ECUADOR PRE-COLUMBIAN ART

Sets 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242

Prehistoric through pre-Columbian cultures and periods in Ecuador have left a variety of cultural artifacts that are continuously being unearthed. These investigations during the past two decades yield redefinition of criteria for a discovery and reassessment of traditions and identity of Ecuador's cultural heritage.

This cultural heritage was forged by mastering a variety of environments: oceanic, Andean highlands, tropical jungles, and harsh paramo regions. Distinct social groups settled on the coastal, highland, and Amazon locales, shaping the first history of Ecuador for a span of over 10,000 years. By 4,000 B.C., the cultures of the Central Coast had evolved into an agricultural village setting. The development of pottery advanced in Valdivia, Machalla, and Chorrera of the Northern Andes.

The early phase of this period corresponds to Valdivia development between 4,000 and 1,800 B.C. in a tropical environment. Excavations in Real Alto, a village from this early formative period, reveals that the inhabitants mainly subsisted on corn and sea species from deep waters off the coast. During the late formative period, 1,800 to 800 B.C., Chorrera established ties with those cultures in the Highlands and Amazon basin. Obsidian was a major component of domestic trades.

The art of formative pottery in Ecuador is unique. The Valdivia "Venuses" mark the beginning of a tradition of anthropomorphic figurines, with a wide range of sculptural approaches and a variety of decorations displayed in vessels, dishes, vases, and the striking "whistle-bottles" that reproduce animal sounds.

Between 500 B.C. and 500 A.D., the chiefdoms evolved in the different ecological regions of Ecuador. The coastal tribal cultures from north to south are: La Tolita, Jama-Coaque, Bahia, Guangala, and Jambeli. From the highlands come the Northern Tuncahuana or Piartal, Panzaleo, Southern Tuncahuana, and late Narro cultures. Although much more study is required, it may be assumed that urban societies existed in the coast, in which a group closely connected with the priests, held administrative, political, and religious power. Farmers and hunters lived upstream in the rural areas. Fishermen settled along the coast ensuring a symbiotic economic and cultural heritage in the region. The long held theory of village groups in the highlands organized around the shaman, remains applicable. Their contact with the people in the Amazon basin, cannot be overlooked in the evidence of highland pottery.

The development of specialized activities in the use of natural resources occurred. Silversmiths and goldsmiths learned techniques for filigree work, welding, alloys, and platinum work. Pottery reached a "golden age" with the
production of statuettes, compotiers, polypods, post-firing paint, masks, articulated figures, scenes of everyday life, and a profusion of architectural maquettes. The artistic developments in the highland cultures consisted of negative painting, globular vessels, jugs, and compotiers decorated on the inside. Merchants as a "class" spread and linked societal developments within and between regions.

Religious beliefs were expressed in the form of deities embodied in images of felines, serpents, and monkeys linked with the priests. Stimulants such as coca leaves, and hallucinogens such as ayahuasca were used in festivals and ceremonies. Tribal music, woven fabrics, basketwork and featherwork used by pre-Columbian cultures are represented on pottery decorative motifs and traces of other artifacts.

The Integration Period from 500 A.D. through 1500 A.D. embraces the great Confederations of the Coastal regions and Highlands. These trade confederations traversed Mesoamerica to Peru. Trade was so extensive coins were used and document much of the development of this era. Chroniclers have reported the existence of large scale temples in areas assigned to worship, war expeditions, and differentiated architecture based on class and status.

During this period highland cultures emerged. From north to south the Capuli or Carchi, Cuasmal or Tuza, Caras, Panzaleos, Puruhases, Cañaris, and Paltas have been identified. Mainly they shared an economy based on corn and tuber cultivation and livestock breeding. Innovations in metallurgy replaced a dependence on pottery crafts. Monumental architecture and political organization of "chiefdoms" reveal their remarkable knowledge of urbanism.

The best of the artisans wares were reserved for worship and funeral rituals. The Capuli "coca leaf chewers" figurines are an example of highland statuettes. The compotiers, jugs, and tripods are peculiar to this Integration Period. "Shaman Pots" are typical of the coastal people. These pots are profusely decorated in Milagro-Quevedo pastillage. Austere, black Nanteño pottery, of which incense burners are the most outstanding are typical of this era.

Ethnographic studies, archaeological research and old manuscripts of the chroniclers disclose the rich cultural heritage predating the Inca Empire.

Sources:


All objects photographed are the property of the Museum of the Central Bank of Ecuador and were included in the itinerary exhibition "Ecuador Regains Its Past".
Figurine of a Woman with Steatopygia. 31 x 17 x 9 cm. Pottery.
La Tolita Culture.

The people of La Tolita have left us with a variety of ceremonial and everyday artifacts. Realism motivated artists to render figures with anomalies: dwarfism, bone malformations, steatopygia. This female figure depicts the anomaly of steatopygia, excessive fat on the buttocks. The realistically rendered head, ear ornaments, and facial features are both stylized and individualistic. The eyes bulge in an archaic expression of sculptural skill. Anatomy is not proportional. Planes and contours are rigid and archaic. The stance has a very frontal, ceremonial pose.

Three Figurines of the Jama-Coaque Culture. Pottery.
The Jama-Coaque culture belongs to the period of Regional Development, the golden-age of the Pre-Columbian art of Ecuador. The statuettes vary in size and type. Techniques of painting, pre-firing and post-firing change also.

Polychrome Anthropomorphic Figurine. 39.5 x 20.7 x 7.5. Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture. Circa 500 B.C. - 500 A.D.
This figure is a woman of high rank shown by her rich apparel: headdress, numerous ear plugs, nose ring, lip plug, necklets, bracelets, and striped skirt. Her arms are decorated with incised geometrical designs. There are still some traces of green and yellow paint applied in subtle hues which adds delicacy to the figurine.

Detail of 236 C.
In this detail notice the rigid symmetry of the head. A curving line emphasizes the roundness of the headdress. The treatment of the eyes is similar to that found in Egyptian funerary sculptures.

Anthropomorphic Figurine. 45 x 27 x 6.8 cm. Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture. Circa 500 B.C. - 500 A.D.
This figurine is a high ranking woman in a ritual position. She wears a striped skirt, ear plugs, a nose ring, and bears intricate tattoos on her arms and shoulders. Body parts are not proportional.

Detail of 236 E.
This details shows the modelled head. Meticulous treatment was given to the hair, and rendering the Indian facial features. The nose ring is made of gold.
236 G  Anthropomorphic Trichromatic Figurine. 36.5 x 23.5 x 10.6 cm. Pottery. Jama-Coaque Culture. Circa 500 B.C. - 500 A.D. Some of the original colors remain on this statuette. The colors are green, yellow and red as seen in the woman's striped skirt, on her face, and on her adornments. The cap-like headdress, the numerous earplugs, the nose ring and the voluminous necklace combine for a harmonious and refreshing effect.

236 H  Detail of 236 G. The conventional treatment of the eyes, and the curious earplugs which hide the ears are detailed in this slide. Green painting on the various adornments brings them out in relief.

236 I  Anthropomorphic Head. 17.9 x 11.2 x 10 cm. Pottery. Jama-Coaque Culture. Circa 500 B.C. - 500 A.D. This head is impressive in its affinity to Egyptian funerary art. The subtle, yet plastic treatment of the features and the overall harmonious form give this sculpture an universal appeal.

236 J  Three-quarter view of 236 I. In this three quarter view, notice the curving shape of the headdress, which may indicate a cranial deformity, which was a common aesthetic practice among some tribes.

Text by Pia Illaramendi. After the catalogue "Ecuador Regains Its Past".

Photographs by Angel Hurtado.
ORGANIZACION DE LOS ESTADOS AMERICANOS
ORGANIZAÇÃO DOS ESTADOS AMERICANOS
ORGANISATION DES ETATS AMÉRICAINS
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

17th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20006

AUDIO-VISUAL PROGRAM

SET 237 ECUADOR PRE-COLUMBIAN ART II

237 A Anthropomorphic Figurine. 37.5 x 18.5 x 9 cm. Pottery.
Jama-Coaque Culture. circa 500 B.C. - 500 A.D.

This is a splendidly dressed personage. He wears a headdress composed of birds and fruits with a serpent-like tiara, gigantic earplug, nose-ring and a voluminous denticulate collar. The piece is very sculptural, with forms jutting out all over the surface. The elaborate adornments remind us of Mayan sculptures of similar type.

237 B Detail of Anthropomorphic figure in 237 A. In this close-up view the great plasticity of the figure can be felt. The face is nearly hidden under all the ornamentation. The man holds what seems to be a musical instrument that could identify him as a musician.

237 C Statue of a "coquero" a coca leaf chewer. 46.9 x 18.7 cm.
Pottery. Carchi Culture (Capuli) Integration period, 500 AD - 1500 A.D.

Statues of thin people chewing coca leaves which fill both cheeks are common motifs in this culture. Coca leaves are a stimulant that is widely used in the Andean region to aid the natives to endure the high altitude and heavy labor. The human figure has been stylized and abstracted. The arms and legs are formed from one single coil of clay and differentiated only by simple incisions. Block-like and severely stylized, it is hieratic rather than naturalistic. The hands on the knees give it a comfortable familiar feeling reducing the rigidity of form.

237 D Head of the coca leaf chewer in 237 C. In this detail one sees clearly how the "coquero's" cheeks bulge filled with coca leaves. These figures of thin people chewing coca leaves are common to the Carchi culture.

237 E Anthropomorphic Statue. 48.5 x 38 x 30.2 cm. Pottery.
Bahia Culture. Regional Development Period, 500 B.C. - 500 A.D.

This high ranking individual adorned in a headdress, ear-plugs, lip-plug (below his lower lip), breastplate in the shape of a bell, his decorated navel, bracelets and anklets displays his rank visually. The figure is heavy and course, but the artist showed details of the ornaments.
237 F Detail of the head of the figure in 237 E. In this detail of the Bahia statue, we can appreciate the roundness of sculpted form, details of the ornamentation, and the facial features such as the bulging eyes, nose, and thick lips of the open mouth. Is the man crying out in anguish, or in a ritual, with his hands tensely poised on his knees.

237 G Figurine of a Sitting Woman Holding a Child. 12 x 9 x 11.8 cm. Pottery. Jama-Coaque culture. Circa 500 B.C. - 500 A.D. Maternal themes can be traced continuously throughout ceramic figurines in Ecuador. This small piece is enhanced by the post-firing green, yellow, black and white paint which still outlines the skin and garments of the figure. The base shows the clear imprint of woven material, a source of knowledge about textile development in Ecuadorean culture.

237 H Figurine of a Sitting Woman. 19 x 12.1 x 13.9 cm. Pottery. Carchi culture (Capuli) Integration Period, 500 A.D. - 1500 A.D.

Ankle length skirts were the characteristic apparel of the Carchi women in the Capuli culture. This seated woman still bears most of the polychrome. She has two lines drawn on her face. The pattern on her dress is still noticeable. The figure is rather primitive and stylized. The pointed, pinched out breasts suggest a female figure. The viewer senses the fingers of the artist/sculptor at work on the piece.

237 I Anthropomorphic Statue. 53 x 31.7 x 23 cm. Pottery. Bahia culture. Regional development Period, 500 B.C. - 500 A.D.

This figure represents a high ranking person. He displays an imperative headdress with protuberances, large ear-plugs, fang shaped pendants, and bracelets. The figure sits in a serene but rigid and imposing position. His face is withdrawn, a trance-like expression.

237 J Detail of the Bahia statue in 237 I. This detail shows the man's cheeks bulging with coca leaves. The observant sculptor has captured a sense of the chewing motions in the statue by distending and half-opening the man's mouth. A feeling of tension is transmitted by the man's expression.

Text by Pia Illaramendi. After the catalogue "Ecuador Regains Its Past".

Photos by Angel Hurtado.
SET 238 ECUADOR PRE-COLUMBIAN ART III

238 A Personage with a serpent headdress
34.8 x 20.2 x 36.8 cm.
Pottery
La Tolita Culture
This figure with mythological accessories has great impact
because of its aggressive expression and pose. The two serpents
jut out not only from the headdress but seem to fill the entire body.
The exact use of this piece has not been established, it is quite
probable that it was used in religious ceremonies.

238 B 3/4 View of Personage with a serpent headdress.
The pose with the belligerent gesturing arms and clenched fists
give motion to the form.

238 C Detail of Personage with serpent headdress.
In this detail the relationship between the fierce expression
of the man's face and that of the serpents adorning his
headdress, give unity and character to the design.

238 D Sideview of Personage with a serpent headdress.
The overall style and treatment; the pose, the headdress,
and the slanted eyes of this piece reminds us of oriental
warrior figures.

238 E Anthropomorphic incense burner
60.3 x 26.4 x 28 cm.
Pottery
Manteño Culture (Integration Period 500 A.D. - 150 A.D.)
The Manteño people established a confederation where religion
was a highly complex institution. These pieces adorned the temples.
An aromatic wood known as 'holy wood' (lignum vitae) was burned
on them. People rarely wore clothes in this region and it was
typical to tattoo the shoulder, as seen on this incense burner
figure. Manteño pottery is austere, stylized and hieratic.
Detail is intricate as in the geometrical design of the tattoo.

238 F Detail of Anthropomorphic incense burner.
The facial features are subtle, the eyes are oval and
finely delineated, showing the pupil, which is not commonly
included in other cultures. The face shows some individualization.
238 G  Zoomorphic mortar
12.4 x 8.3 x 21.9 cm.
Stone
Chorrera Culture
The animal-shaped vessel has been treated in a very abstract
and geometric way, keeping a block-like feeling that emphasis
the heaviness of the stone. Ecuador has a longstanding tradition
in stonework for vessels and mortars, demonstrating a skillful
command of the material and its properties.

238 H  Malacomorphic flute with laddered decoration.
6.9 x 16.1 x 6.9 cm.
Pottery
Cuasimal culture (Tuza) (Integration Period 500 A.D. - 1500 A.D.)
This piece, with its gently swelling shape and geometrical
decoration is a work of art as well as a musical instrument.
The laddered lines of the design on the 'belly' of the flute
conform to the rounded shape of the instrument.

238 I  Stylized anthropomorphic vessel
19 x 14.5 cm.
Pottery
Carchi Culture (Capuli) (Integration Period 500 A.D. - 1500 A.D.)
This vessel is decorated with an abstracted figure of a man.
Emphasis is given to the rounded shape of the pot rather than to the
decoration of it; the result is symmetrical and stylized. The
arms are two spindly coils and the half-closed eyes protrude
in the shape of coffee beans to suggest a human figure.

238 J  Bottle with an ornithomorphic motif
22.2 x 19.5 cm.
Pottery
Chorrera Culture
In the Chorrera Culture the use of superimposed volumes create
complex shapes. The base of this bottle has three bulbous
projections. The neck takes the form of a bird, topped by a
cylindrical spout. It is a masterful combination of abstraction
and realism, adapted to a functional object.

Text by Pia Illaramendi  After the catalogue "Ecuador Regains Its Past".
Photographs by Angel Hurtado
SET 239  ECUADOR  PRE-COLUMBIAN ART  (Chorrera Culture)

239 A  Narrow-spouted globular bottle
22.6 x 13.5 cm.
Pottery
Chorrera Culture
Whistle-bottle, the design of which is closely related to
the Chavin de Huantar culture in Peru. Zoned and incised
iridescent painting forms a calligraphic motif. The quality of
the ceramic is excellent with thin walls that make it very light
and delicate. The tapering spout and connecting handle end in a
whistle. A whistle sound is made when the vessel is moved with
liquid inside.

239 B  Trichromatic bottle
20.5 x 16.2 cm.
Pottery
Chorrera Culture
This vessel represents a round-flooric house with vertical walls
and cone-shaped roof which apparently was the common dwelling of
the late formative period.

239 C  Ornithomorphic bottle  (owl)
28 x 13.5 x 16.4 cm.
Pottery
Chorrera Culture
The representation of the owl is suggested in a stylized manner,
abstracting the globular body. Through the use of color and relief,
the eyes dominate the small head. The uniform smoothness of the
body is broken by a vertical depression that leads the eye to the
protruding feet giving the frontal view a symmetrical composition.

239 D  Side view of the same ornithomorphic bottle.
In this view, we see the off-center tapering spout connected
to a bridge handle rising from the base of the stylized wings of
the owl, achieving a unity and balance through color and design.

239 E  Zoomorphic bottle
22.5 x 12.2 x 16.3 cm.
Pottery
Chorrera Culture
This whistle-bottle with its characteristic cylindrical spout is
molded in the shape of an animal. The treatment is delicate with
soft modelling of the figure.
239 F  Detail 239 E, profile view of Zoomorphic bottle.
The view shows the elegance of the rounded form of the vessel.
The animal shape dominates the design in a sophisticated execution
of form and function. Notice the calm expression of the figure,
given by the closed eyes of the animal.

239 G  Zoomorphic bottle (monkey)
19.5 x 13 x 13.8 cm.
Pottery
Chorrera Culture
In Chorrera pottery, monkeys are always portrayed wearing necklaces
with pendants, and this animal must have been important because it
appears frequently. This whistle-bottle produces a sound which imitates
a monkey's cry. The incised line of the mouth, the circular eyes,
and the position of the paws give life and character to this form.

239 H  3/4 View of the Zoomorphic bottle, 239 G.
The stylization of the monkey's legs and arms unite as one zig-zag
coil of clay, complimenting the circular design.

239 I  Anthropomorphic bottle representing a bearer
26.2 x 16.5 x 19 cm.
Pottery
Chorrera Culture
The custom of carrying the load suspended from the forehead
by a tumpline is still practiced. This bearer with his slanted eyes
and bulging checks is chewing cocoa leaves to withstand the trip
inland.

239 J  Whistle-bottle
21 x 17.3 cm.
Pottery
Chorrera Culture
Many whistle-bottles form the Chorrera Culture have highly aesthetic
designs, since their stylization reveals the potter's capacity. The
simple form and subtle decoration, consisting of a depression that
follows the shape of the bottle and enhances the curving form.

Text by Pia Illaramendi, after the catalogue "Ecuador Regains Its Past"

Photographs by Angel Hurtado
SET 240

ECUADOR

PRE-COLUMBIAN ART

240 A  Vase with Double Anthropomorphic Motif
22 x 16.2 x 17.4 cm.
Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture (Regional Development Period)
The heavy mass of the vase seems to press down on the two figures,
festively attired in short tunics, wide necklaces and ear ornaments.
The decorative pattern of oval clay appliques is broken by a vertical
line on each headdress, repeated again in the tunic. The colour
on this vessel is not uniform, most probably due to poorly controlled
ventilation during firing.

240 B  Compotiers with Antlantes
18.4 x 16.2 cm.
Pottery
Carchi Culture (Capuli)  (Integration Period)
The three stylized figures with their outstretched arms, form a tripod
base for the geometrically decorated bowl. The entire composition rests
on a low annular base. The interesting shape of the compotier is
developed through the play of positive and negative spaces.

240 C  Anthropomorphic Vase Representing a Drummer
26.2 x 20.5 x 19.8 cm.
Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture
The musician is the central figure of feasts and ceremonies, as he is
today. This drummer, simply dressed, is holding a glass of "chicha"
a traditional Ecuadorian beverage. Chone type eyes, (D-shaped)are
produced by a combination of relief and incision. The ears are
ornamented with large "napkin-ring" loops. A similar pattern is
found in the incised bands around the wrists, ankle and the large
collar necklace.

240 D  Front view of 240 C.
The bulkiness of the square shoulders, foreshortened arms and legs
are softened by the straps holding the drum and encircling the vessel.
The distinctive nose ring is common to this culture.

240 E  Vase with Anthropomorphic Motif
25.2 x 16 x 17 cm.
Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture
A figure attired with a headdress of sea-snails. It bears traces
of post firing green, white, and yellow paint which was typical to
Mesoamerican practice.
Cont.
The repetition of the shells on the headdress and the breastplate
give symmetry to the vessel, as does the curvature of the arms and
legs, as the human form and the vessel join.

Detail of 240 E. Vase with Anthropomorphic Motif.
In this detail of the head, we see the D-shaped outline of the eyes
are set at a slant and the nose is decorated with studs on each side.
Framing the face is an ornamented headdress and tassels hanging
from the ears. The incised lines of the collar are repeated in the
arm and wrist bands.

Anthropomorphic Vase Representing a Man Plucking Out His Whiskers.
16 x 15.5 x 16.7 cm.
Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture
The habit of plucking out whiskers continues until present times.
The instrument used is a type of tweezers that was common to the
Ecuacorean coast. The stylization of the arms and legs is a very
modern concept, it eliminates the superfluous detail keeping only
the essence of the form.

Detail of 240 G.
The expressiveness of the face with its allusive wit, is created by
the lines around the eyes, the accentuated cheeks, large nostrils,
rectangular mouth and protruding chin. The figure is dominated by
the face and its detail in contrast to the graceful form of the body.

Cephaloid Mythological Vase
18 x 23.5 x 31.5 cm.
Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture
The prevailing components of Jama-Coaque beliefs are depicted here:
serpents and feline teeth and whiskers. Both serpents and felines
were important in the religion and ceremonies of Ecuacorean coastal
cultures.

Up side down view of the same cephaloid mythological vase.
By turning the base up side down, one may see the stylized
representation of the harpy eagle.

Sources:
Ecuador Regains Its Past. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador,

Meggers, Betty J. Ancient Peoples and Places, Ecuador. New York:
Frederick A. Praeger, 1966.

Text by Pia Illaramendti, after the catalogue "Ecuador Regains Its Past".
Photographs by Angel Hurtado
AUDIO VISUAL PROGRAM

SET 241  ECUADOR  PRE-COLUMBIAN ART

241 A  Anthropomorphic Figurine of a Musician
18.7 x 13 x 7.6 cm.
Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture
(Period of Regional Development 500 B.C. - A.D. 500)
This figure represents a musician playing a "rondador" or panpipe. The bird headdress and two long, profusely decorated ear-plugs capture the viewer's attention with their bulky proportions and plasticity. The panpipe, typical instrument of the Andean region, is now used in the highlands and no longer in the coastal region, as it was in pre-Columbian times. The garments adorning the statue are decorated by incised geometric patterns. Frontal rigidity, symmetry of composition the hieratical costume suggest this statue was used for ceremonial functions and ancient rituals.

241 B  Detail of slide 241 A.
This detail shows the build up of the elaborate headdress and incised decorations on the flat panels.

241 C  Anthropomorphic Figurine.
32 x 18.5 x 10 cm.
Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture
This figure represents a person of the priestly class. The outstanding feature is the bird headdress and the receptacle and styllet for the "llipta", a blend of lime and ashes used to chew coca leaves. He wears a poncho with seashell appliques.

241 D  Anthropomorphic Statuette
40 x 20.6 x 18 cm.
Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture
The hieratical costume worn by this figure covers the human form with relief-like coils, appliques, and rick-rack edging. Note the bivalve shell pectoral, and the snail headdress. He is holding a styllet and a receptacle for the "llipta". Nose rings and lip plugs resemble those made of metal. Gold and silverwork were sophisticated in the Regional Development Period 500 B.C. through 500 A.D.

241 E  Hieratic Female Figurine (Hollow mate type)
19.5 x 13 x 13.8 cm.
Pottery
Chorrera Culture  (Late Formative Period: 1800 B.C. to 800 B.C.)
This hollow piece was created with advanced knowledge of ceramic tech-
niques. The headdress highlights the cranial deformity. Napkin-ring
like earplugs adorn the figure along with simple bracelets incised into
the figures arms. Incised lines suggests other anatomical and decorative
details. The surface treatment is smooth with rounded planes. The
pose emphasizes a frontal view which shows the unnatural swelling of
the extremities.

Detail of 241 E.
The facial features are symmetrical. Simple incisions suggest the
the eyes and mouth reflecting a serene state of meditation and inner
tranquility.

Sitting Figurine Representing a Spinner
26 x 19.2 x 20.4 cm.
Pottery
Jama Coaque Culture
Even today, both on the coast and in the highlands, women use this
device to spin cotton or to prepare the fiber of the hemp plant for
twine cords. The women's attire is rather simple: a headdress decorated
with incised zig-zags, necklaces of beads and coils, arm bracelets and
a simple skirt. The figure has been rendered in an archaic style.

Detail of 241 G.
The artist's keen observation shows in the detail of the spinner's
two feet. The woman hooks the fibers to her big toe. Although the
stub hands and feet are crude, the fingers and toes have been indented with
finger and toenails added for a touch of reality.

Anthropomorphic Ocarina.
21.5 x 12.5 x 5 cm.
Pottery
Guangala Culture  (Regional Development period, 500 B.C. to 500 A.D.)
Guangala pottery from the later periods displays an advanced style of
modelling, comparable to mid-Classic Maya art figurines. Guangala figures
are usually whistles of various shapes. The fine burnished redware
scored by incised parallel lines is evident in this piece. Around 500 A.D.
mould-made figurines transformed the craft, not only by the extreme com-
plexity, but also by course production methods in series. Relief
decoration and traces of pigment reveal the Guangala textile crafts.

The surface of the head is rounded and burnished. The features are
typical of Guangala sculpture: coffee bean eyes, huge upper eyelids,
and a tabular deformation indicated by the head helmet.

Text by Pia Illaramendi. After the catalogue "Ecuador Regains Its Past".
Photographs by Angel Hurtado
SET 242  ECUADOR  PRE-COLUMBIAN ART

242 A  Zoomorphic Vessel (Deer)
8.8 x 17.8 x 29.5 cm.
Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture (Regional Development Period, 500 B.C. - 500 A.D.)
This depiction is a good example of realism. An everyday event has been
made into a functional object in an ingenious way. Tying the catch to a
stick to make carrying easier is still practiced in Ecuador. The animal
figure appears to be resting placidly rather than dead. The treatment
of form is simplified, naturalistic and crude, but forceful.

242 B  Detail of 242 A.
In this close-up view of the head of the deer, coils of clay used to form
the eye, and rope that binds the animal, lend a strong, primitive tactile
quality to this naturalistic but functional object.

242 C  Anthropomorphic Vessel
10.2 x 18.1 x 26.5 cm.
Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture
Pottery from pre-Columbian times has aided in gaining knowledge about
cultural events, costumes, and adornment: earplugs, nose rings, necklaces,
bracelets, and nipple applicques. In this piece, these details punctuate
the smooth, rounded form of the man. His swelling belly has been opened
to transform the object into an original, functional vessel.

242 D  Detail of 242 C.
The design exemplifies a contrast of linear patterns produced by the
repetition of incisions on the teeth, hair, and minutely worked earrings
to the rounded human form which functions as a vessel.

242 E  Leg-shaped Vessels.
7 x 6.8 x 19 cm,
Pottery
Chorrera Culture
Evidence indicates that these leg-shaped vessels lacked a utilitarian
function. Together with the exquisite pottery and its decoration,
the wide range of craftsmanship of the Chorrera potters can be seen.
The dismembered legs, abstracted and stylized, seem almost surreal.

242 F  Detail of 242 E.
Aerial view of one of the leg-shaped vessels.
242 G  Warrior handled pot
25.7 x 19 x 16.5 cm.
Pottery
Jama-Coaque Culture.
A richly attired warrior becomes the handle of a simple pot. He wears
a headdress, ear plugs, nose ring, necklace, nipple and navel appliques,
and apron-like loincloth. In his right hand he holds a dart thrower.
In his left hand, he holds a shield and another weapon. Note the variety
of post-firing colors: black, white, green, and yellow paint. The
colors on the shield echo the pattern on the pot itself, uniting the
decorative figural appendage to the functional vessel.

242 H  Detail of 242 G.

242 I  Anthropomorphic Ventral Decubitus Vessel
9.1 x 8 x 15.6 cm.
Pottery
Chorrera Culture
Chorrera pottery before 500 B.C. shows a Mesoamerican contact in its
figurines, iridescent painting; obsidian flakes and other traits
from the Ocós phases. This artifact, probably used for ceremonial
purposes, represents a man lying on his belly in a casual, naturalistic
pose. He wears a cap-like headdress which may be a stylized coiffure,
or helmet which covers many of the cranial deformities. The treatment
of the human form is stylized. Transitions between planes are
fluid and rounded.

242 J  Side view of 242 I.
The figurines of the Chorrera potters have different facial features
from those of the Jama-Coaque. The eyes bulge slightly and appear
slanted in the Oriental manner. Cheekbones are high and prominent.
The sculptor has attended to the torso and arms in a more naturalistic
way leaving the body and legs to be barely suggested in the vessel.
The anthropomorphic qualities are best revealed in frontal view of 242 I.

Text by Pia Illaramendi. After the catalogue "Ecuador Regains Its Past".

Photographs by Angel Hurtado