



The Capture of Abimael Guzmán

Date

c. 1992

Primary Maker

Nicario Jiménez Quispe

Medium

Wood and boiled potato and gypsum powder paste with paint

Description

Originally from Peru and now based in Naples, Florida, Nicario Jiménez Quispe is known as the “Artist of the Andes,” and celebrated for his creation of Peruvian folk art retablos, which he

often adapts in response to contemporary concerns and events. This retablo depicts the capture and imprisonment of Abimael Guzmán (1934–2021), a Peruvian revolutionary and guerilla leader who founded the Partido Comunista del Perú – Sendero Luminoso (Communist Party of Peru—Shining Path) in 1969—considered a terrorist organization by many governments. A third-generation retablo maker, Jiménez Quispe was born in Alcamenca, a small village in the Ayacucho region of Peru, which is home to the tradition of Peruvian folk art retablos—wooden boxes which open to reveal elaborately staged narratives, usually featuring biblical subjects. From 1980 the city of Ayacucho was used by the Shining Path as the base from which it launched attacks against the Peruvian government. Guzmán’s capture in 1992 marked a significant step in the government’s fight against the group and in Peru’s eventual return to normalcy. Guzmán appears in both the top and bottom registers of the work—shown both at the moment of his arrest and caged in his prison uniform, where he was displayed publicly for the first time before the national and international press. The figures are sculpted from a mixture of boiled potato and gypsum powder, which the artist manipulates using a wooden implement that resembles a large toothpick.

Dimensions

Overall (with doors open): 25 1/2 in. x 32 in. x 6 1/2 in. (64.8 x 81.3 x 16.5 cm) Overall (closed): 25 1/2 in. x 17 in. x 6 1/2 in. (64.8 x 43.2 x 16.5 cm)