

Museum Exhibit Explores 'Ancient' Llhuros Relics

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"The Civilization of Llhuros," opening Friday at the University Museum, offers an intriguing glimpse into a hitherto unknown culture.

Songs and poems, primitive paintings, and religious sculptures encrusted with what appears to be centuries of rust look mysterious to the unlearned observer, but one can turn for help to a soberly academic catalog of condensed research by the world's most renowned Llhuroscian scholars.

Among the finds which scholars don't explain are distinctly un-exotic inscriptions such as Sears, Roebuck & Co., which adorn a few of the "votive statues." A critical look at crumbling artifacts that resemble supermarket meat trays and orange juicers should convince the viewer that that's exactly what they are. In fact none of the art or literature of this "ancient" civilization is more than seven years old. It is all the creation of Norman Daly.

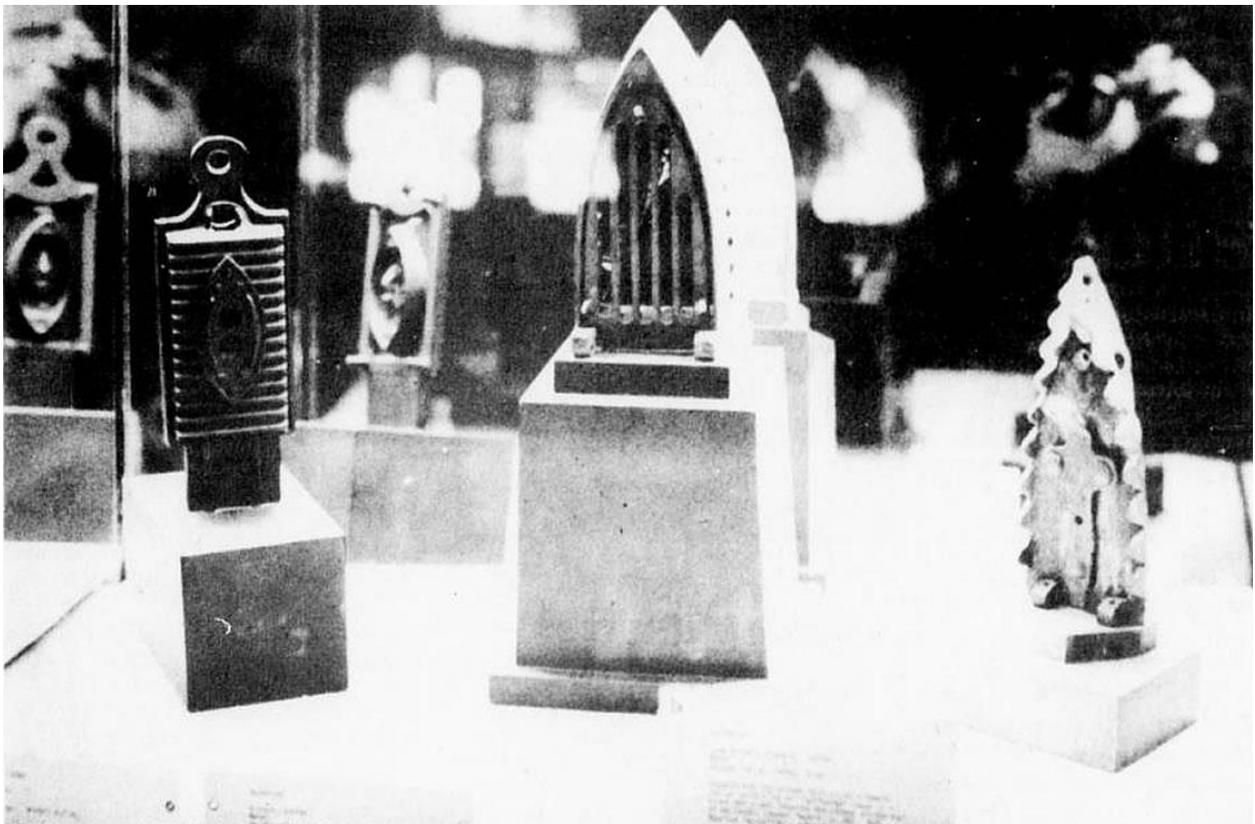
Daly, a painter and Cornell art professor, said Wednesday he began work on his pseudo-anthropological collection seven years ago "mainly as a form of protests as well as a mirror for me."

Daly criticized contemporary artists who try to create abstract beauty without relating their work to their audience. I'm not of the school that thinks that if it's not totally aesthetic, then it's not art," he said. "I'm opposed to the notion that people aren't intelligent enough to react."

Daly said his exhibit is not intended to dupe people into believing that there was a Llhuros, but that a deceptive approach is effective "because it's

so much a part of our lives. Pretense to skills, experience, talents that we don't have, is built in."

Daly said he parodies pretense in modern society's personal relationships by his conception of Llhuros. His "stilt-walkers," represented by a variety of statues, were people whose show of contrition and masochism earned them great respect. Daly said he equates such behavior with modern situations in which "people need to be punished if they haven't lived up to their role."



This collection of rare Llhuroscian "relics" will be displayed in the University Museum starting Friday. The Civilization of Llhuros is a creation of artist Norman Daly of Cornell University.

Photo: Neil Berger for The Daily Pennsylvanian