



Ethnic artwork from New Guinea to be exhibited

Thu, December 9, 2004

Ceremonial objects and other artifacts from several New Guinea tribes will be displayed at Valparaiso University's Brauer Museum of Art in an exhibition running from Jan. 7 to March 20.

"Art and the Spirit World of New Guinea" will feature approximately 150 objects loaned to Brauer Museum from two local private collections.

Gregg Hertzlieb, director of Brauer Museum, said the New Guinea exhibition is the museum's first major display of ethnographic objects. Masks, shields, drums, figurines and a canoe are among the objects that will be displayed. A display of photographs from New Guinea taken by Ralph Cowan will be included in the exhibition.

"These are objects that were actually used in New Guinea culture during the 19th and 20th centuries," Hertzlieb said. "We think of this exhibition as an opportunity to learn about and celebrate the faith, culture and history of the New Guinea people."

An opening reception will be held at 7 p.m. Jan. 7 at the Brauer Museum. Collectors Ralph Cowan of Valparaiso and Lawrence P. Kolton of Beverly Shores will attend the opening along with exhibition curator Robert Welsch, adjunct curator in the Department of Anthropology of Chicago's Field Museum and visiting professor of anthropology at Dartmouth College.

A free brochure written by Welsch is available at the exhibition.

Also showing at Brauer Museum Jan. 7 through March 20 is an exhibition of plaster sculptures created by David DeCesaris of Munster. The exhibition will feature 11 life-sized sculptures in the museum along with a handful of sculptures to be displayed in the lobby of the Center for the Arts.

"His sculptures are surreal and present subjects in unusual positions, providing an interesting commentary on the condition of man in a narrative form," Hertzlieb said.

Among the special events being held in conjunction with the exhibitions is a Jan. 20 lecture by Welsch as part of the weekly Christ College Symposium series of lectures. Welsch's talk, "Art and the Spirit World of New Guinea: Glimpses into the Ritual Lives and Cosmologies of a Tribal Society," will begin at 6:30 p.m. in Mueller Hall on campus.

Feb. 2, DeCesaris will discuss his artwork, inspirations and style during an Artist Coffee Hour at 7 p.m. in the Brauer Museum.

Hertzlieb will discuss the New Guinea and DeCesaris exhibitions at a Feb. 16 Gallery Talk beginning at 7 p.m. in the museum.

All three talks are free and open to the public.

Brauer Museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; from 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, and from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday during the academic year. Admission is free. Group tours may be arranged by calling (219) 465-7926.

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