

# GALERIE GOLCONDA

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

## CERTIFICATE

**SMILING PRIEST**  
**MEXICO – VERACRUZ CULTURE**  
**CLASSICAL ERA (AD 250 – 900)**

**MATERIAL AND TECHNIQUE:** statue of a large anthropomorphic figure, depicting an upright smiling priest, holding a rattle in one hand. The figure is naked and wears on its chest a band with glyphic adornment. Its smiling face may be under the effect of a hallucinogen and is surmounted by a cap covering the ritualistic cranial deformation with patterns in the form of glyphs. The mouth is ajar, suggesting a precious stone lies within it as a sign of eternal life. Orange and beige terracotta.

This piece of remarkable size can be classified in the corpus of the largest of this type. Very fine condition, with breakings and restorations which do not exceed 10% of the total surface area.

**ORIGIN:** it is recently believed that hollow ceramics depicting men and women in brilliant laughter can be closely linked to music and dance. Their production is often located in the southern centre of the state of Veracruz, in the region between the Blanco and Papaloapan rivers. Often called "smiling figures", these ceramic statues constitute exceptional works as much by the human feeling they express as by the control of their execution

As the debate regarding their significance progresses, the idea of these peoples participation in rituals and ceremonies dedicated to the goddess Tlazolteoti (a symbol of vital energy and the regeneration of life), is strengthened. Dancing, laughing, music, singing and drunkenness would be involved during these gatherings. The presence of the rattle and the codified dance posture of this figure reinforce the relevance of this thesis.

**DIMENSIONS:** Height: 47 cm (18.5") – Width: 31 cm (12,20")

**PROVENANCE:** ancient collection belonging to Vie Whorer who acquired it in the 50's.

**THERMOLUMINESCENCE TEST:** N° QED1725/FP-0210 confirming the dating by QED laboratory.

**CULTURAL PASSPORT:** supplied with an export licence issued by the French Ministry of Culture number 188156, allowing this piece to travel worldwide.

Police book registration N°: 1842