

The Legend of Llhuros Lures Gulls to Museum

University of Pennsylvania Museum | Philadelphia

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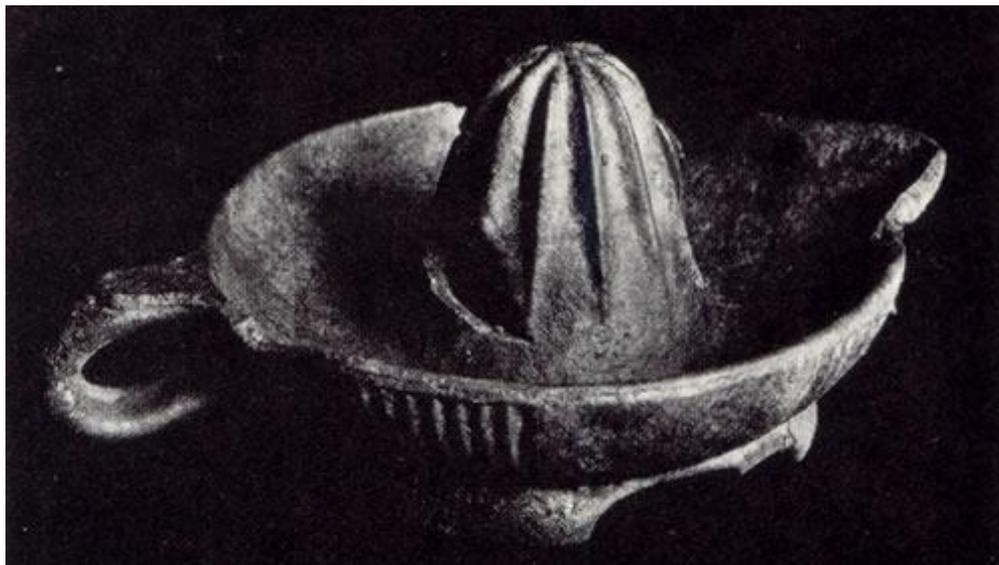
If you fell for the "Piltdown Man" hoax in the 1960s, you're sure to be knocked over by "The Civilization of Llhuros," a new exhibit at the University of Pennsylvania Museum.

Crumbling, austere artifacts – massive bronze doors to erotic iron and marble – sculpture and strains of primitive music bear tribute to what is seemingly a great anthropological find.

Pontificating placards and a detailed catalogue supplement the reconstructed journey to this long lost age, to a civilization that tragically drowned in sexual excesses.

Curiously though, there is no known record of Llhuros. Even stranger, on close examination, are the cultural relics on display.

An earthenware "trallib" ("an oil container found in the excavations of at



Trallib (oil container)

Vanibo") shows an amazing resemblance to a liquid detergent bottle.

A rusty, corroded religious icon seems an ancient precursor to the auto jack.

The bas-relief bronze doors are inscribed with the indecipherable letters H-O-N-D-A.

"Llhuros," you've probably gathered by now, is one fat anthropological joke, the brainchild of Cornell University art professor Norman Daly. Claiming to "have never been on a dig in my life," Daly has fashioned his imaginary civilization from objects found in dusty attics, antique dealers bins and trash heaps.

In his hands, acrylic paints turn a stove-lid holder from an old gas range into a corroded "Early Archaic" sculpture of a "pair of fornicating gods."

An impish, wiry figure of 62, Norman Daly conceived Llhuros eight years ago, while attending a concert of obtuse, avant-garde music "I was envious of how hard the audience was working to understand the music, and I thought if only I could achieve the same involvement with my work . . ."

The "Llhuros" exhibit has been touring for two years, "breaking all sorts of attendance records," and is set to travel to Germany this spring.



Dwarf Monster Riding a Wheel

"It's building like a Frankenstein monster," says it's master. "One of my recurring nightmares is that it's going to go on and on, with more 'diggings' and 'discoveries.' I toss and turn, worrying where I'm ever going to store it all."

On the exhibit's opening day at Penn, though, one of the most delighted visitors to the show was Dr. Gaylord P. Harnwell, retired president of the university. "It is a remarkable spoof," enthused Dr. Harnwell. "All academicians are guilty of taking themselves too seriously some times. This should do them in."

The Legend of Lihuros Lures Gulls to Museum

By JOYVATHAN TAKIIF

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When to Go

The University of Pennsylvania Museum, 33d and Spruce sts., is open Tuesday-Saturday, 10 A.M.-5 P.M., and Sunday, 1-5 P.M. (Closed Monday). The "Civilization of Lihuros" exhibit will be there through April 30. Free admission.

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Part from a lost civilization?

2 FRANK AND DARING FILMS

FANTASIA

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