a Passeport Culturel issued by the French Ministry of Culture number 160970, allowing this piece to travel worldwide.

**MUSEOGRAPHY:** Some very similar urns are exhibited in the private museum of Casa Santo Domingo in Antigua – Guatemala

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** published in "Collecting Masterpieces, Part One" by Beryl Cavallini at pages 60/61

Police book registration N°: 1534