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Art and Archaeology of Pre-Columbian Cuba (Pitt Latin American Series)

Ramon Dacal Moure, Manuel Rivero De La Calle

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Art and Archaeology of Pre-Columbian Cuba presents a number of works, sixteen reproduced in color, by pre-Columbian artists from the archipelago, covering three millennia of human life in Cuba.

Living under difficult conditions, the first Cubans sculpted their emotions, fears, and hopes on stone, shell, wood, and bones. Much of their art has not previously been available either within or outside of the Caribbean. Ramon Dacal Moure and Manuel Rivero de la Calle describe and interpret the two kinds of prehistoric art found on the island: that of original settlers, the Ciboneys, and that of the Tainos, who had largely replaced the Ciboneys by the time of Columbus.

More than one hundred photographs culled for Cuban museums and collections reveal the superb artistry of the Ciboney and Taino cultures. Idols and amulets carved of stone, coral, and wood; shell masks; stone axes; petroglyphs and pictographs are among the art works never before seen outside of Cuba.

Art and Archaeology of Pre-Columbian Cuba is the first report of archaeological findings in Cuba since 1959 and the first synthesis of Cuban prehistoric art and archaeology since Mark Harrington's *Cuba Before Columbus*, published in 1921. Since 1959, Cuban archaeologists have been isolated from research being carried out on other islands in the region, just as other scientists have been unable to work on Cuba or communicate easily with their Cuban colleagues.

While popular interest in and scholarly knowledge of prehistoric art and archaeology have grown in recent years, the Caribbean has been neglected, and Cuba especially. Through *Art and Archaeology of Pre-Columbian Cuba*, archaeologists and other professionals as well as general readers will come to admire and respect the talent visible in these examples of aboriginal art.

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