

Gallery given by local couple opens at Detroit Institute of Arts

The Poplack Gallery of Precolumbian Art at the Detroit Institute of Arts will open to the public on Thursday, Oct. 2.

Underwritten by Mr. and Mrs. William J. Poplack of Birmingham, the new area has been created from existing space on the museum's main floor. It completes the complex of galleries for the permanent exhibition of traditional arts of African, Oceanic and New World Cultures.

"Mr. and Mrs. Poplack's contribution is of immeasurable importance at a time when the museum — like all cultural organizations — must turn increasingly to the private sector for support," said Samuel Sachs II, director of the Detroit Institute of Arts. "The Poplack Gallery of Precolumbian Art will enable the museum to fully represent yet another area of the permanent collection."

The gallery was developed by DIA deputy director and curator Michael Kan, with the assistance of David W. Penney, associate curator. It was designed by Louis Guechi, group director, exhibitions and design, and consultant Charles Fromm.

The gallery features the ancient arts of Peru, Central America and Mexico created before the 16th-century Spanish conquest. It houses nearly 170 objects, including ceramics, stone sculpture, textiles and exquisite ornaments of jade and gold.

THE INAUGURAL INSTALLATION has been drawn from permanent museum collections assembled over a century, thanks to donors like Frederick Stearns (one of the museum's original 40 founders), Robert Hudson Farnham and Lillian Henkel Haass, whose significant gifts form the core of the museum's Precolumbian collection.

In recent years generous gifts have enriched the collection, among them an Olmec jade maskette from W. Hawkins Ferry of Grosse Pointe Shores, and two important early Peruvian textiles from Mr. and Mrs. Lee Hills of Miami, Fla.

The initial display will be enhanced by long-term loans from private collections such as those

of Mr. and Mrs. Alan Schwartz of Bloomfield Hills and Dr. and Mrs. Irving Burton of Huntington Woods.

"The sequence of the Poplack Gallery takes visitors geographically and chronologically through the ancient Americas, while its intimate scale (1,344 square feet) and neutral color scheme enhance the objects as they are presented in distinct cultural groupings," Kan said.

Visitors may enter the Poplack Gallery of Precolumbian Art through either of two glass doors off the North Court of the DIA's Cavanagh Wing.

Entering through the gallery's east door, one encounters art works marking the initial civilization of Peru, the Chavin (700-900 B.C.); then objects from later Peruvian cultures of the Moche, Nazca, Huari, Chimú and finally the Inca, who ruled Peru at the time of the Spanish conquest under Pizarro in 1532.

THE VISITOR TRAVELS north from Peru via objects from Ecuador, Panama and Costa Rica. The civilization of the Maya, literally the geographic heart of Precolumbian cultures, is represented in the central display case.

Beyond, objects of ancient Mexico are shown — the Post Classic cultures of the Mixtec (A.D. 800-1500), the Classic Period cultures of Teotihuacan, Vera Cruz and Monte Alban (A.D. 300-900), followed by the shaft tomb culture of the Nayarit, Colima and Jalisco regions of west Mexico (200 B.C. to A.D. 300) and, finally, the Olmec, the foundation culture of Mexican civilization (1500-500 B.C.).

Poplack is president of Unisource Foods Corp., Detroit. He became a museum trustee in 1984 and is a board member of the museum's Associates of the American Wing. He and his wife, Jane, are Major Benefactors of the Founders Society Detroit Institute of Arts.

Poplack's many contributions to the museum

date back nearly three decades. In 1963, he established the Eleanor E. Poplack Memorial Scholarship Fund in memory of his late wife. Most recently, the fund has made possible year-around children's workshops combining art history with exploration of art media through the museum's Education Department in co-sponsorship with the Center for Creative Studies.

To introduce the Precolumbian collection to the public, Michael Kan, curator, African, Oceanic and New World Cultures, will talk informally on selected works in the gallery at 2 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 2.

Experts in Precolumbian studies will participate in a one-day public symposium at the museum Saturday, Oct. 18.

For individuals interested in more intensive exploration of Precolumbian art, David Penney, associate curator, African, Oceanic and New World Cultures, will conduct a gallery course meeting for four Saturday sessions early in 1987. Arrangements and registration for the course will be handled by the DIA Education Department.



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Symphony welcomes soloists

The Pontiac-Oakland Symphony Orchestra will play a concert of music by Rossini, Barber, Mozart, Gilere and Beethoven at 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 5, at Oakland University, Rochester.

Conductor David Daniels will lead the musicians in the Overture to William Tell by Ossini, Barber's Medea's Meditation and Dance of Venegone, Op. 23, and Mozart's "Ch'lo me scordi di te — Non temer, amato bene" with guest soloists Jan Albright, soprano, and Joyce Adelson, piano.

Daniels will conclude with Concerto for Coloratura Soprano and Orchestra, Op. 82 by Gilere, featuring Albright and Fantasia in C Minor for Piano, chorus and Orchestra, Op. 80 (the Choral Fantasy) by Beethoven. The Beethoven selection will be performed with pianist Adelson and the Oakland Chorale, directed by Lyle Nordstrom.

Daniels, Albright, Adelson and Nordstrom are all faculty members in the OI department of music, theater and dance.

Tickets are \$7 general admission and \$8 for OU students and senior citizens. The concert is also the first of the Classical Music Series sponsored by the Center for the Arts.

For ticket information, call the Center for the Arts box office, 370-3013, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

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