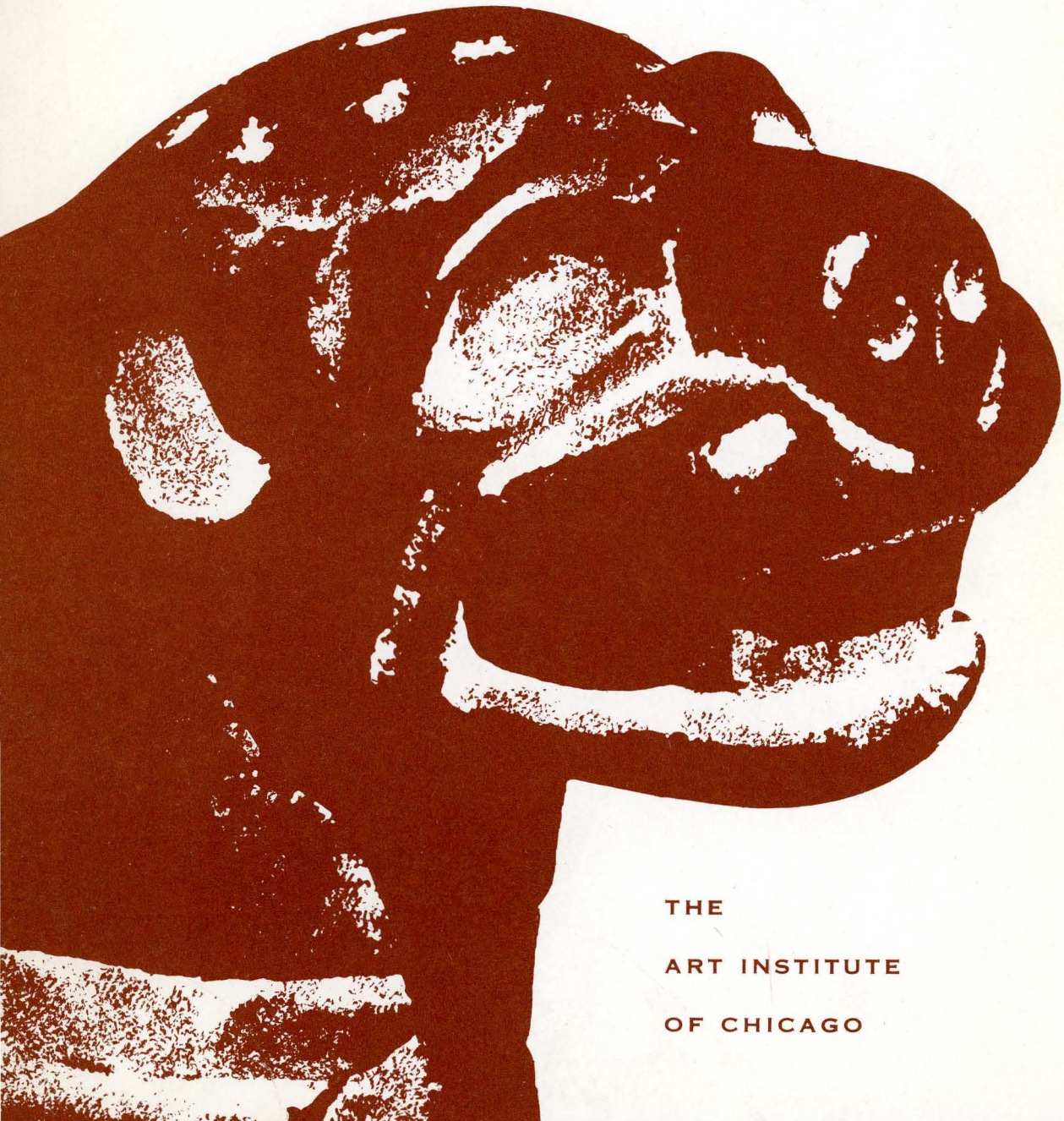


ANIMAL SCULPTURE

IN PRE-COLUMBIAN ART



THE
ART INSTITUTE
OF CHICAGO



TOTONAC

MAYA

COLIMA

AZTEC

NAYARIT

JALISCO

VERAGUAS

MONABI

MOCHICA

CHIMU

CHANCA

INCA

ICA

NAZCA

TIAHUANACO

PRE-COLUMBIAN CULTURES REPRESENTED

ANIMAL SCULPTURE IN PRE-COLUMBIAN ART



*Puma stone l 1½" Tiahuanaco Bolivia
Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf*



How often one hears an expression such as "wise as an owl," "sly as a fox," "stubborn as a mule," or "gentle as a lamb." These are only a few holdovers from the not too remote past when our ancestors lived more closely to nature. Man has always felt a kinship with animals, seeing in them human traits both good and evil. The more intimately they have shared his environment, the keener this feeling of fellowship has been. Modern living has largely deprived us of our sense of being a part of the natural order of living things.

The use of animal symbolism was universal in ancient Central and South America. The jaguar and puma, most powerful of mammals; the eagle and condor, mightiest of birds; and the serpent and crocodile, most feared of reptiles, were used repeatedly as symbols of supreme deity and of the ruling warrior-priest class. Lesser animals each had their special meaning. Often animal, human and imaginative elements were combined to conjure the supernatural. This picture book, and the exhibition from which it is drawn, presents for your enjoyment some of the more realistically rendered animals of Pre-Columbian America. They were fashioned in clay, stone and metal by skilled craftsmen who observed and understood them well. The examples reproduced are all sculptures in the round. Except where otherwise indicated, they are in the form of hollow clay vessels. Dimensions given are maximum for the complete object.

Almost without exception the art objects of ancient America were created for ceremonial purposes. Complex rituals were evolved to protect their agricultural, hunting and fishing economies against powerful natural forces that threatened their survival. Elaborate burial practices called for numerous objects to be placed in the grave to insure the well-being of the dead in after life. These funerary objects were usually made specifically for interment in observance of ritual necessity. We cannot know the exact religious meaning of each object, but when naturalistic canons governed the art style, the contents of tombs afford us our clearest picture of the life and customs of the



Llama with man and woman ht 7½" Chimu-Inca AIC Buckingham Fund



time. This is especially true of the Colima culture of western Mexico and the Mochica culture of northern Peru. Since both cultures are well represented in this picture book, a few remarks concerning their animal sculpture may well be appropriate. The other objects reproduced will speak for themselves.

The Animal Sculpture of Colima

The ceramic sculptors of Colima, along with those of neighboring Nayarit and Jalisco were among the most prolific craftsmen in ancient Mexico. Their infinitely varied terracotta figures offer us a rare glimpse of the everyday life in Pre-Columbian times. Of the three styles, Colima is notable for its smooth flowing simplified realism and the frequency of animal subjects. The animal figures are in the form of hollow ceramic vessels, usually with a spout opening from the back, top, or side. In color they vary from buff to deep Indian red, and are usually mottled with

a bluish black patina. Occasionally incised lines are used to indicate markings.

By far the most frequently depicted animal is the "Techichi," a fleshy hairless dog used for food. Elsewhere in ancient Mexico the dog was associated with death, and its presence in a Colima tomb may have been to guide the deceased in his journey to the next world. Other animals are less common and their significance as tomb sculpture can only be surmised. Some may have symbolized food, others may have been totems of good fortune. Whatever their special meaning, the skill with which the sculptor caught their character and pose delights us as it must have delighted his contemporaries.

Mochica Animal Sculpture

Modeled Mochican ceramics are distinctive in their beautifully simplified forms and selective detail, their simple color schemes of creamy white and earth red

Howling Techichi dog ht 10" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf

Curled Techichi dog l 8 7/8" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf





Bird form reclinario ht 8¼" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



Standing Techichi dog ht 10" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf

slips, and the frequent use of the "stirrup spout," a hollow tube handle with a spout projecting from it. Mochica art is filled with animal symbolism designating deity, clan, rank and ceremonial function. Often animal and human forms are combined with symbolic intent. Sometimes these combinations are so convincing they do not appear to be a distortion of reality. The deer seems comfortably seated in the posture of a man, and the osprey clutches a fish with human hands. Many other sculptural representations of mammals, birds and reptiles are executed with a realism which evinces the intimate knowledge and respect of the Mochicas for their animal brothers.

Acknowledgments

This publication has been made possible through a generous gift to the Art Institute by Mr. and Mrs. James W. Alsdorf. They have also furnished photographs of their outstanding collection of Pre-Columbian animal sculpture. Mr. Nathan Cummings has furnished photographs of some of the fine Mochican animal ceramics which he has given the Art Institute along with other treasures of ancient Peruvian art. Drs. Hans and Mercedes Gaffron have lent objects from their private collections to supplement their father's distinguished collection which was purchased by the Art Institute through the Kate S. Buckingham Fund. Thanks are due also to Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Michel and Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Weilgus for photographs of their objects. Other lenders to the exhibition whose works could not be illustrated because of the lack of space are: Mrs. Maurice Culberg, Mr. André Emmerich, Mr. John J. Klejman, Mr. John Wise, and Suzette Morton Zurcher.

For expert assistance in the identification of the animals of Mexico and Central America, the author is indebted to Mr. Philip Hershkovitz, Mr. Emmet R. Blake, and Dr. Robert F. Inger, curators respectively of mammals, birds and reptiles at the Chicago Natural History Museum. In identifying the sculptures of the Mochica culture of Peru, the author has consulted Volume I of "Los Mochicas" by Rafael Larco Hoyle, Peru's foremost expert on the Mochicas.

ALAN R. SAWYER

Associate Curator of Primitive Arts

October 5, 1957

cast Techichi dog ht 16" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



COLIMA CULTURE MEXICO



Techichi puppy l 13" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf

Snarling Techichi dog l 15 3/4" Mr and Mrs D Michel



Horned toad l 11" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



COLIMA CULTURE MEXICO



Newborn peccary l 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ " Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



Ground squirrel l 10" Anonymous





Brown coati eating ear of maize l 9" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



Land tortoise ht 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ " Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf

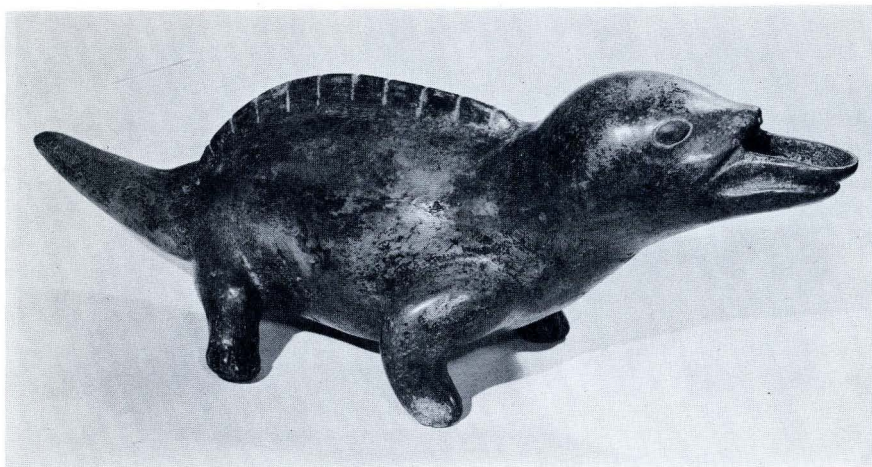


Bufflehead duck l 8" Mr. and Mrs J W Alsdorf



Animal wearing tortoise shell ht 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ " Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf

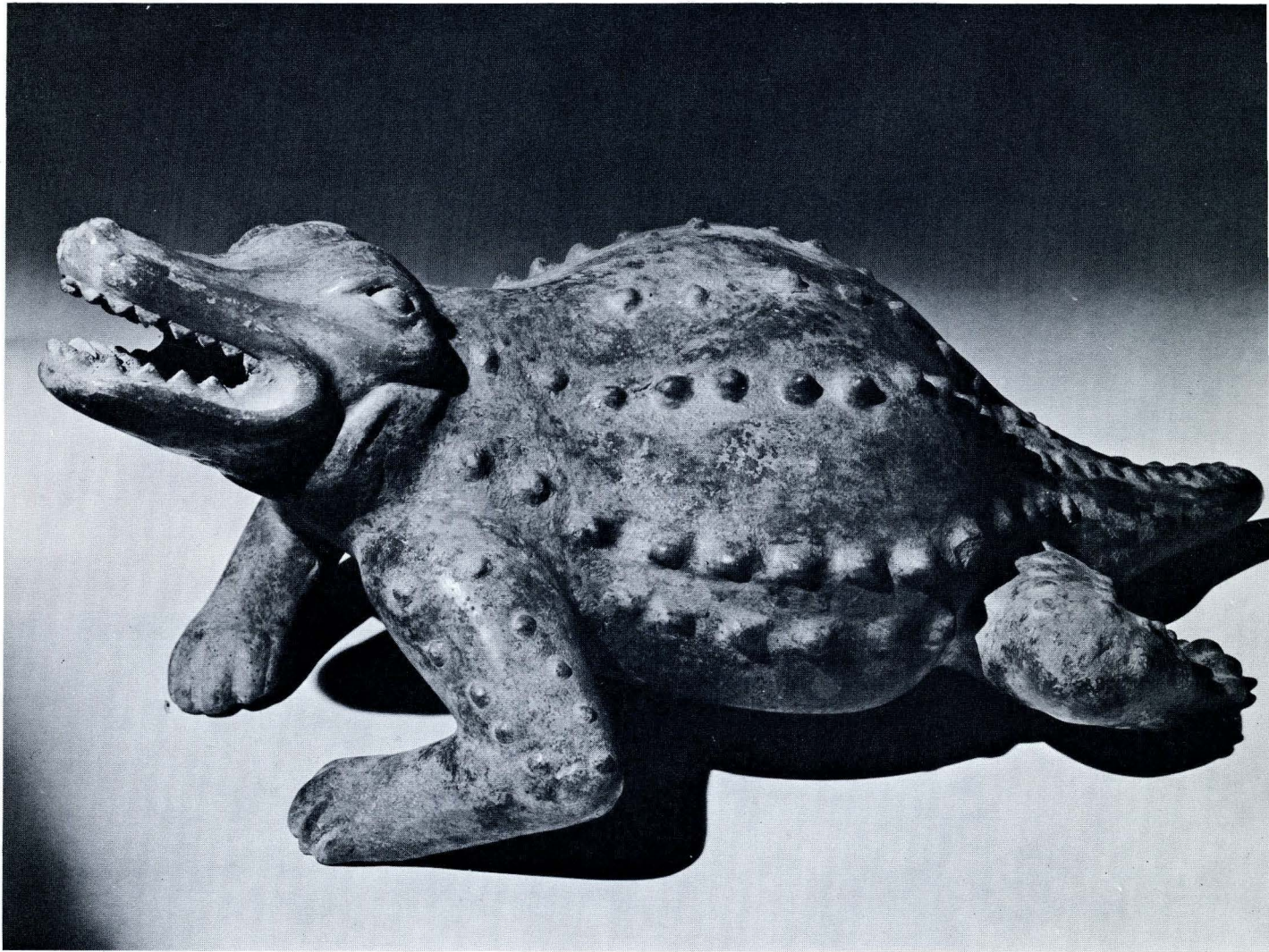
COLIMA CULTURE MEXICO



Iguana with mouth spout l 20" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



Coiled rattlesnake l 7" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



American crocodile l 22½" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



Parrot 1 7½"
Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



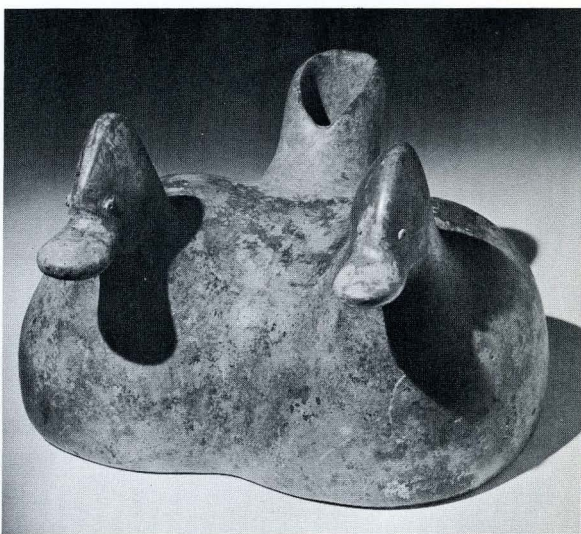
Macaw ht 11½" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



Crow? ht 10¾" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



Swallow l 7½" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



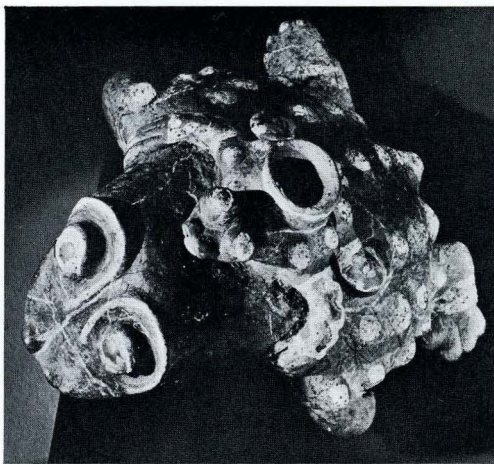
Pair of Bufflehead ducks ht 6" Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf

CULTURES OF WESTERN MEXICO

Snake l 6½" Nayarit Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf



Mother toad ht 6⅞" Nayarit Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf

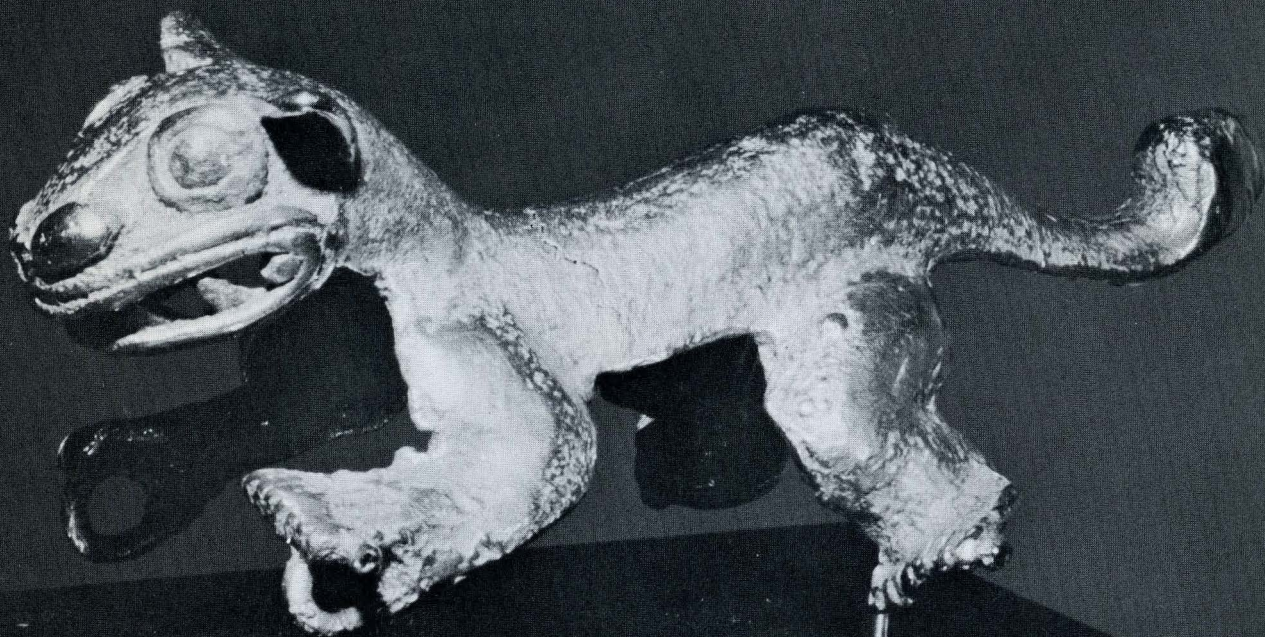


Bowl with fish ht 5⅞" Colima Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf





Armadillo? headed mace ht 3 3/4" Jalisco Anonymous



Jaguar gold pendant 1 2/8" Veraguas Mr and Mrs R Weilgus



Newborn deer stone hacha ht 8½" Totonac Mr and Mrs J. W. Alsdorf



Deer whistle ht 5½" Totonac Mr and Mrs J. W. Alsdorf

MONABI EQUADOR

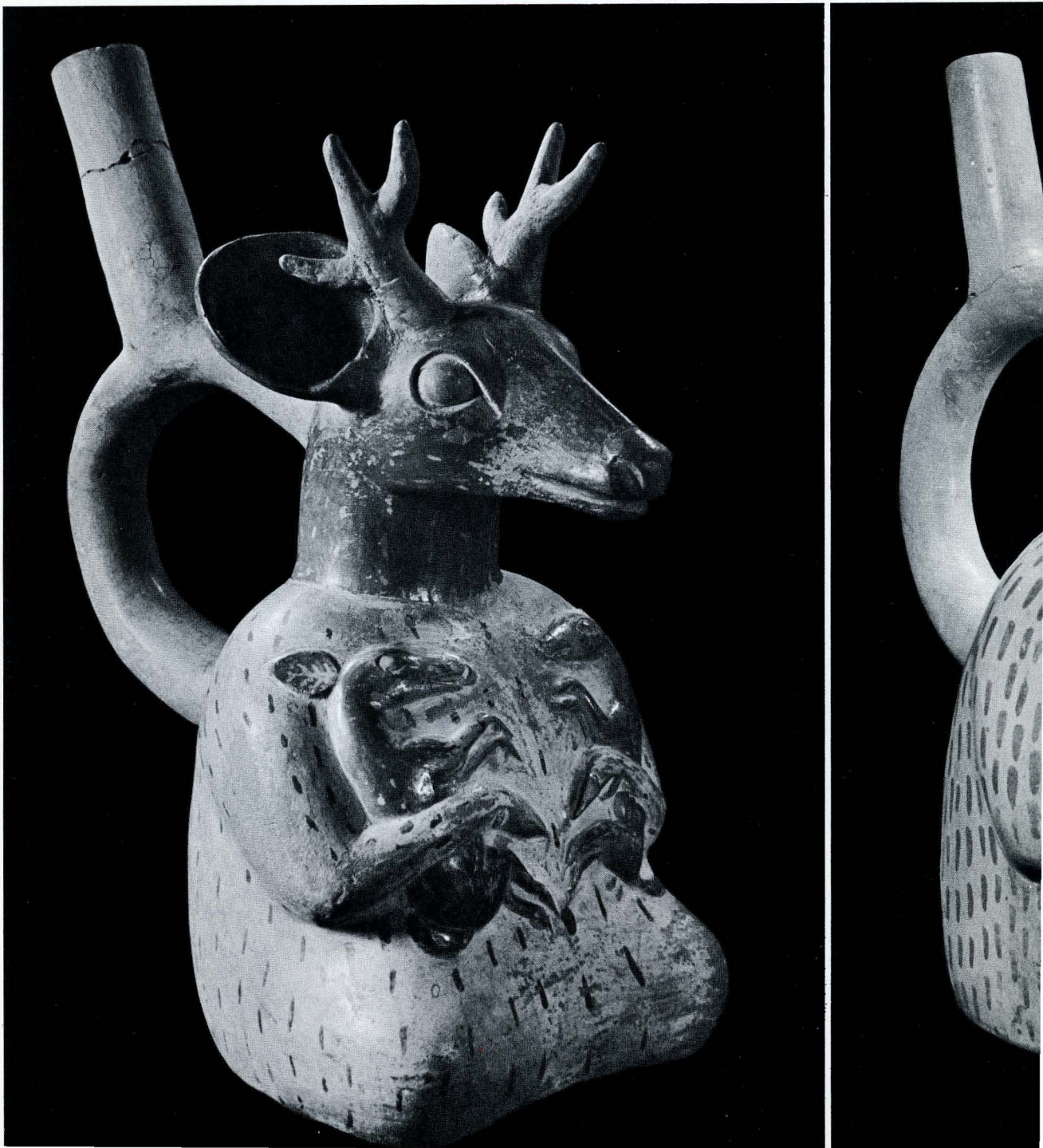




Puma throne stone ht 17" Mr and Mrs R Wielgus

MOCHICA CULTURE PERU

Deer with two fawns ht 11" AIC gift of Mr N Cummings



with drum in lap ht 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " AIC gift of Mr N Cummings



Seal beating on drum ht 17" AIC gift of Mr N Cummings



Puma head fragment ht 4½" AIC Buckingham Fund



*Puma on back of condor ht 7½"
AIC gift of Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf*



Puma in coil of serpents ht 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
AIC gift of Mr N Cummings

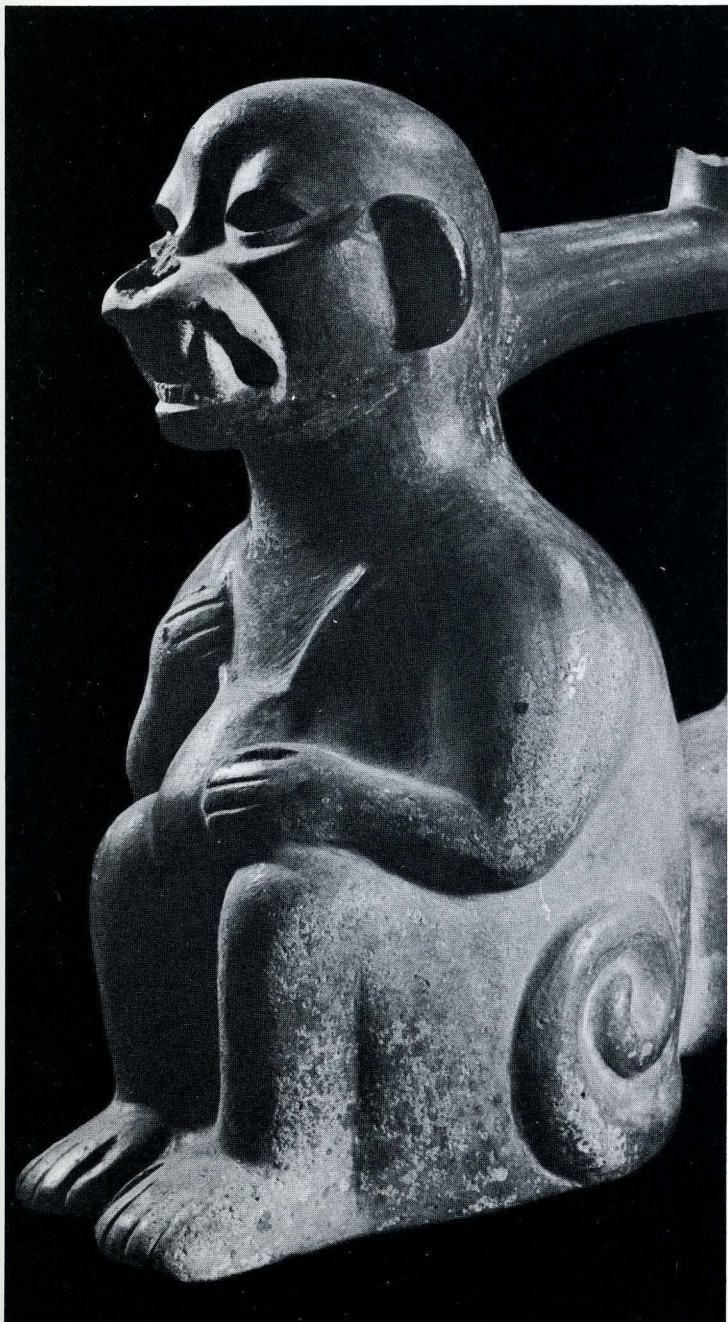
Fox with man's body ht 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf





Llama with saddlebags l 7¾" AIC Buckingham Fund

Monkey with coca bag ht 8½" AIC gift of Mr N Cummings



Head of llama ht 6¾" AIC gift of Mr N Cummings



MOCHICA CULTURE PERU



Owl with mouse in beak ht 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " AIC gift of Mr N Cummings



Two frogs ht 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " AIC Buckingham Fund



Frog bottle wood with shell inlay l 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ " AIC Buckingham Fund



Frog ht 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ " AIC gift of Mr N Cummings



Black frog ht 7 $\frac{5}{8}$ " AIC gift of Mr N Cummings



MOCHICA CULTURE PERU

← Osprey holding fish ht 9¼" AIC gift of Mr N Cummings



Toucan ht 8⅝" AIC gift of Mr N Cummings



Parrot ht 8¼" AIC gift of Mr N Cummings



MOCHICA CULTURE PERU

← Bird finial bronze with shell inlays ht 4 1/4" Mr and Mrs R Wielgus



Merganser with fledgling ht 9 7/8" AIC gift of Mr N Cummings

CHIMU CULTURE



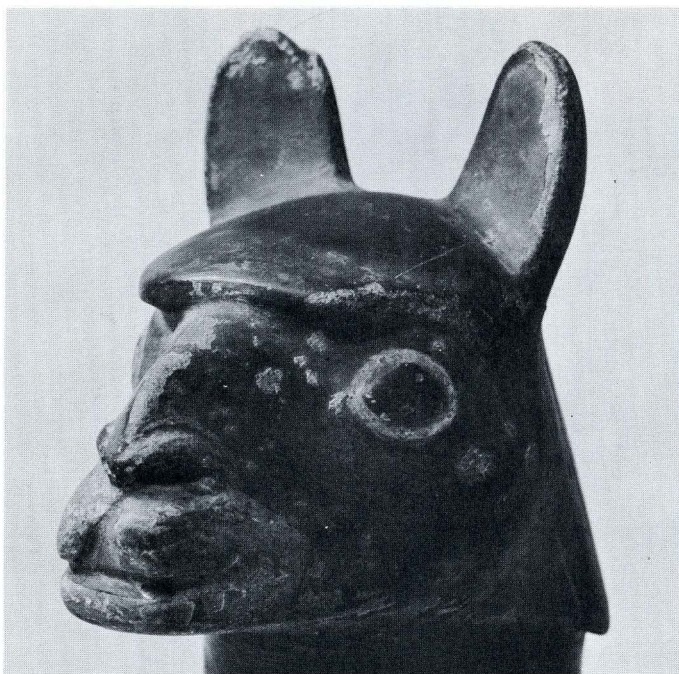
Puma ht 10 1/8" AIC Buckingham Fund

Puma suckling young ht 9 7/8" AIC Buckingham Fund





PERUVIAN COASTAL CULTURES



Alpaca head fragment ht 6 3/8" South Coast Tiahuanaco AIC Buckingham Fund



Guinea pig whistle l 2 1/2" Chancay Drs H and M Graffron



Llama head ht 8 1/4" Chimu-Inca Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf

PERUVIAN COASTAL CULTURES



Puma head detail spout ht 8 $\frac{3}{16}$ " North Coast Tiahuanaco AIC Buckingham Fund

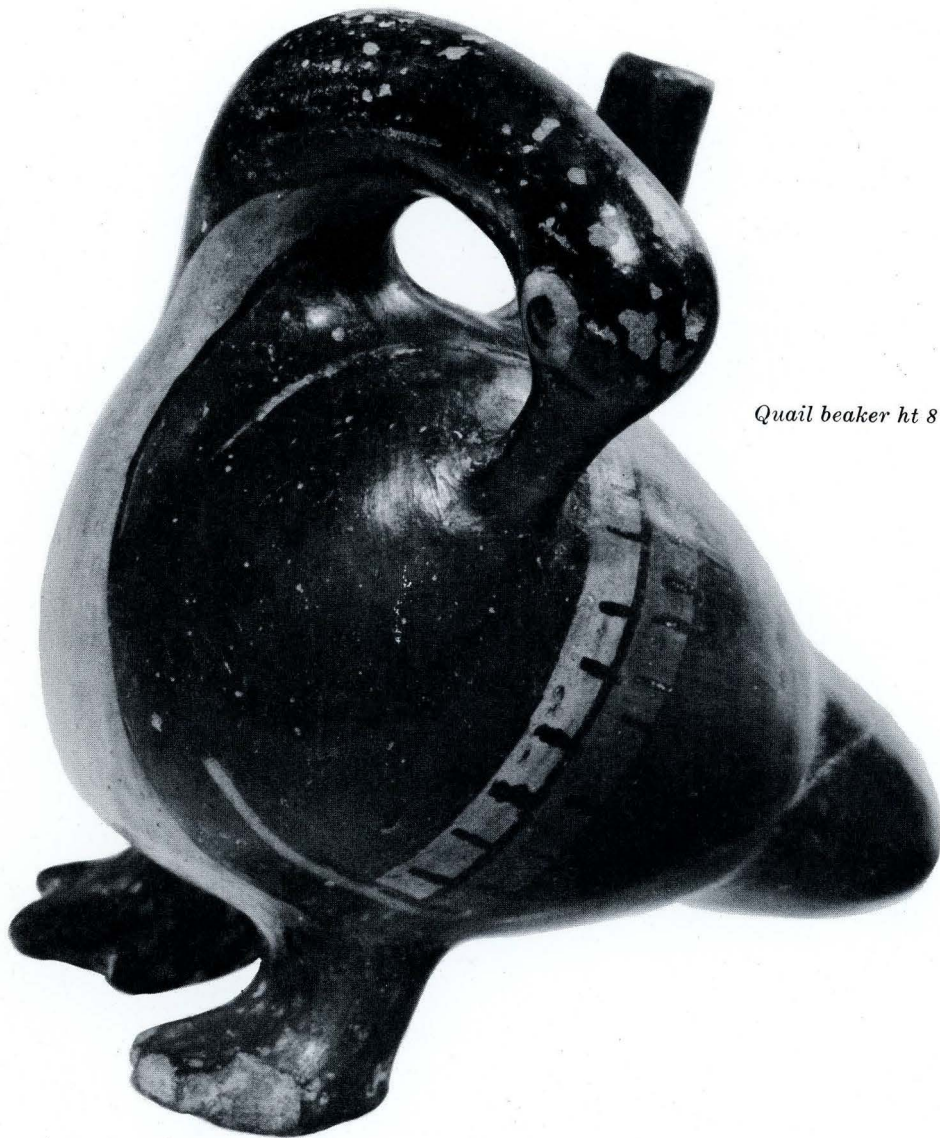


← Ocelot 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " Chancay AIC Buckingham Fund

Ocelot ht 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ " Nazca AIC Buckingham Fund



CULTURES OF SOUTH PERUVIAN COAST



Quail beaker ht 8½" AIC Buckingham Fund

Goose ht 5½" Nazca AIC Buckingham Fund

Dog l 6¾" South Coast Tiahuanaco AIC Buckingham Fund →



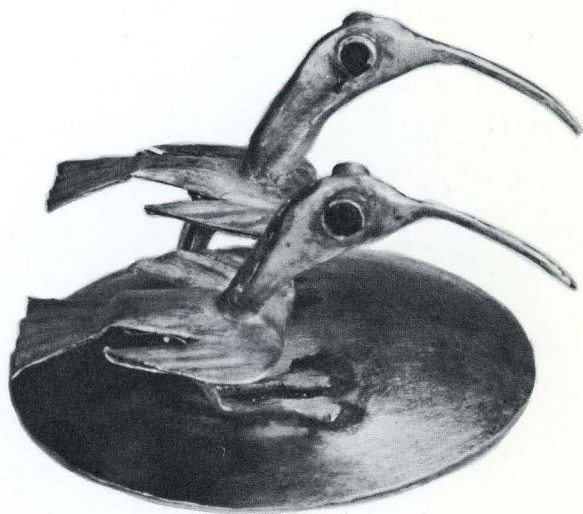




Detail monkeys, pumas and Spaniard on horse gold arm band l 10" AIC Buckingham Fund



Hummingbirds gold ear ornament ht 1¼" AIC Buckingham Fund



HIGHLAND INCA CULTURE PERU



Alpaca stone vessel ht 2 $\frac{7}{8}$ " AIC Buckingham Fund

Llama stone vessel ht 2 $\frac{1}{8}$ " Mr and Mrs R Wielgus





Monkey whistle and rattle ht 8¼"

Late Maya Mr and Mrs J W Alsdorf

CULTURES OF
PRE-COLUMBIAN AMERICA

COLIMA 500-900 AD

NAYARIT 500-900 AD

JALISCO 500-900 AD

TOTONAC 500-900

AZTEC 1300-1500 AD

VERAGUAS 1300-1500 AD

MONABI 600-800 AD

MOCHICA 300 BC-500 AD

NAZCA 100-500 AD

HIGHLAND TIAHUANACO 100-500 AD

COASTAL TIAHUANACO 500-900 AD

CHIMU 900-1400 AD

CHANCAY 900-1400 AD

ICA 900-1400 AD

INCA 1400-1550 AD

