



Mother-of-pearl shell, cowrie shells, plant fiber. Papua New Guinea.
 Courtesy of the Logan Museum of Anthropology, Beloit College, Wisconsin



PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Alicia Cardenas
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We investigate many aspects of what it means to be human by uniting research on the past and present with human biology, language and environment. -San Diego Museum of Man

In mid-November I had an opportunity to visit the San Diego Museum of Man's exhibit, *Body Ornamentation: Artistic Representations of Self*. Months before, I heard that an exhibit was being put together with the help of some of the folks from our community, and I was lucky enough to be in the area while the exhibit was still going on and to see first-hand the amazing contribution our people made to the

Rites of Passage



↓ Clay, cloth, glass, animal and plant fiber, paint. Mojave, California and Arizona.
Courtesy of the San Diego Museum of Man

museum and to the larger community's knowledge of our art.

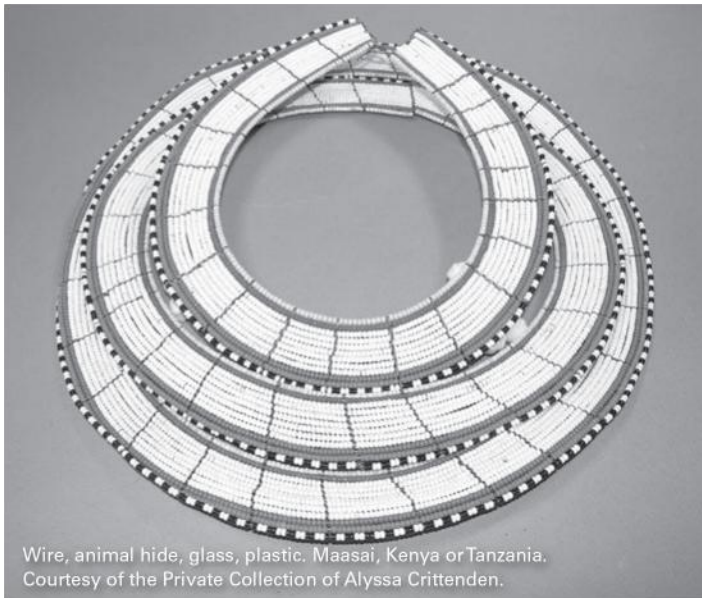
Since its founding in 1915, The San Diego Museum of Man has been working to enrich popular knowledge of anthropology. (Anthropology is the study of humankind — a humankind that just happens to have been getting tattooed and pierced for over 5,000 years.) The recent exhibit specifically addresses the many historic cultures of the earth with body adornment, and cross-references them with modern body art being done today.

It was a great surprise to be walking through the exhibit recognizing names of contributors, the jewelry being used, and bigger-than-life size photos of San Diego's Piercing community. Body art practitioners that were adorning the walls of this museum were Corey Lolley, Matt Southwood, Didier Suarez from Enigma Body Piercing, John and Rebecca O'Connor, Roni Shaw and Eddie Castro from Apogee Body Piercing



and Hydi Rice from Somatic. Additionally, Erica Skadsen and Didier Suarez loaned many pieces from their personal collections to the Museum. This was a world-class exhibit put together through the cooperation of members of our community and a museum curator who made the connection between the artifacts of the past and the practices of the present. It was not only an achievement for the local piercing and tattoo community to be viewed as a valuable part of the history of man, but it was a triumph for all people who wear body art everywhere and struggle for recognition.

For years, we have worked hard to be considered integral members of our communities, and we have put a lot of energy into educating the public about the cultural significance of body art. It was wonderful to see the anthropological establishment reach out to our community for information, cultural artifacts and human reference. I was very impressed with the exhibit



Wire, animal hide, glass, plastic. Maasai, Kenya or Tanzania.
 Courtesy of the Private Collection of Alyssa Crittenden.

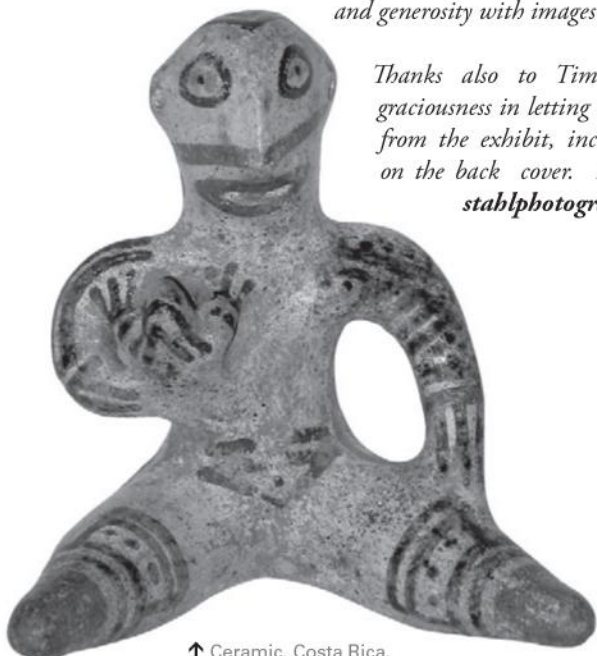
and was most impressed with our beautiful friends for representing our entire community with respect and awareness.

Many body art practitioners and members of our organization are involved in projects such as this at any given time. It is important for our community to be aware of and celebrate all that our people are doing. We should take notice of how the portrayal of our community and our art is changing—as shown by the San Diego exhibit—and the effort made to make our people a part of its planning. *The Point* is an excellent forum for both these projects, where we can all share not only our issues and new information, but also our current involvements and successes and events going on in our local communities. I invite our readers to report news like this to the APP so we can document and acknowledge the efforts being made from both sides to bridge society's understanding of why we do what we do.

For more information about the San Diego Museum of Man and upcoming exhibits, go to www.museumofman.org

Special thanks are due Tori D. Heflin, curator of the exhibit, for her help and generosity with images for this issue.

Thanks also to Tim Stahl for his graciousness in letting us use his images from the exhibit, including the one on the back cover. His site is www.stahlphotographics.com. **P**



↑ Ceramic. Costa Rica.
 Courtesy of the San Diego Museum of Man

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