South American Culture and a permanent new exhibit hall at the National Museum of Natural History, presents an ecological view of South America's diverse cultures.

Starting high in the Andean mountains at the awesome Incan citadel of Machu Picchu, visitors can set forth on a "journey" that takes them the length of a continent and the thousands of years. Along a reconstruction of an Incan road they walk into the plaza of a modern Andean town on market day — where they can see clothing, architecture, ceramics, tapestries, and other Incan artifacts that reflect a mixture of prehistoric, colonial and 20th century cultural influence.

On the Peruvian coastal archeologists, among them the exhibition's script writer, Dr. Geoffrey Conrad, have excavated one of the largest prehistoric cities in the Americas — Chan Chan, the brilliantly planned capital of the great Chimú Empire. Fine pottery, gold bracelets, silver tweezers and pins that were undoubtedly royal possessions are among the articles from the site on view.

Nearby, the visitor sees a modern Ecuadorian coastal scene with a beached balsa-wood raft. From Valdivia, a coastal site in Ecuador, are exhibited pieces of the oldest pottery (3000-1500 B.C.) ever found in the New World. They were uncovered by Dr. Clifford Evans and Betty Meggers, the NMNH husband-and-wife archeological team.

Moving down out of the mountain valleys and coastlands into the heart of the continent, the visitor walks through a three-dimensional reconstruction of a tropical rain forest. Photographs and artifacts illustrate the life of forest Indians.

From the tropical forest the visitor enters an area of grass-covered plains in southern South America. Here, in a life-sized diorama and mural, native Tehuelche Indians on horseback armed with bows are hunting fleeing rheas.

As they walk through these widely different South American environments visitors can see that it is not by accident or pure chance that the urbanized Incan and Chimú civilizations developed where they did instead of in the Amazonian tropics or the Patagonian grasslands.

Throughout, painted murals and life-sized dioramas give an atmosphere of realism to the entire exhibit. It was designed by Steven Makovsky and Gail Singer of the Museum's Office of Exhibits (See the article in this issue naming others who worked on the new hall.)
Dr. Porter M. Kier, NMNH Director (right) was honored October 29 when he received a career service award from the National Civil Service League. His wife, Mrs. Mary Kier (holding the award) is at hand. Under Secretary Robert A. Brooks (left) introduced Dr. Kier at the ceremony.

Dr. Kier Receives Civil Service Award

Dr. Porter M. Kier, Director of the National Museum of Natural History, received a career service award from the National Civil Service League in a ceremony October 29.

The award was granted Dr. Kier for his work in modernizing and expanding the exhibits and educational program. Under Secretary Robert A. Brooks presented Dr. Kier during the award ceremony.

"Dr. Kier has been 20 years in the Civil Service at the Smithsonian Institution as a distinguished scientist, a systematic biologist specializing in the paleobiology of invertebrate organisms," Mr. Brooks said. "This is a vast field of study, going back in time to the origins of life on our planet. He is the world's leading expert on fossil echinoids. The distinction of his work has been recognized by national and international awards and honors, including a doctorate of science from Cambridge University in England."

In the middle of this remarkable scientific career, Dr. Kier was asked three years ago to take on a new challenge, the directorship of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. It is fortunate for the Institution that he accepted. The Museum is the largest single museum in the world in terms of the scope of its activities, collections, budget and personnel. Dr. Kier brought to public service a measure of imagination and enthusiasm for current and future generations. To this end he has taken a leading role in planning the Smithsonian's new Museum Support System Facility designed for the preservation and study of the national collections.

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Dr. Mello of MNH Receives Superior Performance Award

Dr. James F. Mello, Assistant Director of the National Museum of Natural History, has been awarded a superior performance award and certificate for his work as chairman of the computer services study group at the Smithsonian.

The certificate was presented to Dr. Mello by Under Secretary Robert A. Brooks in a ceremony November 5. In recommending Dr. Mello for the award, Mr. Brooks stated:

"Under his supervision the group produced an excellent management survey which documents how computer services have evolved over the last 10 years, how current services are flexibly arranged, and what our capabilities are, and what will be needed in the future. His special role as chairman during this period of study was to provide leadership and performed in an outstanding manner. His contributions were substantial, and deserve special recognition."

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Chinese Group Tours Center For Astrophysics


The visit to the Center was part of a 30-day tour of United States scientific institutions sponsored jointly by the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Academy of Sciences, and the Social Science Research Council as part of the joint U.S.-Chinese program of cultural and scientific exchanges that began in 1973.

The Chinese scientists, led by Professor Chou Pei-yuan of the Peking University, toured the Cambridge facility and held dual discussions with members of the High-Energy Astrophysics, Solar and Stellar Physics, and Radio Astronomy Divisions. The tour included laboratories where instrumentation is being developed for space flight experiments to detect cosmic X-ray emissions and for ground-based radio searches for interstellar molecules. The scientists also viewed solar ultraviolet and X-ray data returned by the experiments aboard the Skylab satellite and received a briefing on the design of the Multiple-Mirror Telescope now under construction by the Smithsonian and the University of Arizona.

One member of the delegation, Dr. Chung Hsueh of the Fisch-chu-shan (Purple Mountain) Observatory, presented a special after-dinner colloquium on "The Problem of the Cataclysmic Variations and Study of the Inner Corona and a Condensation Region in the Solar Corona," describing solar research in China for Center staff members.

Burtwell Field, Center director, served as host for the one-day meeting, which came as a response to an invitation extended by former Harvard College Observatory director, Donald Menzel, during his visit to the Chinese People's Republic a year ago.

Hamarah Compiles Arabic Works

Dr. Sami K. Hamarah, historian of pharmacy at the National Museum of History and Technology, has published a book entitled Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts on Medicine and Pharmacy at the British Library, through a grant from the Smithsonian Foundation Research.

It is described as the first independent catalogue of its kind devoted to medicopharmaceutical documents with a chronological study of authors and their contributions, and with a critical evaluation of their works. The 324-page work includes over 300 manuscripts, many never before studied or known.

SI Grid Team Takes Second Place

The Smithsonian's football team finished its 1975 season with a respectable 4-2-1 record and enough points to place in second in the strong Government Division of the D.C. Recreation Department's Adult Football League.

"But it wasn't good enough for co-coach Chuck Mangene," Tony Gooden said. "We're very disappointed at this finish," he said, noting it was the third straight year that the Smithsonians had finished as "bridesmaids" in second place. Only division winners advance to the playoffs in the D.C. league, "We had hoped to win the division title this year," Garrison added. "We certainly had the material. We just didn't have the breaks."

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...Presidents' China...

"American Presidential China," is an exhibition of 115 ceramic objects which served the tables of the nation's first families, both at home and in the presidential mansion. The exhibition will be at NMHT from December 6 to January 11, when it will begin a tour of museums in five other cities. Each of the 38 Presidents is represented by at least one article of tableware. The six living First Ladies have lent examples from personal services.

The White House, the Smithsonian, and all of the Presidents, many presidential libraries and private collections have participated in gathering revealing assemblages of china which has never before been viewed collectively.

The Bicentennial Traveling Exhibition Service organized the exhibition for circulation during the Bicentennial period. It was conceived to illustrate the evolution of tastes and styles in one aspect of American cultural history.

Among the objects of exceptional aesthetic and historic interest are a plate and bowl from the "Cincinnati" service which belonged to George Washington. Another rare plate is from the monogrammed "States" service which was presented to "Lady Washington" in 1796 by a Dutch trading company. These porcelain wares were decorated in China to American specifications.

One plate represents the short-lived Confederacy president of Jefferson Davis. An engraved portrait in the plate painted by First Lady Carolina Scott Harrison, is said to be the only reproduction of Davis known to exist.

Many other examples represent services imported by Presidents before the years 1815-1850, when proved the value of producing china of sufficient quality to grace the service of the nation's governors. White House china has been manufactured in the U.S. since.

Examples from each of the official services of the Presidents are included.

A 96-page catalog with 20 color and 36 black and white illustrations accompanies the exhibition. It was written by Susan Gray Detweiler, with a grant from the Barra Foundation. Support for the exhibition has also been provided by the Smithsonian's Bicentennial Program.

"Our Changing Land..."

"Our Changing Land," is the permanent ecology exhibit hall at NMNH. Its opening November 20 coincided with the completion of an elevator between the ground and first floors of the building. For the Bicentennial, the Museum wished to show how the face of North America had changed since the arrival of man, particularly since the nation's founding," commented Dr. Porter Ker, NMNH Director. "Our country is too large to show the changes everywhere, so a site was selected on the outskirts of the Potomac, where Washington now stands. We believe that the changes that have taken place there reflect the experience of many areas of the nation."

Mural and life-size dioramas recreate the site at four stages in time: 10,000 years ago, 1608 A.D., 1776 and 1976, and show the change from virgin land to farm land and ultimately to an urban center. Ecological processes that maintain the balance of nature are interpreted in the context of these changes.

During the hall from the Museum's Constitution Avenue side, a visitor walks into a dense forest of huge life-like hemlocks resembling those that grew in the immediate area of the Potomac 10,000 years ago during the ice age. Glaciers were far enough south to make the seasons much like southern Canada today. Man is not seen.

The visitor sees a totally different forest environment in 1608. The glaciers have receded, the river valley is a broad meadow, and the cold weather hemlocks have been replaced by a sycamore-and-maple hardwood forest with lush undergrowth. The Indians still hunted and fished but they now inhabited permanent villages.

In 1776, the cold-weather hemlocks and sycamore were gone, and the trees which were used for charcoal, birchbark, and other purposes were cut. The woodland for charcoal was cut along the Potomac River between 1767 and 1768. The continued planting of tobacco had impoverished the forests. A diorama recreates an empty farmhouse and inferitile field. Its owners had found it more profitable to move west. A display of plows helps illustrate how technological improvements and a better understanding of soil management eventually made possible the rescue of Potomac Valley farmland.

As population grew, many plants and animal species disappeared. This display shows an array of large animals that once roamed the area but that are now locally extinct. In a case is the national bird, the Bald Eagle, whose numbers continue to decline.

The 1976 exhibit shows the urban environment that now dominates a large area of the Potomac Valley. A mural shows the highways, bridges and parkland that now surround the Washington waterfront. A diorama recreates a park site where a cat is foraging in garbage under a picnic table. On display is a selection of foods, birds, insects, and animals now in the region.

This final section of the exhibition shows the importance of energy resources to modern life, exemplified by a large oil pump on display. Some of the problems concerning the urban areas as populations continue to increase are also discussed.

(Names of those working on the hall will be carried in a future issue of the Torch.)

...The Americans...

The National Portrait Gallery's exhibition, based on Dr. Boortz's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, The Americans: The Democratic Experience, presents the forward-thinking men and women who, through their inventions and innovations, revolutionized America in the decades following the Civil War.

In addition to environmental conservation: prevention of disease; alleviation of addiction; spreading the Christian gospel, and improvement of food sources.

Dr. Carr Receives Browning Award

A biologist who is famous among conservationists and television viewers as well as fellow scientists, Dr. Archie F. Carr, has been awarded the 1975 Edward W. Browning Award in the field of "Conserving the Environment." Secretary Ripley presented the Browning medal and the accompanying tax-exempt award of $5,000 to Dr. Carr in a ceremony October 16 in the Smithsonian Regents' Room.

The international authority on turtles, Dr. Carr found that his early studies of turtle migration, reproduction, feeding, and ecology led him to a special concern for preserving the green turtle species. A symptom of his work is shown in his book The Windward Road, published in 1957, stimulated formation of the Caribbean Conservation Corporation. The organization is a non-profit institution dedicated to restoration of the green turtle as a vital protein source for peoples of the tropics, especially the Caribbean.

In announcing the award, the Smithsonian said that Dr. Carr, through his inventions and innovations, has been a major contribution to the global migration of marine turtles, making them the peers of classic migratory species. Dr. Carr has shown the turtle to be one of the most promising of all animals for repeating experimentation in navigation problems.

Dr. Carr is author of more than 75 scientific papers and two other major books on turtles. His field work has been the subject of major television programs filmed at his research camp in Costa Rica. The Browning Achievement Awards, administered by the New York Community Trust, have been awarded by the Foundation for international achievement in four areas in addition to environmental conservation; prevention of disease; alleviation of addiction; spreading the Christian gospel, and improvement of food sources.
November 14 and runs through next May 30. In his foreword to the exhibition catalog, Marvin Brodie, Director of the Gallery, writes: "...For these early years of its existence, the National Portrait Gallery has focused its attention mainly on political, military, artistic, and scientific personalities, and the historic episodes in which they played a part. They've been the easy people to identify and the easy opportunity to introduce, through the medium of the brilliant orchestrated format (of Dr. Brooien's book) a new cast of characters."

In the cast of characters includes the famous as well as the little known talents that helped mold the way America works, relaxes, plays and lives. This is what has become known as The American Way of Life.

The exhibition is mounted on the newly reopened third floor of the Gallery. What was once an array of large wooden beams 21 feet long, 62 feet wide) has been restored to its former Victorian Renaissance splendor — a colorful combination of patterned stone, marble, marbelized plaster, tile, colored glass decorations and relief panels. After its restoration following a disastrous fire in 1877 the door was closed to the public. Now for the first time in nearly 100 years this space is open as an exhibition area.

...Artists, Models

"Artists and Models" an exhibition of photographs and documents from the collections of the Archives of American Art, open December 10 at the Archives Gallery on the first floor of the National Portrait Gallery, and will remain on view until November 4, 1976.

The exhibition centers on the 19th and 20th centuries and includes a manuscript by Rembrandt Peale concerning events when George Washington sat for portraits by the Peale family and for Gilbert Stuart.

Garnett McCoy, archivist who selected the exhibition, describes the period from the 1870s through the first half of the 20th century as "the heyday of professional modeling in America."

In a preface to the catalog (6 pages, fully illustrated), Dr. Douglas Clevinger describes the 23 Smithsonian bookshops for $31.33. Dr. McCoy writes of the 19th century: "Morality advanced at the expense of art. The study of the human figure, which required life classes and observation of the nude model, was widely regarded as licentious and a throwback to Greek and Roman past."

The catalog, which the opinion held even among painters, that the professional model lacked respectability."

SI, Scholastic Issue Portfolio "Museum" Series

Publication of "The American Experience," a pictorial history of America in 20 portfolios designed to serve as a portable museum for individuals, schools, libraries and other institutions throughout the country, has been announced by the Smithsonian Institution and Scholastic Magazine, Inc.

The portfolios, one of 22 Smithsonian Bicentennial programs, bring together for the first time photographs, documents, paintings, historical publications, maps and other Americana organized around 20 broad topics that reflect the American experience.

Each portfolio contains some 50 (1-by-1¼-inch reproductions, plus textual material which describes the development and significance of major facets of American life. Altogether, the series will encompass more than 1,000 images. Among the themes addressed are education, transportation, government, the economy and industrialization.

The materials were selected by the Smithsonian Institution from its own collections, as well as through the National Archives, the Library of Congress and museums and other institutions associated with American history.

The portable museum format was developed to enable schools and individuals to use the portfolios in a variety of ways, ranging from individual studies in homes, libraries or classrooms, to group research projects and displays in classrooms or other institutional settings.

...Nadelman...

An exhibition of the sculpture and drawings of Elie Nadelman, once recognized as a major artist, but forgotten in recent years opens December 19 at the Hirshhorn Museum.

Nadelman's works are being presented in a comprehensive exhibition for the first time since they were the subject of a show in 1948 as The Museum of Modern Art in New York. The exhibition, organized by the Whitney Museum of Museum of American Art with the cooperation of the Hirshhorn, consists of 182 sculptures and 41 drawings. It includes Nadelman's neoclassical works, portraits, decorative pieces, and a representative group entitled "Abstract Heads," encompassing a variety of media including wood, bone, stone, terra cotta and ceramic. Also in the exhibition are 13 sculptures from the Hirshhorn, which houses one of the most important collections of Nadelman's work.

"This is not only the most comprehensive presentation of Nadelman's work to date, she shows all facets of his artistry, but it also which supports the revaluation of Nadelman as one of the brightest spirits in 20th century sculpture and one of its most personal and elegant artists; an adventure in rediscovery as well as an aesthetic feast," said Abram Lerner, Hirshhorn Director. Before coming to the Hirshhorn, the exhibition was shown at the Whitney Museum in New York and was highly praised.

The exhibition will be shown through February 15, 1976, in the Hirshhorn Museum's fifth-floor gallery on the building's lower level. The installation was designed by Joe Shannon. Illustrated

Kier Gives Recognition to Creators of MNH Exhibition

(For Dr. Evans, it was the second time he has been involved in a hall's modernization. He and his wife, Dr. Betty Meggery, stimulated a general revamping in 1954-55. Since then, only minor work had been physically deteriorated.)

RALPH E. BECKER HONORED... The silver James Butterfield medal was presented to Washington attorney Ralph E. Becker (right) by Secretary Riepert in a ceremony leading on December 19 at the National Museum of History and Technology. The presentation was in recognition of Dr. Becker's donation to the Institution of his valuable collection of political campaign memorabilia. This presentation is in recognition of Mr. Becker's donation to the Institution of his valuable collection of political campaign memorabilia. The presentation was in recognition of Mr. Becker's donation to the Institution of his valuable collection of political campaign memorabilia...