

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The itinerary for Between Continents/Between Seas: Precolumbian Art of Costa Rica has been revised. The new itinerary is as follows:

National Gallery of Art
December 20, 1981 - May 9, 1982

San Antonio Museum of Art
June 21 - September 12, 1982

Los Angeles County Museum of Art
October 25, 1982 - January 16, 1983

Exhibitor to be announced
as soon as confirmed.
February 28 - May 22, 1983

San Diego Museum of Art
July 4 - September 25, 1983

The Detroit Institute of Arts
November 7, 1983 - January 29, 1984

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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** PRESS PREVIEW
Tuesday, December 15, 1981
10 A.M. - 3 P.M.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY LEADS TO FIRST SURVEY OF PRECOLUMBIAN ART FROM COSTA RICA

WASHINGTON, D. C. December 4, 1981. In the first exhibition of its kind ever to travel from Costa Rica to the United States, more than three hundred works of Precolumbian art in gold, jade, ceramics and volcanic stone go on view in the National Gallery of Art's East Building on Sunday, December 20.

The exhibition, Between Continents/Between Seas: Precolumbian Art of Costa Rica--reflecting Costa Rica's unique crossroads position on the Central American isthmus--will remain on view at the National Gallery through May 9, 1982. It then begins a tour of five other U.S. cities.

Spanning the centuries from about 500 B.C. to the mid-sixteenth century A.D., the time of the Spanish conquest, the ceremonial, decorative and utilitarian objects in the exhibition illustrate the variety of arts in each of the three major archaeological regions within Costa Rica's territory. The works are arranged for the first time chronologically by region, suggesting the sequence of Precolumbian cultures, as well as northern and southern influences on them. Recent archaeological studies serve as the basis for this chronological arrangement, which is a key to further understanding the regions' aesthetic history.

Following its premiere at the National Gallery, the exhibition will travel to the San Antonio Museum of Art (June 21 - September 12, 1982), the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (October 25, 1982 - January 16, 1983), the Carnegie Institute,

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Pittsburg (February 28 - May 22, 1983), the San Diego Museum of Art (July 4 - September 25, 1983) and the Detroit Institute of Arts (November 7, 1983 - January 29, 1984).

The Detroit Institute of Arts conceived and coordinated the exhibition. It has been organized by a scientific committee composed of Julie Jones, curator of primitive art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Michael Kan, deputy director and curator of African, Oceanic and New World cultures at the Detroit Institute of Arts; and Michael J. Snarskis, director of archaeological research at the Museo Nacional de Costa Rica.

Major institutions lending objects to the exhibition include the Museo Nacional de Costa Rica; the Banco Central de Costa Rica, which houses the country's Gold Museum; the Banco Nacional de Costa Rica; and the Instituto Nacional de Seguros, which houses the Museum of Jade. Private collections contributing to the exhibition are those of Juan and Ligia Dada, Carmen de Gillen, Alfonso Jiménez-Alvarado, Maritza Castro de Laurencich, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Mannil, Daniel and Marjorie Oduber, Dr. Hernán Páez U. and Dr. Carlos Roberto Páez S., Maria Eugenia de Roy, and Margarita de Ruenes.

Finely wrought gold and elegantly carved jade pendants and other ornaments are included in the exhibition, as are bright, richly incised ceramic vessels and large sculptures, ritual implements and curved grinding tables carved from volcanic stone in intricate designs. In addition to human forms, many of these objects portray birds, reptiles, insects, animals or fantastic creatures combining characteristics of each.

The objects are installed on the East Building's Concourse level, in galleries constructed especially for the exhibition. The first several rooms present works from the archaeological region of Guanacaste-Nicoya, in the northwestern part of Costa Rica. The second section offers examples from the Central Highlands--Atlantic Watershed region, and the third displays objects from Diquís, a region in the country's southwest.

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Gaillard F. Ravenel and Mark A. Leithauser of the Gallery's Installation and Design Department, with Charles B. Froom for the Detroit Institute of Arts and in consultation with the scientific committee, designed the plan for installing the exhibition. The plan allows the most effective use of each participating institution's exhibition spaces.

A fully illustrated catalogue containing 100 color plates, essays by Dr. Snarskis and five other experts in the field, and entries for each object by Dr. Snarskis accompanies the exhibition. The catalogue is published by Harry N. Abrams, Inc., in association with the Detroit Institute of Arts. The photographs of the objects were produced especially for the catalogue by Dirk Bakker of the Detroit Institute of Arts' Photographic Department. An illustrated guide to the exhibition written by Dr. Snarskis and Ms. Jones and published by the National Gallery also is available.

Two lectures pertaining to the exhibition will be offered on consecutive Sundays at 4 p.m. in the East Building auditorium. On December 20, Dr. Snarskis will speak on "Recent Archaeological Projects in Costa Rica," and on December 27, Ms. Jones will discuss "Precolumbian Art of Costa Rica." The lectures are open to the public without charge.

The Detroit Institute of Arts is producing a ten-minute documentary film in conjunction with the exhibition. This project has been coordinated by Dennis Bogorad, Executive Film Producer, the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The exhibition is supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. It is indemnified by agreement with the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

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** Film crews and photographers should contact the Information Office (842-6353) in advance.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION or photographs, contact Katherine Warwick, Assistant to the Director (Information Officer) or Mary Dyer, Information Office, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C. 20565, area code 202, 842-6353.