

# The People and Gold of Pre-Hispanic Colombia

Photographs taken by Cathleen Rosen at Museo del Oro

## Gold Ornament



#### **Ancient Metalsmiths**

The earliest discoveries of ancient metalsmithing in the Americas began in Peru. There is evidence of the use of gold in the Colombia region as early as 1500 B.C. The advancements and varied uses of metals in this region were then taken to a fine art.

# Pre-Hispanic Societies Of Colombia

Nariño	Tumaco	Calima	San Agustín
Tierradentro	Tolima	Quimbaya	Cauca
Zenú	Tairona	Muisca	Urabá and Chocó

## Techniques of Goldmaking

## Lost Wax Molds



## Clay Mold Lost Wax Cast



## Gold Tools



## Gold Tools



## Flat Sheet of Gold



# Gold Hammering



## Flat Breastplate









### Types of Artifacts

Pre-Hispanic cultures primarily created gold objects for the leaders of their societies and for spiritual purposes. The array of adornments generally were intended to show the special status of either the chieftans or their shamans.

## Funerary Masks



## Calima Funerary Mask



# Breastplate



# Earrings



#### **Body Adornments**

The shamans would utilize the gold objects during spiritual ceremonies in which they might be trying to protect the community, cure illness, or predict the future.

## Ear Spools



## Muiscas Gold Object



## Winged Gold Object



## Lime Container



## Votive Object



#### Beliefs

Pre-Hispanic societies created objects that either transformed them or showed a transformation of humans into different animals. Many animals and birds were incorporated into the designs of the objects used throughout Colombia.

#### Jaguar

The power and strength of the jaguar was highly admired by societies not only in Colombia, but in other regions of the Americas. Shamans were known to adopt the personality of the jaguar to project fear and respect.



### Shaman Necklace



## Calima Jaguar Nosering



#### **Animal Symbols**

The snake with a head at each end appears associated with the sun, as a symbol of its eternal movement to and fro between two opposite points on the horizon. It was from this movement that life originated.

## **Gold Container**

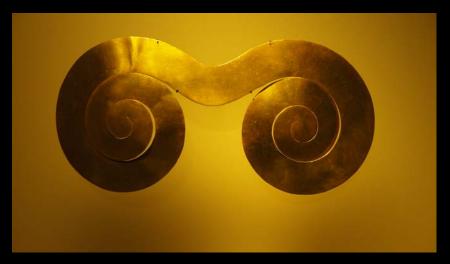


#### **Artistic Elements**

Many of the Pre-Hispanic artisans used the idea of cycles or repeating patterns of nature in the designs they used in their various metal artifacts.

The also believed some materials with a reflective quality could communicate with supernatural forces.

## **Artistic Elements**





# Amazing

