

### at University of Toronto Art Centre

Free exhibit displays one-of-a-kind cultural artifacts



*the Silver of Peru)*

The largest collection of Peruvian silver ever to be displayed in Canada will be in the spotlight at the University of Toronto starting January 15 in *Luminescence: The Silver of Peru*.

The spread of more than 140 objects—including sculptures, paintings, crowns, masks and regalia—spans Peruvian history from the pre-Columbian period to contemporary times.

“One can only imagine the incredible impact that silver must have had in pre-Columbian Peru,” said Anthony Shelton, curator of the exhibit. “Garbed in the precious metal, radiating and reflecting the harsh desert light, the Incas and their predecessors would have appeared as deities.”

While silver was used by Andean priests and rulers, its cultural significance evolved for employment in Catholic rituals and by colonial vice-regal elite who admired the use of silver in paintings

As Peru gained its independence in 1821, the style and subject of silverwork changed once again as it celebrated the country’s natural landscapes and wildlife.

“Even as the region underwent sweeping changes in subsequent centuries, the cultural importance of silver remained alive,” said Shelton. “In *Luminescence*, we explore what the incredible, reflective properties of silver

have meant to Peru over time.”



Featured artifacts include:

- Two surviving 19th century Silver Dance Crowns
- Two of only three existing silver tunics from the Chimu civilization dating back to 1450 AD
- Ancient silver artifacts from diverse pre-Columbian civilizations
- Three golden headdresses worn by pre-Columbian Lords



- 17th century painting of the Virgin Mary

- A reconstruction of an 18th century church altar decorated in silver

*Luminescence: The Silver of Peru* is on display at the [University of Toronto Art Centre](#) from January 15-March 9.

The exhibit is made possible by its sponsors, Pan American Silver Corp., The Patronato Plata del Peru and The Silver Institute.

It is co-curated by Shelton in collaboration with the Patronato Plata del Peru.



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