



The Grinnell-Lee Collection

March 9, 2014 • 2 - 4 pm

Santa Monica, CA 90402

The Grinnell-Lee 1920's Spanish Revival home is filled with an eclectic mix of collectibles, ranging from rubber ducklings to butterflies and beetles, Japanese and Korean *tonsus*, and old Kilim rugs scattered throughout the room. Most conspicuous are collections of pre-Columbian ceramics from central Panama and artifacts from Papua New Guinea.

Both collections were initiated in the 1960's, during research trips to these countries to study the echolocation capabilities of bats. The Panamanian material comes from a relatively small region west of the Panama Canal, and was produced by a culture that was continuous from at least 9000 BCE to the conquest. Despite Panama's position between the high cultures of MesoAmerica and the Andes, the ceramics show almost no influences from either. Many of the shapes are virtually unique to the area: double-bodied pots, carafes, bottles, tall pedestal plates and bowls, and others. And the painted polychrome designs are arguably the most colorful in the pre-Columbian repertoire, with some of the most elegant, sophisticated designs on ceramics anywhere in the world. Because there is very little literature on the art, Dr. Grinnell is writing a book on the subject in an attempt to redress this neglect. A substantial display of these artifacts - gifts and/or on loan - are on view at LACMA in the Ancient Arts of American galleries.

The PNG material greets visitors in the form of a 13-head men's house lintel. Most of the available space in the house is filled with masks, door-boards, shields, bowls, flute-stoppers, lime-sticks, drums and spirit figures. Some were collected in the 1960/70's in the course of doing bat research while the later and higher quality material, including precontact artifacts, came through Michael Hamson, including those from an arduous trip taken with him in 2005. Refreshment follow the talk and tour. Limited to 45 persons.

RSVP by Noon March 6 to feelie@ucla.edu or call (310) 454-7851

