

NOTICIAS BREVES

El Museo del Oro en Londres.





La princesa Ana de Inglaterra en la inauguración del Museo del Oro en la Real Academia de Artes. La acompañan, entre otros, Sir Hugh Casson, presidente de la academia, y Luis Gómez Vargas, subdirector administrativo del museo.

THE GOLD

Opening Hours

The Exhibition will be open from Tuesday, 21st November 1978 until Sunday, 18th March 1979 (closed Sunday 24th and Monday 25th December).

Monday–Friday (except as shown below) 10 am–7 pm.

Saturday and Sunday 10 am–6 pm.

Mondays 27th November–11th December and 15th January–12th March 2 pm–7 pm.

Last admission on all days one hour before closing.

Pre-Booked School Parties

On Mondays from 27th November–11th December and from 15th January–12th March the period between 10 am and 2 pm is reserved solely for pre-booked school parties.

Booking details may be obtained from the Exhibition Office.



OF EL DORADO

Pre-Booked Evenings

Pre-booking for parties and individuals at £2.50 per ticket weekday evenings 7.30 pm–9 pm. Details from the Exhibition Office.

Admission Charges (inclusive of VAT)

Adults £1.20.
Children and Old Age Pensioners 60p.
Students (on production of current NUS or ISU card) 60p.
Pre-booked school parties 60p per pupil.

Reduced Admission

On Sunday mornings between 10 am–2 pm the admission charge will be 60p for all visitors.

How to get there

By Tube: The nearest tube station is Piccadilly Circus which is on the Piccadilly and Bakerloo lines.

By Bus: 9, 14, 19, 22, 38 pass the Royal Academy. In addition, routes 3, 6, 12, 13, 15, 39, 53, 59, 88 and 159, go to Piccadilly Circus.

Exhibition Office

The Gold of El Dorado 13 New Quebec Street
London W1H 7DD Tel: 01-723 1634

**Presented by Benson & Hedges in
association with Times Newspapers Ltd.
and The Royal Academy of Arts.**

THE GOLD



A priceless treasure:
El Dorado, the
'Gilded Man',
on his raft

The richest display of ancient treasure since
tutankhamun opens at the Royal Academy on
uesday: The Gold of El Dorado. Five hundred
magnificent pieces have been garnered from
Colombia, from Madrid, London and America:
Among them a copy of the 'Gilded Man' himself
(above), on the raft on which went on to Lake
Tataavita (right), coated in gold dust and
bearing golden gifts to consign to the depths.
These treasures have never been retrieved,
but others have survived: some are shown on
these pages. *David Attenborough* on page 65
tells the story of the golden tribes of Colombia
and their descendants (below, Ika tribesmen).
Photographs *Brian Brake* and *Evelyn Hofer*



LEFT BY DAVID ATTENBOROUGH - PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEVINE





OF EL DORADO

THE SUNDAY TIMES MAGAZINE
Londres, noviembre 19, 1978.



EMBAJADA DE COLOMBIA

245A

Londres febrero 9, 1979

Señor Don
Luis Duque Gómez
Director del Museo del Oro
del Banco de la República
Bogotá

Señor Director:

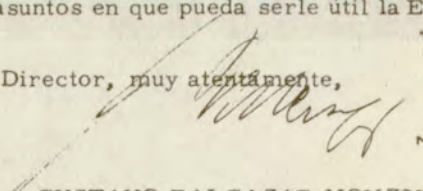
Desde mi llegada a esta ciudad como Embajador de Colombia, tuve el propósito de que una de mis primeras actividades sería visitar la exposición del Museo del Oro en la Royal Academy of Arts. En efecto, tuve la gran satisfacción de recorrer detenidamente las galerías donde se exhiben nuestros tesoros precolombinos y pude contar en esa oportunidad con la compañía y doctas explicaciones del Señor Alec Bright, funcionario del Museo y de Mr. Sydney Hutchison, Secretario de la Royal Academy.

Con verdadero orgullo pude comprobar y me complace manifestar a usted, que el nombre de Colombia ha quedado colocado a la mayor altura, con motivo de la exposición. El despliegue publicitario ha sido verdaderamente impresionante y ha llegado hasta los más remotos lugares de este país, a la vez que ha repercutido en toda la Europa occidental. No exagero al decirle que casi sin excepción todas las personas que he conocido o con quienes he hablado, se han referido a la exposición en los términos más encomiosos.

Por todo ello, me complace expresar a usted Señor Director y, por su conducto, al Banco de la República, las felicitaciones más calurosas por el éxito obtenido con la exposición y el agradecimiento por la invaluable contribución que ella representa para la difusión de nuestra cultura y para el estrechamiento de los nexos que nos unen con Gran Bretaña.

Al mismo tiempo deseo ofrecerle mi colaboración más decidida para todos los asuntos en que pueda serle útil la Embajada hoy a mi cargo.

Del Señor Director, muy atentamente,


GUSTAVO BALCAZAR MONZON
Embajador

Colombia's golden treasury

David Moss previews the Royal Academy's exhibition



This gold jaguar pendant is destined to be one of the most popular exhibits in the Royal Academy exhibition. It is from the Simu region, measures 12.1 cms (4 7/8 inches) in length and comes from the Museo del Oro, Bogotá.



Ceramic figure of a woman carrying a child, from the Quimbaya region (height 10 cms, 3 1/8 inches).



Gold pendant representing a group of jewellery from the Tolima region on show in London. Loaned from the Museo del Oro, this stylised figure measures 5.5 cms (2 1/8 inches) high.



A ceramic solid slab figure in Quimbaya style (height 20.2 cms, 8 inches), on loan from the Museo del Oro.

Every year a major exhibition held in London tends to capture the public's imagination and becomes the focus of international attention. These major shows belie any talk of the general public not really being interested in fine art and on such occasions we witness thousands of people who do not normally attend museums and galleries queuing and jostling to see an assortment of treasures. So far in the 1970s such exhibitions have included the legendary Tutankhamun display held at the British Museum from March to December 1972, which attracted an unprecedented 1 1/2 million visitors. Then in 1973 the Royal Academy showed 'Treasures from China' to over 750,000 people in four months, and followed up with the famous Turner exhibition, which attracted 400,000 visitors, and the Pompeii exhibition, seen by nearly 650,000.

This year the premier exhibition looks all set to be 'The Gold of El Dorado', which opens at Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1, on November 21 and runs until March 18 next year.

Gold has always held a peculiar fascination; throughout history it has been the symbol of wealth and power. The Royal

Academy offers the opportunity to indulge all one's fantasies about this most alluring substance when some 580 gold exhibits go on show, the largest and most significant collection of pre-Columbian gold ever to be seen outside South America.

The exhibition explores both the legend and the reality of El Dorado, that fabulous 'Kingdom of Gold' searched for by the Spanish Conquistadores and finally discovered high in the Andes around the sacred lagoon of Guatavita. The gold was worked by the Colombian Indians and was not - as the popular imagination believes - the artefacts of the Inca or Aztec cultures.

In the Age of Discovery it was lust for gold that was one of the great driving forces of the European explorers. Christopher Columbus brought back enticing news of the fabulous gold of the American Indians. The Conquistadores found and plundered the Aztec and Indian nations but were still convinced that they had not found El Dorado, the legend that finally led them to Colombia and the treasure of Guatavita. It is believed to this day that beneath the waters of this lake is an inestimable hoard of gold.

The marauding Spaniards destroyed the Colombian gold culture but many



All is not gold that will captivate the visitors to 'The Gold of Eldorado' exhibition. Many interesting archaeological items in ceramic will be on show, one of them this goblet in the Betanci style from the Sinu region. It stands 34 cms (13½ inches) high.

finely-worked pieces survived both the Conquistadores and successive generations of tomb-robbers. Most of the pieces come from the extensive collection of Colombia's major tourist attraction, the Museo del Oro in the capital Bogotá.

In order to comprehend fully the wealth and variety of gold on display at the Royal Academy one must remember that gold was a plentiful metal to the Colombian Indian. Its use was, therefore,

not restricted to ornamental and ceremonial use. It was employed for everyday objects such as combs, needles and even fish-hooks.

Gold is obviously the dominant component of the exhibition but other material will also be on display, taken from public and private collections in North and South America, Great Britain and Spain. These include much of the beautiful ceramic work of the Colombian

Indians at the time of the Spanish invasion and their items of everyday use. There is, for example, a reconstruction of an Indian hut complete with pottery and kitchen utensils. Relics of the Conquistadores themselves, such as armour and navigational aids, are also on show.

The exhibition has been designed by Alan Irvine and is laid out in a sequence of six rooms. These recount thematically the voyages of the Conquistadores, the legend of El Dorado, gold-working techniques and tribal life, while a Hall of Treasures has been designed to show the finest pieces to best advantage; Death and Afterlife features some mummies of the period and a shaft tomb with funerary urns.

It has taken two years and £½ million to mount this exhibition. It took a



This gold mask with nose ornament (width 16.5 cms, 6½ inches) is loaned for the exhibition from the RA's near neighbour, the Museum of Mankind.

number of trips to Bogotá and some delicate negotiations with museum authorities before these fragile treasures were allowed to leave South America. The packing and shipping of the gold was in itself a tremendous feat and is a triumph for specialist packers Wingate & Johnston.

One can only guess at the overall value of the Colombian national treasures on show; it certainly runs into several millions and the pieces have all been insured through Lloyds. There were pieces that the Colombians would not let out of their country – they are too fragile to travel – but one must feel grateful to the Bogotá museum for allowing such a high percentage of its exhibits to come to this country and so allow us an insight into Colombia's immense cultural heritage. Some of the exhibits on show date back to 800 BC, although most are dated from around AD 500 – 1500. Here is a unique opportunity to see the cream of Pre-Columbian culture.

The Royal Academy anticipates that 'The Gold of El Dorado' will attract half a million visitors. Admission charge is £1.20 for adults and the exhibition will be open from 10am to 7pm on weekdays and until 6pm at weekends.

The exhibition is presented by Benson & Hedges (one can readily see the advertising potential: *Pure Gold From...*) in association with Times Newspapers and the Royal Academy of Arts.

Tumba de un príncipe celta junto a Stuttgart

“Arqueólogos del Departamento de Conservación de Monumentos de Land en Stuttgart han descubierto en un campo junto a Hochdorf, en el distrito de Ludwigsburg, la tumba de un príncipe celta. El mausoleo, que por la riqueza de su contenido es ya designado como “hallazgo del siglo”, procede del Neolítico (aproximadamente 500 a JC) y en 2.500 años no ha sido saqueado nunca. De él se esperan nuevos conocimientos sobre los ritos funerarios de los celtas, de los que se carece por completo de testimonios escritos. El montículo sepulcral, allanado por la erosión y la utilización agrícola, debió tener 8 m. de altura y 60 de longitud. El edificio sepulcral propiamente dicho, bajo la masa de tierra, consistía en una construcción entramada, de piedras y pilotes de roble, protegiendo la cámara funeraria situada bajo la tierra y revestida con paños. El cuerpo embalsamado del príncipe, que al morir tenía unos 40 años y una estatura de 1.83 m., yacía en un sarcófago de bronce de 3 m. de longitud, con forma de navecilla. El sarcófago reposaba a su vez en un carro en forma de cajón rectangular, con varas, formado por ocho adorantes y montado sobre ruedas de radios. Además de varios huesos de la mano y tendones del antebrazo, se conservaban numerosos adornos de oro, como un aro de cuello, una fíbula en forma de serpiente para colgar al cuello, cintas del calzado, brazaletes, láminas de cinturón. También se han encontrado arreos para el caballo, en madera, anteojeras de cuero, 6 escudillas de bronce sobre un pie de madera tallada, y una vasija de bronce de origen desconocido, de un metro de diámetro, que podría ser de origen etrusco. Las excavaciones se continuarán hasta 1980. Se sospecha además que la tumba de la esposa del príncipe podría encontrarse en las cercanías”. (1)

(1) Crónica Cultural - 1978-S. Inter Nationes. Bonn.