

learning library ONLINE!

July 2022

BEGIN TRANSCRIPT

Hi friends! I'm Violette-Anne, a Museum Guide at the Dayton Art Institute. Let's discover together the story of this golden mask. Look for a bit at

this artwork. What do you find interesting? Maybe the shiny metal or the eyes with spikes sticking out or the elaborate designs around the ears...or something else?



This mask was made about 500 years ago by the Chimú people who used to live in the northern part of Peru, a country in South America. It is made of gold, a metal the Chimú believed came from the sweat of the sun because the two share the color yellow and a bright glow. Where can you find another color besides gold in the mask? The dark green color you see in the eyes, the spikes coming out of them and the wires attaching everything together are all made of copper. Copper is a metal that starts out as an orangey-brownish color, like a brand-new penny. After it is exposed to air and humidity for a while, the metal turns green (the fancy name is patina) like you see in the eyes of our mask or like the Statue of Liberty which is also made of copper!

Can you imagine why this mask would be difficult to wear? Besides the pointy spikes being quite dangerous, there are no openings to see through the mask! The reason is that it was actually used to be put on a mummy inside a tomb to help the deceased have a peaceful passage to the afterlife. It is thanks to this practice of leaving objects in tombs, common in many ancient civilizations, that we learn how people in ancient times lived and what was important to them.

By studying other Chimú masks, we also know that when this mask was made, the gold might have been covered with paint, feathers, shells and semi-precious stones like turquoise. Imagine what this mask would look like with these additions and draw your version of it!

You can view this sparkling Chimú mask at the Dayton Art Institute in Gallery 102. Thank you for discovering art with us and check in next month for a new 'Art Vids For Kids'!

END TRANSCRIPT

DAYTON ART INSTITUTE

Click [here](#) for full multimedia presentation.

FEATURED ARTWORKS*

Sustenance for Eternity via © National Geographic. Photograph by Matthew Helmer, NG Grantee

Archaeology Student Makes an Unusual Find at a Peruvian Dig via [phys.org](#) © Harvard Gazette

“Liquid Metal Door Copper Patina Timelapse.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Camel Glass & Joinery Ltd, August 12, 2019,
<https://youtu.be/n8X4rj4FuHc>

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