

"The Rock Art of Easter Island: Symbols of Power, Prayers to the Gods" and "Rapa Nui, Island of Memory".

Hyder's photos are exceptional in many ways. They show the island as it was in 1982, symbolically commemorating the 25th anniversary since the original events by establishing the gallery in 2007. All pictures are of superb quality; different image sizes allow both fast preview and very detailed high-resolution versions.

The gallery presents a rich variety of unique rock art photos, taken under extremely favorable illumination, causing the designs to stand out clearly in all their beauty. Here you will find masterly carved Makemake faces from Ana Nga Heu; about a dozen photos from 'Orongo showing stylistic variations of bass-relief birdmen carvings at the sacred precinct Mata Ngarau, including one-of-a-kind photos of a stone with two birdmen that is located inside one of the houses and still showing white pigment traces, and the famous carved doorpost with numerous *komari* motifs and cupules. Four photos are dedicated to another currently sealed site – a stone panel with multiple *komari* incisions located in a cave near Hanga Tee. Several wonderful images show Ana Kai Tangata's paintings and the outside of the cave, illuminated by rays of the setting sun.

The gallery also includes an exceptional set of almost twenty breathtaking aerials taken from a small plane, showing the fantastic volcanic landscapes of Rapa Nui with solitary clusters of trees emerging from the sea of sun-burnt grass, orange-red patches of eroded soil, and omnipresent scattered black rocks. You will find here an amazing photo of Poike ditch, revealing its discontinuous character, several pictures of Rano Raraku's volcano from different angles and zoom shots of the external quarries and *moai* standing below. There are some wonderful birds-eye views of Ahu Vaihu, Ahu Akahanga, Papa te Kena and Cape Puku Auke. One stunning aerial shot of Ahu Nau Nau at 'Anakena is exceptional: one can see the site after the recent excavations, with its seawall free from sand to its full height and several open excavation trenches.

The newly opened online photographic gallery of William D. Hyder presents the unique set of historical images from Easter Island, incredible aerials and wonderful petroglyph images – a pure delight for every Rapanuiphile!

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MOAI SIGHTINGS

A *MOAI* CONSTRUCTED OF CANS of peas was displayed at the Charleston (N. Carolina) Civic Center in a competition to create a sculpture from canned goods. Teams of architects, engineers, and contractors competed to design and build a sculpture out of canned foods. The charity event is organized by the Society of Design Administration. The Easter Island-inspired entry was a six-foot structure with a seven-foot *moai* on top, formed completely from cans of peas. Some cans of chili were added "for color." After the competition, the canned goods were donated to charity.



It seems that one can order individualized postage stamps in Britain, stamps exhibiting pictures of newlyweds, one's dog or child or, in this case, *moai*, which was sent to us by David Maddock. These special stamps are called "smilers", and are legal tender.



A photograph sent in by Elaine Baker shows an unlikely picture of three snowmen *moai* seen at the McCall (Idaho) Winter Carnival in January 2007.



A small *moai* with *pukao* and Maria Eugenia Santa Coloma in the Montserrat Museum, Spain. It was donated by a private collector but no other information was available. Photo by Patrick Chapman

WHAT'S NEW IN THE PACIFIC

THE CUNARD LINE, PIONEERS OF WORLD CRUISING, will make maritime history in January 2008 when its newest ocean liner, *Queen Victoria*, sails from New York at the same time as Cunard's *Queen Elizabeth 2*. The two departures will mark the start of *Queen Victoria's* "Pathway to the

Explorers" cruise and the *QE2's* start of a 90-day "Pacific and Far East Odyssey." Both ships will sail to Fort Lauderdale for celebrations and then each will head off on different itineraries, reuniting in Sydney at the end of February.

The *QE2* will sail around South America, stopping at Valparaíso and then off across the Pacific, with a stop at Easter Island. Note that the ship carries 1,900 passengers plus 1,015 crew. The impact of such a number of people at one time on the island's fragile eco-system staggers the imagination.

LAPITA DESIGNS

THE RIDDLE OF THE MYSTERIOUS faces on South Pacific artifacts may be solved by research conducted by John Terrell, Curator of Pacific Anthropology at The Field Museum, and Esther M. Schechter, a Research Associate in the Department of Anthropology at The Field Museum. "Lapita" pottery has been found at more than 180 different places on tropical islands located in a broad arc of the southwestern Pacific from Papua New Guinea to Samoa. Experts have long viewed the faces on pottery as human in appearance, and considered them to be a sign that Pacific Islanders long ago may have worshiped their ancestors. But Terrell and Schechter have identified the symbolism on prehistoric pottery excavated at Aitape on the Sepik Coast of northern New Guinea as representing sea turtles. Furthermore, these portraits may be showing us ideas held by early Pacific Islanders about the origins of humankind.

Terrell and Schechter's discovery suggests that a folktale recorded on this coast in the early 1970s – a story about a great sea turtle (the mother of all sea turtles) and the origins of the first island, the first man, and the first woman on earth – may be thousands of years old. "Nothing we had been doing in New Guinea for years had prepared us for this discovery," Terrell explained. "We have now been able to describe for the first time four kinds of prehistoric pottery from the Sepik coast that, when considered in series, fill the temporal gap between practices and beliefs in Lapita times and the present day. A plausible reason for the persistence of this iconography is that it has referenced ideas about the living and the dead, the human and the divine, and the individual and society that remained socially and spiritually profound and worthy of expression long after the demise of Lapita as a distinct ceramic style," Terrell added.

Terrell and Schechter acknowledge that more work must be done to pin down their unexpected discovery. Nevertheless, it now looks as if they have deciphered the ancient "Lapita code" and may have rescued one of the oldest religious beliefs of Pacific Islanders from the brink of oblivion. "I was skeptical ... about connecting these designs with sea turtles," Schechter said, "but then a conservation biologist pointed out that some of the designs match the distinctive beach tracks that a green sea turtle makes when she is coming ashore to lay her eggs. Everything made even more sense when we came across the creation story about a great sea turtle and the first man and woman on earth," she added. The story comes from a village only 75 miles away