In the summer of 1967, the Delgado Museum of Art embarked on an Arts of the Americas project, laying the foundations of what may one day be a definitive collection of the fine arts of this hemisphere.

But, what exactly are the Arts of the Americas?

The term is admittedly a broad one, but a partial answer will be available on Friday, May 10, when Delgado, as its major contribution to the New Orleans 250th Anniversary Celebration, presents a comprehensive survey of "The Arts of Ancient and Modern Latin America," as reflected in the more choice collections of North America.

The large display, which was made possible by contributions from a group of interested civic leaders, took months to assemble. It covers the great art that has survived from the Indian cultures that flourished in Mexico, Central America and the Andean area before Columbus' discoveries; it explores the naive, charming painting and sculpture of Spanish Colonial times; it includes the sophisticated work of the leading Latin-American artists of the 20th Century; and winds up with examples of the revolutionary "sculptured light," which is in the avant garde of today.

A special feature of the show will be the Pre-Columbian gold—a collection within a collection of nearly 100 masks, amulets, cups, bracelets, necklaces, gorgets and other pieces of precious metal that survived the grasping hands of the 16th Century invaders. There will be baby-faced sculptures from the Olmec civilization which existed on the Gulf Coast of Mexico long before the Christian era; there will also be sculptures in stone, stucco, jade and jadeite from the later Maya, Toltec, Aztec and other peoples of Mexico and Central America. And, of course, there will be numerous examples of decorated pots and ceremonial jars from these cultures and from those established by the Mocheicas, Chimus and Incas of the Andean regions.

One of the rarest of the exhibits will be an articulated Mayan doll, circa 600-900 A.D., which was recently acquired by Delgado. This foot-high ceramic figure, which has the baffling Mona Lisa smile typical of all such pieces, can take many poses as its arms, legs and head are movable. Though many of these dolls have articulated limbs, museum director James B. Byrnes believes this to be only one whose head can also be moved.

An "Immaculate Conception," painted by Spanish master Bartolome Esteban Murillo, will be included in the show. Thought to have originally been done for the cathedral of Lima in Peru, it is representative of the European sources that inspired much of the religious art that flowered in the Latin-dominated countries after the conquest.

Continued On Page 9

Latin America's Art

By Alberta Collier

Portrait of Dona Maria de la Luz Padilla y Cervantes will be in local show.

Later Dona Maria likeness shows beauty spots. It's on loan from Brooklyn Museum.
Gold necklace was product of ancient Mochicas of Peru.

Diego Rivero’s “Flower Day” typifies style Mexican master made famous.

Delgado’s director, James B. Byrnes, with rare Mayan articulated doll. Smaller photos show some of the poses that this newly acquired Latin-American treasure can take.

Large sofa, which was recently added to Delgado’s collection, Spanish Colonial.

Diego Rivera’s “Flower Day” typifies style Mexican master made famous.
Continued From Page 7

Particular gems are two portraits of Dona Maria de la Luz (or Luis) Padilla y Cervantes. One shows her as a dressed-up doll of about two; the other pictures her as an elegantly attired young matron. One beauty spot adorns the forehead of the tiny Maria, while no less than five are considered proper for the dignified senora.

As lagniappe to the Colonial section, there will be a group of Santos (paintings) and Bultos (sculptures) from New Mexico and the southern part of Colorado. Although this primitive art was produced in this country, it had its roots in the Spanish Colonial work in Old Mexico. The Indian and mestizo artists, like those of the Middle Ages, rarely bothered to sign their works. So, it is only with the advent of the 20th Century, when Latin-American artists sought out the mainstreams of world art, that one comes to the big, established names.

Among those to be represented by major paintings are Roberto Matta Echaurren of Chile, Joaquin Torres-Garcia of Uruguay, Wilfredo Lam of Cuba and Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco and Rufino Tamayo, all of Mexico.

Most were influenced by the vital art movements which swept Europe in the first part of the 20th Century—the Mexicans also took a long look backward and drew added inspiration from the great work of the Indian past.

Museums everywhere treasure works by these artists. But they are also seeking out the creations of the young men and women of today who, breaking with all tradition, are blazing new trails in world art.

Of this company is Julio LeParc of Argentina, whose experiments with light won him the top sculpture prize in the 1966 Venice Biennale. The Museum of Modern Art in New York and Delgado were the first institutions in this country to acquire his work!

The coming exhibition will be built up around the small core of Pre-Columbian and Latin American art in the Delgado's own collection. These works will be supplemented by some 300 other pieces borrowed from important private collections and from such institutions as the Museum of Primitive Art in New York City; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Cleveland (Ohio) Museum of Art; Harvard University's Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Cornell University's Andrew Dickson White Museum of Art; the Wadsworth Athenaeum; the Brooklyn Museum; the John and Mary Ringling Museum of Art; Tulane University's Middle American Research Institute, and others.

"The Arts of Ancient and Modern Latin America," which covers only half of the art of our hemisphere, is planned as a partial preview of the quality and extent of the Arts of the Americas collection which Delgado hopes one day to call its own.