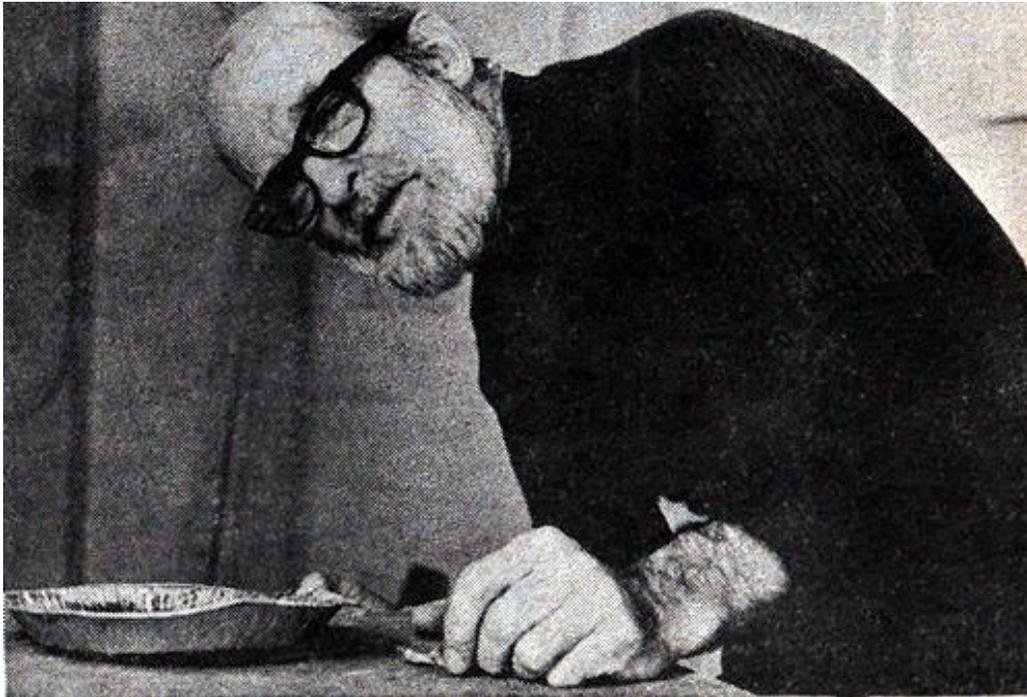


# *The "Ambiguous" Culture of Llhuros*

University Art Gallery, State University of New York at Albany | January 15-March 11, 1973  
Albany Student Press | January 19, 1973



Norman Daly, "discoverer of the lost civilization of Llhuros"

The University Art Gallery of State University of New York at Albany soon will offer a remarkable exhibition experience, the "discovery" of a previously unknown civilization, "Llhuros." All of the fragmentary remnants of the "Llhuroscian culture—its utilitarian and ritual objects, its scientific instruments, its architectural ruins—are in fact the conception of a single contemporary artist, Norman Daly, professor of painting and sculpture at Cornell University.

Besides creating "artifacts," Daly has written Llhuroscian poetry and music, and has established a considerable body of Llhuroscian scholarship. The exhibition will present Llhuros as a "real" ancient civilization for archaeological, anthropological and aesthetic study. It will not expose the work as that of an individual artist.

The exhibition to be on view at the University Art Gallery from Monday, January 15, through March 11 will consist of more than 100 objects including sculpture, paintings and facsimiles from temples, photo montages, and the like. Larger

dramatic pieces include temple doors, huge fragments of frescoes, and a full-scale, spectacular temple wall, decorated in bas-relief. Taped sound will provide music, translations of ritual chants, and an interview with noted Llhuroscian anthropologists.

The implications of the exhibition and Daly's concept go well beyond imitation and parody. The "artifacts" are described as quite beautiful, their qualities enduring independent of the Llhuroscian context. Many are ingeniously constructed out of found objects, carefully patinated to suggest an ancient origin. The degree of disguise varies, offering constant challenge to the visitor's innocent assumptions of the reality of the ancient culture and of the reliability of his own senses. The ambiguity is heightened through the use of real stone and marble pieces appearing among those of heavily encrusted Styrofoam, plastic and similar materials,

Likewise, the chants of human voices are interspersed with electronically generated sounds. Thus, the unsuspecting visitor first enters to receive straightforward information, to see works of logically varied scale and purpose, to sense a consistency of style and ancient surfaces — all factors which permit him to make an initial leap of faith, to willingly suspend disbelief and accept the civilization as authentic. Presented also with innumerable contradictory clues, fragmentary evidence, and planned interferences, he is provoked into actively participating in rediscovering and synthesizing the idea of the culture for himself.

The magazine *Newsweek* has called the show "an outrageous spoof of archaeological exhibits, a tour de force of craftsmanship and a provocative esthetic experience." The ambiguities of the show are deliberate. Daly has said that he wants the viewer to be actively aware of the synthetic nature of the Llhuros civilization and to become involved with the artist in its rediscovery. Beyond that, he hopes "the foibles, follies, superstitions, cruelties, fears and anxieties of this mythical culture be recognized as having disquieting resemblance to our own civilization."

The entire exhibition was organized by the Andrew D. White Museum of Art at Cornell. On Thursday night, February 1 at 7:30, there will be a reception and lecture by Mr. Daly to which the public is invited at no charge. Gallery hours are 9 to 5, Monday through Friday and 1-5, Saturday and Sunday.

# The "Ambiguous" Culture of Lihuros

The University Art Gallery of State University of New York at Albany soon will offer a remarkable exhibition experience, the "discovery" of a previously unknown civilization, "Lihuros." All of the fragmentary remnants of the "Lihurosian culture" — its utilitarian and ritual objects, its scientific instruments, its architectural ruins — are in fact the conception of a single contemporary artist, Norman Daly, professor of painting and sculpture at Cornell University.

Besides creating "artifacts," Daly has written Lihurosian poetry and music and has established a considerable body of Lihurosian scholarship. The exhibition will present Lihuros as a "real" ancient civilization for archaeological, anthropological and aesthetic study. It will not expose the work as that of an individual artist.

The exhibition to be on view at the University Art Gallery from Monday, January 15, through March 11 will consist of more than 100 objects including sculpture paintings and facsimiles from temples, photomontages, and the like. Larger dramatic pieces include temple doors, huge fragments of frescoes, and a full-scale, spectacular temple wall, decorated in bas-relief. Taped sound will provide music, translations of ritual chants, and an interview with noted Lihurosian anthropologists.

The implications of the exhibition and Daly's concept go well beyond imitation and parody. The "artifacts" are described

as quite beautiful, their qualities enduring independent of the Lihurosian context. Many are ingeniously constructed out of found objects, carefully patinated to suggest an ancient origin. The degree of disguise varies, offering constant challenge to the visitor's innocent assumptions of the reality of the ancient culture and of the reliability of his own senses. The ambiguity is heightened through the use of real stone and marble pieces appearing among those of heavily encrusted styrofoam, plastic and similar materials.

Likewise, the chants of human voices are interspersed with electronically generated sounds. Thus, the unsuspecting visitor first enters to receive straightforward information, to see works of logically varied scale and purpose, to sense a consistency of style and ancient surfaces — all factors which permit him to make an initial leap of faith, to willingly suspend disbelief and accept the civilization as authentic. Presented also with innumerable contradictory clues, fragmentary evidence, and planned interferences, he is provoked into actively participating in rediscovering and synthesizing the idea of the culture for himself.

The magazine Newsweek has called the show "an outrageous spoof of archaeological exhibits, a tour de force of craftsmanship and a provocative esthetic experience." The ambiguities of the show are deliberate. Daly has said that he wants the viewer to be actively aware of the synthetic nature of the Lihuros civilization and to become involved with the artist in its



Norman Daly, "discoverer" of the lost civilization of Lihuros

rediscovery. Beyond that, he hopes "the foibles, follies, superstitions, cruelties, fears and anxieties of this mythical culture are recognized as having disquieting resemblance to our own

civilization." The entire exhibition was organized by the Andrew Dickson White Museum of Art at Cornell. On Thursday night, February 1 at 7:30, there will be a recep-

tion and a lecture by Mr. Daly to which the public is invited at no charge. Gallery hours are 9 to 5 Monday through Friday and 1 to 5 Saturday and Sunday.

University Art Gallery, State University of New York at Albany  
Albany Student Press | January 19, 1973