

CERAMICS: ***A Tradition of Permanence***

- Clay played an important role in everyday and ceremonial life of the early peoples in the Greater West
- It had the power to change the way people lived: to store and transport food and water; seeds and grains could be preserved and liquids carried; facilitated food preparation and cooking
- Earliest examples represented human forms dating back to approximately 3500 BC
- Clay was also used to make musical instruments (flutes, trumpets, drums, whistling vessels)
- Ceramics were considered the hallmark of the Greater West, particularly for agriculturally based groups such as Chumash, Pomo, Paiute, Navajo, Pueblo, Zuni and other that were sedentary for at least part of the year (due to its breakability)
- Most pottery was made for either storage, preparation or consumption of food
- Less common is fine ware pottery (seen in this show) These were involved in ritual or ceremonial events, including burials. They communicated ideas, ideologies and narratives
- Pottery is closely tied to cultural identity (own unique style)
- Ceramics afford us a preserved visual record of a past that would otherwise be lost since clay does not

disintegrate or return to the earth with the passage of time