Lafayette will see its first "Pre-Columbian Art Festival" during the week of Oct. 23-27. A distinctive slate of events has been planned, including two lectures by Dr. Donald Robertson of Tulane University, one of the most eminent scholars of Pre-Columbian Art History in the United States, and an exhibition of rubbings of Maya monuments and bas-relief tablets. This collection of rubbings, entitled "The Merle Greene Robertson Collection," will be displayed at the Bank of Lafayette on Johnston Street, beginning Oct. 23.

Dr. Robertson, the featured speaker of the Festival, received his doctorate from Yale University and is presently the director of the Pre-Columbian Art History Program at Tulane University. He will speak on Oct. 25 at 8:00 p.m. on "The Pre-Columbian Maya," and again Oct. 26 at 9:30 a.m. on "Pre-Columbian Art." Both lectures will be held in the Harry Griffin Auditorium on the USL campus. A reception honoring Dr. Robertson will be held at the Bank of Lafayette immediately following the Oct. 25 evening lecture.

The festival is being sponsored by the Acadia Art Council, the USL Chapter of Pi Gamma Mu, the National social science honor society, the Bank of Lafayette, and the Lafayette Art Association. Pre-Columbian Art signifies the art of a particular place, time, and people. The place is the New World — the Americas. The time extends from the fourth millennium B.C. through the early 16th century A.D. The people — the artists and craftsmen who created the art — were the native inhabitants of the New World, representatives of cultures on both continents. Some of these cultures influenced others artistically, others developed independently.

Pre-Columbian Art ceased, not with the landing of Columbus in 1492 as the term Pre-Columbian implies, but with the arrival of the Spanish on the mainland some years later.

Although a lecture introducing Pre-Columbian Art will be given on Oct. 26, this festival has as its emphasis on jewel of Pre-Columbian civilization — the Maya civilization.

The Maya civilization flourished during the fourth to sixteenth centuries A.D. in what is now Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, and parts of Mexico. To mark the passage of time over the centuries, the Maya erected stelae, stone monuments, inscribed with texts of hieroglyphs and portraits of rulers, priests, and gods, and dedicated these stelae at the end of specified time periods. The temples, stelae, and stucco sculptures of the Maya lay hidden for centuries, until their "discovery" in the middle of the 19th century by explorer John Lloyd Stevens and his traveling companion, artist Frederick Catherwood, who made drawings documenting this remarkable lost civilization. Dr. Robertson's evening lecture on Oct. 25 will deal exclusively with the Maya, and will consist of both color slides and his comments on the Maya, their art, and their architecture.

The idea for this festival came about as the result of the interest of Cynthia I. Walson, Special Projects Coordinator for the Acadia Art Council, and USL professor Michel Pillet, Director of the USL School of Art and Architecture. Ms. Walson is a senior at USL, and will receive her B.A. in May in the field of History. The coordination of Festival events was initially begun by her in completion of requirements for Senior Project 1 under Pillet. She assisted Dr. Gloria K. Fiero of the USL History Department in conducting a similar festival dealing with Egyptianology last year. Pillet is presently working on a doctorate in Pre-Columbian Architecture and American Studies at the University of New Mexico. His dissertation will deal with the Pueblo Architecture of the Anasazi Civilization, complex of Chaco Canyon, and will consist of an architectural and planning analysis of the site.