

# Joana Vasconcelos

Viriato



NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF WOMEN IN THE ARTS

Viriato, 2005

## Off the Hook

**Joana Vasconcelos (b. 1971)** explores consumer culture, collective identity, and our assumptions about what constitutes art. This Portuguese artist is known for enveloping everyday items, such as pianos, laptops, or decorative objects, in crocheted and knitted material.

## Take a closer look

In *Viriato*, Vasconcelos cloaks a lawn ornament in elaborate needlework, contrasting mass-produced with hand-crafted. The lacy covering invites us to peer at the details beneath, while also competing for our attention with the figure it masks.

## Something to talk about

Because handmade textiles are universally rich with associations, Vasconcelos incorporates them in many of her works to encourage multiple interpretations. How do your associations with crochet and similar techniques affect your response to *Viriato*?

## Who knew?

Viriato was a first-century leader in the area of present-day Portugal. He is credited with turning back an invasion of his homeland by the ancient Romans.

Joana Vasconcelos, *Viriato*, 2005; Faience dog and handmade cotton crochet, 29½ x 17¼ x 15¼ inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Heather and Tony Podesta Collection; © Joana Vasconcelos; Photograph by Lee Stalsworth

